



REWRITING ANTIQUITY

WOMEN IN ANTIQUITY

REAL WOMEN ACROSS THE ANCIENT WORLD

EDITED BY STEPHANIE LYNN BUDIN AND JEAN MACINTOSH TURFA

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM



R E W R I T I N G A N T I Q U I T Y

WOMEN IN ANTIQUITY

REAL WOMEN ACROSS THE ANCIENT WORLD

EDITED BY STEPHANIE LYNN BUDIN AND JEAN MACINTOSH TURFA

WOMEN IN ANTIQUITY

Women in Antiquity is an extremely useful compilation which is intended to be, without doubt, a reference book for all those with an interest in well-written ancient history spanning all its complexity, a must that cannot go missing from any library.

Agnès Garcia-Ventura, Università degli Studi di Roma, Italy

This volume gathers brand new essays from some of the most respected scholars of ancient history, archaeology and physical anthropology to create an engaging overview of the lives of women in antiquity. The book is divided into ten sections, nine focusing on a particular area, and also includes almost 200 images, maps and charts. The sections cover Mesopotamia, Egypt, Anatolia, Cyprus, the Levant, the Aegean, Italy and Western Europe, and include many lesser-known cultures such as the Celts, Iberia, Carthage, the Black Sea region and Scandinavia. Women's experiences are explored, from ordinary daily life to religious ritual and practice, to motherhood, legal rights, sex, and building a career. Forensic evidence is also treated for the actual bodies of ancient women.

Women in Antiquity is edited by two experts in the field and is an invaluable resource to students of the ancient world, gender studies and women's roles throughout history.

Stephanie Lynn Budin is an ancient historian who focuses on ancient Greece and the Near East. Her published works include *Artemis* (Routledge, 2015), *Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age* (2011), *The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity* (2008) and *The Origin of Aphrodite* (2003), as well as numerous articles on ancient religion and iconography. She lives in New Jersey with her husband and bunnies.

Jean MacIntosh Turfa received her PhD in Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology and Latin from Bryn Mawr College, USA. She was a consultant for the Kyle M. Phillips Etruscan Gallery of the University of Pennsylvania Museum, where she is currently a Consulting Scholar.

Rewriting Antiquity

Rewriting Antiquity provides a platform to examine major themes of the ancient world in a broad, holistic and inclusive fashion. Coverage is broad both in time and space, allowing a full appreciation of the selected topic rather than an exclusive view bound by a relatively short timescale and place. Each volume examines a key theme from the Ancient Near East to Late Antiquity, and often beyond, to break down the boundaries habitually created by focusing on one region or time period.

Volumes within the series highlight the latest research, current developments and innovative approaches, situating this with existing scholarship. Individual case studies and analysis held within sections build to form a comprehensive and comparative overview of the subject enabling readers to view matters in the round and establish interconnections and resonance across a wide spectrum. In this way the volumes allow new directions of study to be defined and provide differing perspectives to stimulate fresh approaches to the theme examined.

Available:

Sex in Antiquity

Mark Masterson, Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz, James Robson

Forthcoming:

Childhood in Antiquity

Lesley Beaumont, Matthew Dillon, Nicola Harrington

Globalisation in Antiquity

Konstantin Vlassopoulos

Disability in Antiquity

Christian Laes

Women in Antiquity

Stephanie Lynn Budin and Jean MacIntosh Turfa

WOMEN IN ANTIQUITY

Real women across the Ancient World

*Edited by Stephanie Lynn Budin and
Jean MacIntosh Turfa*

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2016
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2016 Stephanie Lynn Budin and Jean MacIntosh Turfa

The right of the editors to be identified as the authors of the editorial material, and of the authors for their individual chapters, has been asserted in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Every effort has been made to contact copyright-holders. Please advise the publisher of any errors or omissions, and these will be corrected in subsequent editions.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN: 978-1-138-80836-2 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-62142-5 (ebk)

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Swales & Willis Ltd, Exeter, Devon, UK

CONTENTS

List of illustrations

List of abbreviations

Notes on contributors

General introduction

Stephanie Lynn Budin and Jean MacIntosh Turfa

PART I

Mesopotamia

Introduction

1 Female sexuality in Mesopotamia

Stephanie Lynn Budin

2 Being mothers or acting (like) mothers? Constructing motherhood in ancient Mesopotamia

M. Erica Couto-Ferreira

3 Images of queens, high priestesses, and other elite women in third-millennium Mesopotamia

Claudia E. Suter

4 Women's power and work in Ancient Urkesh

Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati

5 Mesopotamian women's cultic roles in late 3rd–early 2nd millennia BCE

Alhena Gadotti

6 Women, gender and law at the dawn of history: the evidence of the cuneiform sources

7 Businesswomen and their seals in early Mesopotamia

Andrew McCarthy

8 The female tavern-keeper in Mesopotamia: some aspects of daily life

Anne-Isabelle Langlois

9 Neo-Assyrian elite women

Saana Svärd

10 Patterns of violence against women in the Iron Age town of Hasanlu, Solduz Valley, Iran

Janet Monge and Page Selinsky

11 No reason to hide: women in the Neo-Elamite and Persian Periods

Maria Brosius

PART II

Egypt

Introduction

12 Understanding the lives of Ancient Egyptian women: the contribution of physical anthropology

Rosalie David

13 Women's role in sexual intercourse in ancient Egypt

Marc Orriols-Llonch

14 Motherhood in Pharaonic Egypt

Erika Feucht

15 Women's participation in the religious hierarchy of Ancient Egypt

Suzanne Onstine

16 Living and working in a New Kingdom 'harem town'

Jan Picton

17 Women at Deir el-Medîna

Deborah Sweeney

18 Women in Amarna: legendary royals, forgotten elite, unknown populace?

Katharina Zinn

19 The role of Egypt's dynastic queens

Joyce Tyldesley

20 Women in Ancient Nubia

Jacke Phillips

PART III **Hittites**

Introduction

21 The role and status of women in Hittite society

Trevor R. Bryce

22 Birth and motherhood among the Hittites

Gary Beckman

23 Women in Hittite religion

Billie Jean Collins

PART IV **Cyprus**

Introduction

24 Real bones, real women, real lives: bioarchaeology and osteobiographies of women in ancient Cyprus

Kirsi O. Lorentz

25 Maternity in Ancient Cyprus

Stephanie Lynn Budin

26 Women at home and in the community in prehistoric Bronze Age Cyprus

27 The social and economic roles played by the women of Alashiya

Louise Steel

28 Women and the art of Ancient Cyprus

Nancy Serwint

29 Women in the cities of Cyprus: rulers and urban dwellers from the Late Bronze Age to the Hellenistic period

Joanna S. Smith

PART V

The Levant and Carthage

Introduction

30 Functions and personalities of “Syrian” priestesses in the Bronze Age: priestesses at Mari, Emar, and Ugarit

Patrick M. Michel

31 Women’s daily lives in Late Bronze Age Ugarit (2nd millennium BCE)

Marguerite Yon

32 Women’s daily life in Bronze Age Canaan

Jennie Ebeling

33 “Will womankind now be hunting?”: the work and economic lives of women at Late Bronze Age Ugarit

Kevin M. McGeough

34 Women’s daily life (Iron Age Israel)

Carol Meyers

35 Women in Philistia: the archaeological record of the Iron Age

Assaf Yasur-Landau

36 Women’s religious life (Iron Age Israel)

Carol Meyers

- 37 “Until I come and take you away to a land like your own”: a gendered look at siege warfare and mass deportation

Peggy L. Day

- 38 Women’s ritual practice in the western Phoenician and Punic world

Meritxell Ferrer Martin and Kathryn Lafrenz Samuels

PART VI

The Aegean, Bronze Age and historical

Introduction

- 39 From the Caves of the Winds to Mycenae rich in gold: the faces of Minoan and Mycenaean women

John Prag

- 40 Minoan women

John Younger

- 41 Maternity in the Bronze Age Aegean

Stephanie Lynn Budin

- 42 *i-je-re-ja, ka-ra-wi-po-ro* and others . . . : women in Mycenaean religion

Cécile Boëlle-Weber

- 43 Women in the Mycenaean economy

Cynthia W. Shelmerdine

- 44 Beyond Penelope: women and the role of textiles in Early Greece

Brendan Burke

- 45 The bioarchaeology of women in Greek antiquity

Sherry C. Fox

- 46 Women in Early Iron Age and Archaic Greece: a view from the grave

James Whitley

47 Mothering in Ancient Athens: class, identity, and experience

Yurie Hong

48 'Chrysis the Hiereia having placed a lighted torch near the garlands then fell asleep' (Thucydides Iv.133.2): priestesses serving the gods and goddesses in Classical Greece

Matthew P. J. Dillon

49 Prostitutes, women, and gender in Ancient Greece

Allison Glazebrook

50 The Athenian businesswoman

Edward E. Cohen

51 Hellenistic women and the law: agency, identity, and community

Gillian Ramsey

PART VII

Etruria and the Italian archipelago

Introduction

52 The Nuragic women: facts and hypotheses

Fulvia Lo Schiavo and Matteo Milletti

53 Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: an Etruscan aristocrat

Judith Swaddling

54 Motherhood in Etruria

Larissa Bonfante

55 Health and medicine for Etruscan women

Jean MacIntosh Turfa

56 Etruscan marriage

Gilda Bartoloni and Federica Pitzalis

57 Women of the princely families in Etruria

Gilda Bartoloni and Federica Pitzalis

- 58 To give and to receive: the role of women in Etruscan sanctuaries
Ingrid E. M. Edlund-Berry
- 59 Women and textile production in pre-Roman Italy
Margarita Gleba
- 60 The *Ager Faliscus* and its women
Maria Anna De Lucia Brolli and Jacopo Tabolli
- 61 Daunian women: costume and actions commemorated in stone
Camilla Norman
- 62 Female slaves and slave-owners in ancient Etruria
Enrico Benelli

PART VIII

Rome

- 63 Roman motherhood
Lena Larsson Lovén
- 64 Women's daily life in the Roman west
Emily Hemelrijk
- 65 Strained relations, gender differences, and domestic ideals: the significance of two Roman family festivals
Fanny Dolansky
- 66 Roman women in the urban economy: occupations, social connections, and gendered exclusions
Hilary Becker
- 67 A demanding supply: prostitutes in the Roman world
Linnea Åshede
- 68 Identities and social roles of women in military settlements in the Roman west
Elizabeth M. Greene

69 Female gladiators in the Roman Empire

Anna McCullough

PART IX

At the edge

Introduction

70 Warrior women: the archaeology of Amazons

Adrienne Mayor

71 Women in Iberian culture: sixth–first centuries BCE

Lourdes Prados Torreira

72 Viragos and virgins: women in the celtic world

Miranda Aldhouse-Green

73 Women in the Roman Iron Age (AD 0–400) in Scandinavia

Nancy L. Wicker

PART X

Coda

74 Continuities in rape and tyranny in martial societies from antiquity onward

Kathy L. Gaca

Index

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figures

- 3.1 Seal of Queen Puabi from Ur.
- 3.2 Ur-Nanše's stela from al-Hiba.
- 3.3 Seal of Daqum.
- 3.4 Seal of Takunai.
- 3.5 Seal of Aman-Aštar.
- 3.6 Seal from Ur.
- 3.7 Seal of Waqartum, ancient impression.
- 4.1 Urkesh palace plan, c.2250 BC.
- 4.2 Nude female statuette from the favissa in A12f194.
- 4.3 Small jar in the shape of a nude woman (A12.108).
- 4.4 Cylinder seal with the representation of a sacrifice (A15.270).
- 4.5 Urkesh "family scene" (q2).
- 4.6 Uqnitum inscription held on backs of two servants (q1).
- 4.7 Uqnitum and her daughter (q4).
- 4.8 Seal of Zamena, the wet-nurse of Uqnitum (h2).
- 4.9 Earliest seal of Tuli, cook of Uqnitum (h3).
- 4.10 Later seal of Tuli (h5).
- 4.11 Seal of Tar'am-Agade, daughter of Naram-Sin.
- 5.1 Calcite disc with relief scene of Enheduana. (Courtesy of Penn Museum, image no. 150424.)
- 7.1 Imported and recut Old Babylonian cylinder seal found in Cyprus.
- 7.2 Cylinder seal from Tello. Uruk Period.
- 7.3 Reconstructed seal of Ninhilia.
- 10.1 Perimortem depressed skull fracture on the cranium of a Hasanlu male.
- 10.2 Antemortem fracture of right zygomatic and maxillary bones.

- 10.3 Bones of the human skull – lateral view.
- 12.1 CT-scan of a mummy.
- 12.2 False toe discovered on an Egyptian mummy.
- 12.3 Elaborate hairstyle on an Egyptian mummy.
- 13.1 Sexual activity, Wadi Hammamat.
- 13.2 Sexual practices, Deir el-Medina.
- 14.1 Stela of Setjau. Berlin 13466. 6th Dynasty.
- 14.2 From Tomb of Neferhotep (TT 49) 18th Dynasty. Time of Aye.
- 14.3 Royal tomb at Amarna.
- 15.1 A woman in the tomb of Roy (TT 255) showing her titles.
- 15.2 A choir of chantresses.
- 15.3 Musicians playing in the gateway of the first pylon at Medamud temple.
- 16.1 Plan of the Gurob New Kingdom town.
- 16.2 Palace quality faience bowls and ceramics from Gurob.
- 16.3 Lady Resi and the unnamed singer of Amun.
- 17.1 Woman and child in birth booth.
- 17.2 Four-room house at Deir el-Medina.
- 18.1 Tiye and Amenhotep III receiving gifts on the occasion of his third jubilee.
- 18.2 Woman dressed for a special occasion.
- 18.3 Representation of a squatting woman suckling a child.
- 20.1 Map of Ancient Nubia.
- 20.2 *Ba*-figure of a woman.
- 20.3 Queen Kadimalo and less important woman worshipping the goddess Isis.
- 20.4 Procession of Nubians before the ‘King’s Son of Kush’ Huy.
- 20.5 Pylon façade of the mid/late first-century AD Temple of Apedemak at Naga.
- 21.1 Probable wedding scene from vase (c.1600 BC) found at Bitik, near Ankara.
- 23.1 Puduhepa pouring a libation to the Sun Goddess alongside her husband, King Hattusili III.
- 23.2a Scenes of female musicians and dancers on two relief vases from Hüseyindede.
- 23.2b Scenes of female musicians and dancers on two relief vases

from Hüseyindede.

- 25.1 Paphos District Museum, Inv # KM 299.
- 25.2 Cyprus, Cyprus Museum, Nicosia, 1934/III-2/2.
- 25.3 Cyprus Museum, Nicosia, 1976/54.
- 25.4 Oriental Institute X.1611.
- 25.5 Pyrgos pitcher (Limassol District Museum LM 1739/7).
- 26.1 The evolution of domestic architecture at Marki.
- 26.2 A Middle Bronze Age house at Marki.
- 26.3 Anthropomorphic figurines.
- 26.4 Figure carved on wall of tomb at Karmi and terracotta models.
- 27.1 Women's work
- 27.2 Bronze four-sided stand from Enkomi Tomb 97.
- 27.3 Gold signet ring from Kalavassos Ayios Dhimitrios.
- 28.1 Seated figure from Sotira *Arkolies*.
- 28.2 Cruciform figurine from Yialia.
- 28.3 Birthing figurine from Kissonerga-*Mosphilia*.
- 28.4 Plank-shaped figurine from Cyprus, cesnola Collection.
- 28.5 Late Bronze Age figurine from Cyprus.
- 28.6 The Bomford figurine.
- 29.1 Limestone grave stele from Marion.
- 29.2 Fragmentary silver bowl said to be from Kourion.
- 29.3 Terracotta female statuette from Marion.
- 31.1 The divorce tablet of Ammištamru II.
- 31.2 Ivory figurine (RS 9.283).
- 31.3 Faience goblet (RS 4.106).
- 31.4 Houses of Late Bronze Age Ugarit.
- 31.5 Ivory panels from a bed.
- 32.1 Asiatic family arriving in Egypt.
- 32.2 Building 6205 in Area C at Hazor.
- 32.3 Tomb 101 at Tel es-Sa'idiyeh.
- 35.1 An oxcart and details of the hairstyle of the women and noncombatant men.
- 35.2 Domestic assemblages at Ashdod.
- 35.3 A stand from Yavneh.
- 37.1 Neo-Assyrian relief depicting alleged rape of an Arab woman.

- 37.2 Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III, Band IX.3 (= King, Plate L).
- 37.3 Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III, Band XIII.4 (= King, Plate LXXV).
- 37.4 Sennacherib's Palace relief of deportees from Lachish.
- 38.1 Map of western Mediterranean with most important Phoenician and Punic sites.
- 38.2 Punic terracotta female figurine from Puig des Molins' cemetery (Ibiza).
- 38.3 Selected materials recorded in "Locus 1060" of the "House of the Domestic Shrine" of Mozia.
- 38.4 Selected materials recorded in room I of the residential area A of Pani Loriga.
- 38.5 Votive stele from Carthage tophet: CIS I 382.
- 38.6 Votive stele from Carthage tophet: CIS I 253.
- 39.1 The face of the 'priestess' from Anemospilia.
- 39.2 The face of the woman from Tomb 132 at Armenoi.
- 39.3 The face of 'Gamma 58' from Grave Circle B at Mycenae.
- 39.4 The face of 'Gamma 55' from Grave Circle B at Mycenae.
- 40.1 Xeste 3, Akrotiri, room 3.
- 40.2 Incised jug from Malia, Chrysolakkos.
- 40.3a Ayia Triada sarcophagus, ends.
- 40.3b Ayia Triada sarcophagus, long sides.
- 40.4 Gold axe from Arkalokhori (LM I) and "labrys".
- 41.1 Heraklion Archaeological Museum 15072.
- 41.2 Athens, National Archaeological Museum #7711.
- 41.3 Nemea Museum 489.
- 42.1 Gold signet ring from Phaistos
- 42.2 Mycenaean terracotta psi-style figurine from Zeli, Locris.
- 44.1 Name vase of the Penelope Painter.
- 44.2a Ivory Triad from Mycenae (front view).
- 44.2b Ivory Triad from Mycenae (back view).
- 46.1 Southern burial shaft on hill at Toumba, Lefkandi in Euboea.
- 46.2 Cremation inside an urn.
- 46.3 The arc of ninth-century Athenian 'gendered' burial practices.
- 46.4 Statue of Phrasikleia.
- 47.1 Terracotta baby bottle in the form of a pig.

- 47.2 Black figure amphora with textile workers.
- 48.1 Nike, held on Athena's hand, crowns a priestess who carries a temple key.
- 48.2 Marble grave stele of Polyxena from Boeotia.
- 48.3 A kanephoros in a festival procession.
- 52.1 Bronze statuette from Ogliastro.
- 52.2 Daggers from Populonia and Bracelets from the village of Serra Orrios, Dorgali.
- 52.3 Bronze statuette, Santa Vittoria di Serri and rattle/wind-chime, Sassari.
- 52.4 Bronze statuette from Bonorva, Sassari and "Model" of Nuragic women's clothing.
- 52.5 Head of a female bronze statuette, Oristano and female figure, Nuraghe Mela Ruja.
- 52.6 "La Coppietta" from Su Tempiesu, Orune (Nuoro).
- 53.1 Painted terracotta sarcophagus of Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa.
- 53.2 The skeleton preserved within Seianti's sarcophagus.
- 53.3 Silver objects found in Seianti's tomb.
- 53.4 Photocomparison of clay reconstruction of head and portrait on terracotta sarcophagus.
- 54.1 The birth of Menerva (Athena) from the head of Tinia (Zeus).
- 54.2 Birth scene, seal on bucchero fragment from Poggio Colla.
- 54.3 Erotic scenes and birth scene on situla from a tomb at Pieve d'Alpago.
- 54.4 Amber figurine of a woman carrying a little girl.
- 54.5 Nuclear family, detail from Tragliatella oenochoe.
- 55.1 Etruscan dental appliances.
- 55.2 Votive terracotta model of pregnant uterus.
- 56.1 Married couple covered with veil. Sarcophagus from Vulci.
- 56.2 Episode of *dextrarum iunctio* (married couple clasp right hands).
- 56.3 Procession with cart. Frieze plaques from Murlo.
- 57.1 *Tintinnabulum* (ceremonial rattle) from the Tomba degli Ori.
- 57.2 Throne from Tomb 89 of the Lippi necropolis of Verucchio.
- 58.1 Sarcophagus lid.
- 58.2a Bronze statuette (Florence 299).
- 58.2b Bronze statuette (Florence 335).

- 58.3a Statue base with dedication by Kanuta.
- 58.3b Statue base with dedication by Kanuta.
- 58.4a Bronze statuettes of Culsans (Cortona 1278).
- 58.4b Bronze statuette of Selvans (Cortona 1279).
- 58.5 Boccanera plaque.
- 58.6a Vetralla, Macchia delle Valli, Demeter sanctuary.
- 58.6b Vetralla, Macchia delle Valli, Demeter sanctuary.
- 59.1 Scenes from the Throne of Verucchio.
- 59.2 *Tintinnabulum* from Bologna, Arsenale Militare.
- 60.1 Narce, necropolis of Monte Lo Greco, tomb 18 (XXXII).
- 60.2 Narce, necropolis of I Tufi, tomb 1 (VIII).
- 60.3 Narce, sanctuary of Monte Li Santi – Le Rote.
- 61.1 Female Daunian stela (front and back). Manfredonia inv. 717–720.
- 61.2 Reconstruction of the costume worn by Daunian women.
- 61.3 Fragment of a female Daunian stela (mid-front) with patterned apron.
- 61.4 Fragment of a female Daunian stela (upper back) with ritual scene.
- 62.1 Scene of toilette engraved on bronze mirror.
- 64.1 Marble relief of a funerary monument from Noviomagus in Gallia Belgica.
- 64.2 Marble statue of the drunken old woman.
- 66.1 House of Marcus Vecilius Verecundus.
- 66.2 Marble relief of a butcher and a woman keeping records.
- 66.3 Cupids and Erotes in a perfume shop (fresco now lost).
- 66.4 Limestone relief of a female pharmacist or soap maker.
- 66.5 Marble relief of Septimia Stratonice, *sutrix* (?).
- 66.6 Terracotta tile from Pietrabbondante signed by Detfri and Amica.
- 68.1 The so-called “Lepidina slipper”.
- 68.2 Shoe belonging to child with the “fishnet” decorative style.
- 68.3 Shoe belonging to an infant with the “fishnet” decorative style.
- 69.1 Female gladiators on relief from Halicarnassus.
- 70.1 Major archaeological sites with armed women burials.
- 70.2 Three early “Amazon” graves, 100–900 BC.

- 70.3 Warrior woman skeleton.
- 71.1 Map of the main ethnic groups of the Iberian Culture.
- 71.2 The “Offering Lady” from cerro de Los Santos (Albacete).
- 71.3 The “Lady of Elche” (Alicante).
- 71.4 Female *ex voto* offering breads. Collado de Los Jardines (Jaén).
- 71.5 The “Lady of La Alcudia” (Elche, Alicante).
- 71.6 Bronze figurine from the sanctuary of Castellar (Jaén).
- 71.7 The “Lady of Baza” (Granada).
- 71.8 *Ex voto* from the sanctuary of La Serreta (Alcoy, Alicante).
- 71.9 Relief with representation of a Family. Sanctuary Las Atalayuelas (Jaén).
- 71.10 *Ex voto* from the sanctuary of Torreparedones (Baena, Córdoba).
- 71.11 Bronze figurine of a swaddled baby. Collado de los Jardines (Jaén).
- 71.12 *Ex voto* shaped like a uterus. Collado de los Jardines (Jaén).
- 71.13 Terracotta representing a nurturing divinity. La Serreta (Alcoy, Alicante).
- 71.14 Funerary relief from La Albufereta (Alicante).
- 71.15 Two female figures playing a ritual activity. Torreparedones (Baena, Córdoba).
- 72.1 Statuette from Ballachulish (Argyll).
- 72.2 Bronze, four-wheeled, ‘cult-wagon’.
- 72.3 Gundestrup Cauldron.
- 72.4 Tablet inscribed with name of dead person, ‘Gemma’.
- 72.5 Boudica depicted in ‘Queens’ Window’, Colchester.
- 73.1 Roman wine service from burial at Öremölla, Skivarp.
- 73.2 Iron knife for leather-working, from Skogsby, Torslunda.
- 73.3 Round stone-setting over cremation burial, Åby, Västerhaninge.

Tables

- 3.1 Narrative scenes in reliefs and glyptic by period.
- 6.1 Principal law codes.
- 10.1 Chronology of Hasanlu.

- 10.2 Age categories used in the analysis of the Hasanlu skeletal individuals.
- 10.3 Sex categories used in the accumulation of data.
- 10.4 Distribution of skeletons by sex.
- 10.5 Distribution of ante- and perimortem trauma by sex.
- 10.6 Female/male antemortem fracture patterns.
- 20.1 Outline of periods, locations and dates in Nubian chronology.
- 45.1 Reconstructed mean living statures of females and males in Ancient Greece.

Maps

- 1 Mesopotamia and Levant.
- 2 Egypt.
- 3 Cyprus.
- 4 Greece and the Aegean.
- 5 Europe.

(See also [Figures 20.1, 38.1, and 71.1.](#))

ABBREVIATIONS

AA	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
ÄA	<i>Ägyptologische Abhandlungen</i>
AbB	Altbabylonische Briefe in Umschrift und Übersetzung (Leiden 1964ff.)
ABC	Grayson, A. K. (1975) <i>Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles</i> . Locust Valley, NY: Glückstadt.
ABSA	<i>Annual of the British School at Athens</i>
ABV	Beazley, J. D. (1956) <i>Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters</i> . Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press
AE	<i>Archaiologike Ephemeris</i>
ÄF	<i>Ägyptologische Forschungen</i>
AfO	<i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i>
ÄHK	Edel, E. (1994) <i>Die Ägyptisch-hethitische Korrespondenz aus Boghazköi</i> . Opladen, Germany: Westdeutscher Verlag
AHw	W. von Soden, <i>Akkadisches Handwörterbuch</i>
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AJAH	<i>American Journal of Ancient History</i>
AJP/AJPh	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
AJPA	<i>American Journal of Physical Anthropology</i>
AMI	Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran (Berlin 1929–1938); Erg.-Bd. = Ergänzungsband (1929ff.); NF = Neue Folge (1968ff.); Erg.-Bd. (NF.) = Ergänzungsband (Neue Folge)
AmerJTropMedHyg	<i>American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene</i>

<i>AnnPerugia</i>	<i>Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, Università degli studi di Perugia</i>
AOAT	Alt Orient und Alt Testament
AoF	Altorientalische Forschungen (Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des Alten Orients)
ArAn	<i>Archivum Anatolicum</i>
ArchClass	<i>Archeologia Classica</i>
ARCHIBAB	<i>Archives Babylonniennes</i>
Archiv.Path.	<i>Archives of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine</i>
ASCSA	<i>American Schools of Classical Studies in Athens</i>
ASOR	<i>American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
AthMitt	<i>Athenische Mitteilungen</i>
AUCT	Andrews University Cuneiform Texts (Berriens Springs, MI: 1984ff.)
AuOr/AulaOr	<i>Aula Orientalis</i>
BAAL	<i>Bulletin d'Archéologie et d'Architecture Libanaises</i>
BABesch	<i>Bulletin antieke beschaving: Annual papers on classical archaeology</i>
BAce	<i>Bulletin of the Australian centre for Egyptology</i>
BaF	<i>Baghdader Forschungen</i>
BAR	<i>British Archaeological Reports</i>
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BCH	<i>Bulletin de Correspondance Hellenique</i>
BE	The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, Series A: Cuneiform Texts Philadelphia
BICS	<i>Bulletin of the Institute for Classical Studies</i>
BIFAO	<i>Bulletin de l'Institut Francais d'Archeologie Orientale, Le Caire</i>
BIOR	<i>Bibliotheca Orientalia, Bruxelles</i>
BMJ	<i>British Medical Journal</i>
BSA	<i>British School at Athens, Bulletin</i>
CA/ClAnt	<i>Classical Antiquity</i>

CAARI	Cypriot American Archaeological Research Institute, Nicosia
CAD	<i>The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary</i> of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago
<i>Cah.D.A.F.I.</i>	<i>Cahiers de la Délégation archéologique française en Iran</i>
CAJ	<i>Cambridge Archaeological Journal</i>
CANE	<i>Civilizations of the Ancient Near East</i> (ed. J. Sasson). Hendrickson Publishers, 1995
CAT	(see KTU)
CceC	<i>Cahier du centre d'Études chypriotes</i>
ceG	Hansen, P. A. (1983) <i>Carmina Epigraphica Graeca</i> , Vol. 1. Berlin
CGC	Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire
CHANE	<i>Culture and History of the Ancient Near East</i>
CIE	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Etruscarum</i> . Leipzig and Florence (1893–)
CJ	<i>Classical Journal</i>
CM	Cuneiform Monographs (Groningen, The Netherlands: 1992ff.)
COS	<i>Contexts of Scripture</i> . W. W. Hallo and K. L. Younger (eds). Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2003
CP	<i>Classical Philology</i>
CQ	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
CRAI(BL)	<i>Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres</i>
CRRAI	<i>Comptes rendus de la Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale</i>
CSE	<i>Corpus Speculorum Etruscorum</i>
CT	Faulkner, R. O. (1973 and 1977) <i>The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts I–II</i> . Warminster, UK: Aris and Phillips.
CTH	Laroche, E. (1971) <i>Catalogue des textes hittites</i> . Paris: Klincksieck.
CurrAnth	<i>Current Anthropology</i>
CW	<i>Classical World</i>

<i>DE</i>	<i>Discussions in Egyptology</i>
<i>DMOA</i>	<i>Documenta et monumenta Orientis antiqui</i>
<i>EJA</i>	<i>European Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>EMC/CV</i>	<i>Échos du monde classique/Classical Views</i>
<i>EncIr</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia Iranica</i>
<i>ET</i>	<i>Etruskische Texte</i> (2 editions): regional corpus of known Etruscan inscriptions. Rix, H. (ed.) (1991) <i>Etruskische Texte. Editio minor</i> , first edition, two volumes. Tübingen, Germany: Gunther Narr
<i>FGrH</i>	<i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> ed. F. Jacoby (Berlin, Leiden 1923–1958)
<i>FM</i>	<i>Florilegium Marianum</i>
<i>G&R</i>	<i>Greece and Rome</i>
<i>GM</i>	<i>Göttinger Miszellen</i>
<i>HA(e)B</i>	<i>Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge</i>
<i>HdO</i>	<i>Handbuch der Orientalistik</i>
<i>HEO</i>	<i>Hautes Études Orientales</i>
<i>HSCP(h)</i>	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
<i>HSS</i>	<i>Harvard Semitic Studies</i>
<i>HT(h)R</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HW2</i> (aka <i>HethWb.</i> , <i>HWb2</i>)	J. Friedrich/A. Kammenhuben, <i>Hethitisches Wörterbuch</i>
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Graecae</i>
<i>INSTAP</i>	<i>Institute for the Study of Aegean Prehistory</i>
<i>IPriene</i>	Von Gaetringen, F. H. (1906) <i>Inschriften von Priene</i> . Berlin.
<i>IrAnt</i>	<i>Iranica Antiqua</i>
<i>JA</i>	<i>Journal Asiastique</i>
<i>JAEl</i>	<i>Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections</i>
<i>JAMA</i>	<i>The Journal of the American Medical Association</i>
<i>JANER</i>	<i>Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JAR</i>	<i>Journal of Anthropological Research</i>

JARce	<i>Journal of the American Research center in Egypt</i>
JAS	<i>Journal of Archaeological Science</i>
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JBVO	<i>Jenaer Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient</i> (Wiesbaden).
JCS	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>
JDAI	<i>Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
JdI	<i>Jahrbuch des deutschen Instituts</i>
JEA	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
JEH	<i>Journal of Egyptian History</i>
JESHO	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
JFH	<i>Journal of Family History</i>
JHS	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
JHS	<i>Journal of Hebrew Scripture</i>
JhumEvol	<i>Journal of Human Evolution</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JPR	<i>Journal of Prehistoric Religion</i>
JRA	<i>Journal of Roman Archaeology</i>
JRS	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
JSSEA	<i>Journal of the Society of the Study of Egyptian Antiquities</i>
KBo	<i>Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi.</i> Leipzig and Berlin: J. C. Hinrichs
KMT	<i>KMT: A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt</i>
KTU	M. Dietrich, O. Loretz, J. Sanmartin (1976) <i>Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit.</i> 1. Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany. Second enlarged edition: <i>The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit.</i> Münster, Germany, 1995
KUB	<i>Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi.</i> Berlin: Akademie-Verlag
LÄ	<i>Lexikon der Ägyptologie</i> I-IV, (eds) E. Otto and W. Helck, 1975–1989
LSAM	Sokolowski, F. (1955) <i>Lois sacrées de l'Asie mineure.</i> Paris.
LSCG	Sokolowski, F. (1969) <i>Lois sacrées des cités grecques.</i> Paris.

LSCG	Suppl. Sokolowski, F. (1962) <i>Lois sacrées des cités grecques: Supplément</i> . Paris.
MDAIK	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i> , Abteilung Kairo
MDP	<i>Mission de la Délégation française en Perse</i>
MEFRA	<i>Mélanges de l'École Française à Rome: Antiquité</i>
MMJ	<i>Metropolitan Museum Journal</i>
NABU	<i>Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires</i>
NEA	<i>Near Eastern Archaeology</i>
OBO	<i>Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis</i>
OJA	<i>Oxford Journal of Archaeology</i>
OLA	<i>Orientalia Lovaniensia analecta</i> (Leuven, Belgium: 1975ff.)
OpArch	<i>Opuscula Archaeologica</i>
OpRom	<i>Opuscula Romana</i>
P&P	<i>Past and Present: A Journal of Historical Studies</i>
PBS	University of Pennsylvania: The Museum Publications of the Babylonian Section
PBSR	<i>Papers of the British School at Rome</i>
PEQ	<i>Palestine Exploration Quaterly</i>
PIFAO	<i>Publications de l'Institut Français d'Archeologie Orientale</i>
PIHANS	<i>Publications de l'Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul</i> (1956ff.)
PM	Porter, B. and Moss, R. L. B.: <i>Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs and Paintings</i> I–VII. Oxford 1973–1979
Procs.Roy.Soc.	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Society of London</i>
PRU	<i>Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit</i> II–VI, 1955–1970. Paris: Geuthner
RA	<i>Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie orientale</i>
RDAC	<i>Report of the Department of</i>

RE	<i>Antiquities, Cyprus</i> Gary M. Beckman, <i>Texts from the vicinity of Emar in the collection of Jonathan Rosen</i> (= HANEM 2, 1996).
RIA	<i>Reallexikon der Assyriologie</i> (Berlin, 1928–)
RSF	<i>Rivista di Studi Fenici</i>
RSO	<i>Ras Shamra-Ougarit I–XXI</i> , 1983–2013, Paris, Lyon, Louvain
SAAB	<i>State Archives of Assyria Bulletin</i>
SAK	<i>Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur</i>
SBL WAW	Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Ancient World series
SEG	<i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i>
SEL	Studi Epigrafici e Linguistici sul Vicino Oriente Antico
SHC II	Knapp, A. B. (ed.) (1996) <i>Sources for the History of Cyprus Volume II: Near Eastern and Aegean Texts from the Third to the First Millennia BC</i> . Altamont, NY: Greece and Cyprus Research center
SIG ₃	Dittenberger, W. (1915–24) <i>Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum</i> , third edition, volumes 1–4, Leipzig, Germany
SIMA	Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology
SMEA	Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology
StBoT	Studien zu den Bogazköy-Texten (Wiesbaden, Germany: 1965ff.)
StEtr	<i>Studi Etruschi</i>
TAPA	<i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i>
TBR	Daniel Arnaud, <i>Textes syriens de l'âge du Bronze Récent</i> (= <i>AulaOr.</i> Suppl. 1, 1991).
ThesCRA	<i>Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum</i> (eds) V. Lambrinoudakis and J. C. Balty.

	Los Angeles, CA and Basel, Switzerland (2004–)
THeth	Texte der Hethiter (Heidelberg, Germany: 1971ff.)
TMHC	Texte und Materialien der Frau Prof. Hilprecht Collection of Babylonian Antiquities im Eigentum der Universität Jena (Leipzig)
TTKY	Türk Tarih Kurumu Yayinlari (Ankara, Turkey: 1935ff.)
UF	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
VO	Vicino Oriente. Annuario dell'Istituto di Studi del Vicino Oriente, Università; di Roma (Rome: 1978ff.)
WO	<i>Welt des Orients</i>
YBC	Yale Babylonian Collection
YOS	<i>Yale Oriental Series</i>
ZÄS	Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde, Berlin.
Z(f)A	Zeitschrift für Assyriology
ZivaAnt	<i>Živa Antika: Antiquité vivante</i>
ZPE	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

CONTRIBUTORS

Miranda Aldhouse-Green is Emeritus Professor of Archaeology at Cardiff University, Wales, UK. She currently holds the post of academic and technical advisor with Sky Atlantic for a major forthcoming drama series on ancient Britain.

Linnea Åshede earned her *PhD* in 2015 with the dissertation *Desiring Hermaphrodites: The Relationships of Hermaphroditus in Roman Group Scenes*. Research interests include all things gender-queer, classical reception, and posthumanist theory. She also butlers for two demanding cats and two anarchist bunnies.

Gilda Bartoloni graduated in 1967 in Etruscology, having studied with Massimo Pallottino at Rome, and from 1976 has been professor of Etruscology at the Universities of Lecce, Siena and Paris IV Sorbonne, and visiting professor at the Universities of Copenhagen and Vienna. Since 2001 she has been full professor at the University of Rome 'La Sapienza'. Her scientific interests include especially Etruscan and Latial protohistory, and she has published handbooks on the Villanovan and Etruscan cultures and mortuary archaeology, as well as over 100 works on the relations between the Italic peoples and other Mediterranean cultures, and curated the exhibition on *Etruscan Princes between Mediterranean and Europe*, held at Bologna in 2000. She has participated in and directed many archaeological excavations in Etruria and Latium, most recently the Veii project of the University of Rome 'La Sapienza' (the settlement of Piazza d'Armi) and the Villanovan necropolis of Poggio delle Granate at Populonia. In 2003 she began research at Poggio del Telegrafo (Populonia). In collaboration with the Soprintendenza di Toscana she is responsible for the excavation of the Campassini site (Monteriggioni), of the handicraft area of Quartaia (Colle Val d'Elsa) and of the Pugiano sanctuary (San Gimignano). She is an ordinary member and auditor of the Istituto di Studi Etruschi ed Italici, and has been director of the newly reinstalled Etruscan and Italic Antiquities Museum of the University of Rome 'La Sapienza'.

Hilary Becker is Assistant Professor of Classics, Department of

Classical and Near Eastern Studies, Binghamton University (USA). She has published articles dealing with Etruscan property, archives and settlement patterns and co-edited along with Margarita Gleba the volume *Votives, Places and Rituals in Etruscan Religion* (2009). She is currently researching a Roman imperial pigment shop in the Area Sacra di S. Omobono in Rome as part of the ongoing excavations there.

Gary Beckman, since 1992 Professor of Hittite and Mesopotamian Studies at the University of Michigan, has published widely on Hittite religion and on Hittite social organization and diplomacy. His most recent book is *The babili-Ritual from Hattusa* (2014). The focus of his current research is the reception and adaptation of Syro-Mesopotamian culture by the Hittites. He is completing an edition of the tablets of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* recovered from the site of the Hittite capital. He lives in Ann Arbor with his wife, Professor of English Karla Taylor, five cats, and two Corgis.

Enrico Benelli is a specialist in Etruscology and the archaeology of pre-Roman Italy. He worked in the *Soprintendenza ai beni archeologici delle Marche* from 1999 to 2001, becoming a researcher in the CNR (National Research Council), where he is currently responsible for research in Etruscan epigraphy and editor of the *Thesaurus linguae Etruscae* and the *Corpus Inscriptionum Etruscarum*. He developed a new chronological framework for the archaic cultures of inner central Italy and conducted excavations in the Sabine necropolis of Colle del Forno (Eretum) from 2003 to 2009. His research includes Etruscan epigraphy, history and society, especially the later period. A series of studies of late Etruscan inscriptions from the area of Chiusi, combining epigraphical, archaeological and antiquarian topics, has led to innovative results, especially concerning the social history of Chiusi and the whole of Etruria. He has taught Etruscology at the University of Udine since 2005.

Cécile Boëlle-Weber gained her PhD in Ancient History from the University of Nancy II, and is now a Professor of History at the Lycée Fabert in Metz, France. Having written her dissertation on Po-ti-ni-ja: The female element in the Mycenaean religion based on Linear B archives, she now specializes in Mycenaean religion, with publications including her book *Po-ti-ni-ja, l'élément féminin dans la religion mycénienne* (2004). Equally enamoured of cats and Crete, she divides her work between education in secondary school and the history of the religion of the Aegean Bronze Age.

Larissa Bonfante received her BA from Barnard College, her MA from

the University of Cincinnati, and her PhD at Columbia University, where she studied with Otto J. Brendel, Margarete Bieber and Meyer Schapiro. She is Professor of Classics *Emerita* at New York University and has published on Etruscan and Roman dress, and Etruscan language and culture, particularly iconography. She recently edited *The Barbarians of Ancient Europe* (2011), in which she also deals with Etruscan influence in Europe, and is presently at work on the publication of an edited book on *Nudity as a Costume in the Ancient Mediterranean*. For the last ten years she has been co-editor, with Jane Whitehead, of *Etruscan News*, the Bulletin of the US Section of the Istituto di Studi Etruschi. In 2007 she was awarded the Gold Medal of the Archaeological Institute of America. She is a member of the Archaeological Institute of America, the Istituto di Studi Etruschi ed Italici, the German Archaeological Institute, the Société des Etudes Latines and the American Philosophical Society. Her books *Etruscan Life and Afterlife* (ed.), *The Etruscan Language. An Introduction* (with Giuliano Bonfante), and *Etruscan Dress* have seen multiple editions in the US and abroad.

Maria Anna De Lucia Brolli, a student of Massimo Pallottino, graduated in 1975 with honours in Etruscology and Italic Antiquities from the University of Rome 'La Sapienza' with a thesis on the manufacture of Archaic architectural terracottas. She joined the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, serving with the Naples Museo Archeologico Nazionale and the Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici del Lazio. Since 1983 she has been an official with the Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici dell'Etruria meridionale, responsible for the protection of antiquities in the Faliscan territory (Narce, *Falerii*, Corchiano, Vignanello). She is Director of the Museo Archeologico dell'Agro Falisco in the Forte Sangallo of Civita Castellana and has also been responsible for the reinstallation of the Faliscan galleries in the Villa Giulia Museum and for many other exhibitions. She has directed numerous excavations, including the definitive studies (and protection) of sanctuaries at Narce (Monte Li Santi-Le Rote), *Falerii* (Scasato II and via Gramsci sites) and the underworld shrine at Grotta Porciosa. Her publications include *L'Agro Falisco* (1991) and *Civita Castellana. Il Museo Archeologico dell'Agro Falisco* (1991), and articles such as, with M. P. Baglione, 'Le deposizioni infantili nell'agro falisco tra vecchi e nuovi scavi', *Scienze dell'Antichità* 14 (2007–2008): 869–893.

Maria Brosius is Associate Professor of Near and Middle Eastern Civilisations at the University of Toronto, Canada. As an ancient historian, her research focuses on the history of pre-Islamic Persia, especially on the Achaemenid empire, as well as on the cultural links

between Greece and the eastern Mediterranean. Among her publications are *Women in Ancient Persia (559–331 BC)* (1996, 2000, 2002), *The Persians: An Introduction* (Routledge, 2006) and the edited volume *Ancient Archives and Archival Traditions: Concepts of Record-Keeping in the Ancient World* (2003). A book on *A History of the Achaemenid Empire* is currently in preparation for Blackwell's *History of the Ancient World*.

Trevor R. Bryce is Emeritus Professor of Classics and Ancient History at the University of Queensland, Australia. He has previously taught at the University of New England, Australia, and is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities.

Stephanie Lynn Budin holds a PhD in Ancient History from the University of Pennsylvania, with concentrations in Greece and the Near East. She is the adoring mother of the bunny Peanut Butter Cup.

Brendan Burke is an Associate Professor in and Department Chair of the Department of Greek and Roman Studies at the University of Victoria in British Columbia. He co-directs excavations at the site of ancient Eleon in eastern Boeotia and for many years he was involved in the excavations at Gordion in Turkey. His research interest range from funerary iconography and chronology in the Bronze Age Aegean, textile production in the ancient world, and the history and legend of the Phrygian King Midas. A strong supporter of study abroad experiences for his students, Brendan teaches by example and tries to spend as much time in Greece as possible.

Edward E. Cohen is Professor of Ancient History and Classical Studies (adjunct) at the University of Pennsylvania, USA. He is the author of many articles and books on the economic and social position of women, foreigners and slaves in the classical world, including *Athenian Economy and Society: A Banking Perspective* (1992), *The Athenian Nation* (2000) and, most recently, *Athenian Prostitution: The Business of Sex* (2015). He is presently preparing *Roman Economy and Society: Slaves' Perspective*.

Billie Jean Collins (PhD, Yale University, 1989) is director of Lockwood Press and an instructor in Middle Eastern and South Asian Studies at Emory University, USA. She is author of *The Hittites and Their World* (2007) and editor of *A History of the Animal World in the Ancient Near East* (2002). She has also authored numerous articles on Hittite society and religion.

M. Erica Couto-Ferreira is a postdoctoral researcher at the University

of Heidelberg, Germany, specialising in Asia and Europe in a global context. She has published and co-edited works on women's healthcare, childbirth and healing practices in ancient Mesopotamia, as well as on the lexicography of the body in Sumerian and Akkadian cultures.

Rosalie David is *Emerita* Professor of the University of Manchester, UK and Vice-President of the Egypt Exploration Society. Formerly she was Director of the KNH centre for Biomedical Egyptology and Keeper of Egyptology at the Manchester Museum. She has authored over 40 books and is a television consultant/contributor to numerous programmes on ancient Egypt and mummies. A Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and the Royal Society of Medicine, she was awarded OBE (Order of the British Empire) for services to Egyptology.

Peggy L. Day is a Full Professor in the Religion and Culture Department at the University of Winnipeg, where she has taught since 1989. She is very tired of snow.

Mathew Dillon is a Professor of Classics and Ancient History at the University of New England. His research interests include Greek and Roman history, but he specialises on Greek religion, on which he has written a number of books and articles. His current research projects include children, and women, in ancient Greek religion, and ancient healing cults. He has a charming girl Aussie bulldog puppy called Rutherford, who sleeps on his work backpack in his study, and is an immense source of inspiration to him.

Fanny Dolansky is Associate Professor of Classics at Brock University, Canada, where she teaches courses in Latin, Roman history and Roman religion. Her research focuses primarily on the history of the Roman family and childhood.

Jennie Ebeling is Associate Professor of Archaeology at the University of Evansville in Indiana, USA, and co-director of the Jezreel Expedition in Israel. She has co-edited volumes on ground stone artifacts and household archaeology in the southern Levant and is the author of *Women's Lives in Biblical Times* (2010).

Ingrid E. M. Edlund-Berry is Professor *Emerita* in the Department of Classics at the University of Texas at Austin. She received her fil. lic. degree at the University of Lund and PhD at Bryn Mawr College and has taught at the University of Georgia, University of Minnesota, the Intercollegiate center in Rome and the University of Texas at Austin. Her excavation experience includes Poggio Civitate (Murlo), S. Angelo

Vecchio (Metaponto) and Morgantina. Her publications include *The Iron Age and Etruscan Vases in the Olcott Collection at Columbia University* (1980), *The Gods and the Place: Location and Function of Sanctuaries in the Countryside of Etruria and Magna Graecia (700–400 B.C.)* (Stockholm, 1987), *The Seated and Standing Statue Akroteria from Poggio Civitate (Murlo)* (1992); with Lucy Shoe Meritt, *Etruscan and Republican Roman Mouldings* (2000); edited papers and books: 'Architectural theory and practice: Readings of Vitruvius', *Memoirs of the American Academy* 50 (2005) 1–86; with Giovanna Greco and John Kenfield, *Deliciae Fictiles III: Architectural Terracottas in Ancient Italy: New Discoveries and Interpretations* (2006); with Nancy T. de Grummond, *The Archaeology of Sanctuaries and Ritual in Etruria* (2011); articles, biographical essays and book reviews.

Meritxell Ferrer Martin is a Beatriu de Pinós/Marie Curie Postdoctoral Research Fellow (BP-B) at Universitat Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona). Previously, she was Beatriu de Pinós/Marie Curie Postdoctoral Research Fellow (BP-A) at Stanford University, Classics Department and center for Archaeology (2013–2015). She earned her PhD from IUHJV-UPF (Barcelona, Spain) in 2012 with a dissertation entitled *Sicilian Acropolis: Communities, Rituals and Powers (10th–5th BC)*. Her research specializes in the archaeology of the Mediterranean during the Iron Age, mainly Phoenician and Greek colonization in the western Mediterranean, with a particular interest in Sicily and the Iberian Peninsula. Her interests encompass themes such as post-colonial perspectives, cultural contact, ritual, gender and power relations and contemporary uses of the past. Meritxell has done fieldwork in Spain, Sicily, Portugal and Sardinia.

Erika Feucht is Professor of Egyptology at the University of Heidelberg, Germany. She contributed to the *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* with Eberhard Otto and Wolfgang Helck and has published on motherhood and childhood in ancient Egypt. Having retired in 2003, she remains a member of SÄK (Ständige deutschsprachige Ägyptologenkonferenz), ICOM (International Committee of Museums), CIPEG (International Committee for Egyptology), and was awarded the Universitätsmedaille der Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg at her home institution.

Sherry C. Fox received her Bachelor of Science degree in both anthropology and psychology from the University of Michigan, and both her Master of Arts degree (with a certificate in Forensic Anthropology) and her doctorate in anthropology from the University of Arizona. She is an Adjunct Professor at Arizona State University and currently teaching courses in biological anthropology and forensic

anthropology at Eastern Michigan University. Dr Fox is a Fellow of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences.

Kathy L. Gaca is Associate Professor of Classics at Vanderbilt University, USA. Her research explores how sexual norms rooted in antiquity inform current concerns of social injustice and violence against women and girls. She is the author of *The Making of Fornication: Eros, Ethics, and Political Reform in Greek Philosophy and Early Christianity* (2003, winner of the CAMWS 2006 Outstanding Publication Award) and of numerous articles. She is currently at work on her second book, *Rape as Sexual Warfare against Girls and Women: Ancient Society, Modern Witness*.

Alhena Gadotti is an Associate Professor of History at Towson University, USA, and Director of the Ancient Mediterranean Studies Minor there. She is a Sumerologist focusing on Sumerian literary documents from the Old Babylonian period and has also published on Mesopotamian women and Mesopotamian education. Her most recent book *Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the Netherworld and the Sumerian Gilgamesh Cycle* was published in 2014.

Allison Glazebrook is Associate Professor of Classics at Brock University, Canada. Her research focuses on women, gender and sexuality in ancient Greece. In addition to numerous articles and chapters, she is co-editor of *Greek Prostitutes in the Ancient Mediterranean, 800 Bce-200 ce* (2011) and *Houses of Ill-Repute: The Archaeology of Brothels, Houses and Taverns in the Greek World* (2016).

Margarita Gleba obtained her PhD from the Department of Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology at Bryn Mawr College, USA. Her special area of study is the archaeology of textile production, including the investigation of textiles, textile tools, as well as relevant written, iconographic and other sources. She was research project manager at the centre for Textile Research, University of Copenhagen, Denmark and completed a Marie Curie Intra-European Research Fellowship at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, UK. She is currently a European Research Council Principal Research Associate at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge, UK, where she leads a five-year project *Production and Consumption: Textile Economy and Urbanisation in Mediterranean Europe 1000–500 Bce (PROCON)*. She has excavated in Italy, Turkey and Ukraine. Her books, authored and edited, include *Textile Production in pre-Roman Italy* (2008), *Dressing the Past* (2008), *Places and Rituals in Etruscan Religion. Studies in Honour of Jean MacIntosh Turfa* (2009), *Communicating Identity in Italic Iron Age Communities* (2011), *Textiles*

and *Textile Production in Europe from Prehistory to AD 400* (2012) and *Making Textiles in Pre-Roman and Roman Times* (2013).

Elizabeth M. Greene is Associate Professor of Roman Archaeology in the Department of Classics at the University of Western Ontario, Canada. She has excavated at the Roman fort at Vindolanda since 2002 and currently co-directs the Vindolanda Field School. She is currently co-editing a volume devoted entirely to questions about women and the Roman army to be published with Cambridge University Press.

Emily Hemelrijk is Professor of Ancient History at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Her research focuses on Roman women. Her most recent book is *Hidden Lives – Public Personae: Women and Civic Life in the Roman West* (2015).

Yurie Hong is Associate Professor of Classics at Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota, USA. Her research interests include Greek literature and myth, women in classical Greek medicine and gender violence in the ancient and modern world. She is currently working on a book entitled *Birthing Bodies, Birthing Culture: Rhetorics of Reproduction in Archaic and Classical Greece*.

Josué J. Justel is a Ramón y Cajal researcher in the University of Alcalá (Spain), where he teaches Ancient History. He has specialized in the languages, history and cultures of the Ancient Near East, focusing mainly on legal documentation from the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1550–1150 bc). He has published several monographs and papers devoted to the role of women in these sources. He is the proud father of two, and an unabashed lover of heavy metal rock.

Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati is Professor Emerita of archaeology and ancient art, California State University Los Angeles and currently Visiting Professor Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, UCLA. She was the Director of the Urkesh excavations at Mozan, Syria, and she is presently excavating at Aradetis Orgora in the Republic of Georgia with a team from Ca' Foscari University. She has published extensively on Syro-Mesopotamia and the South Caucasus in the third millennium, especially the stratigraphy and material culture of the Hurrians, seal iconography, ceramics, identity markers of the women of ancient Urkesh and connections between the South Caucasus and Syro-Mesopotamia.

Anne-Isabelle Langlois works for TEXTELSEM, a Franco-German project run by Nele Ziegler, Eva Cancik-Kirschbaum and Adelheid

Otto. It deals with the historical geography of Upper Mesopotamia during the second millennium BC and aims to model data by analysing textual and archaeological information using web semantics and geoinformatics (higeomes.org).

Kirsi O. Lorentz received her PhD in Archaeology from Trinity College, University of Cambridge, after receiving an MSc in Osteology, Palaeopathology and Funerary Archaeology from the University of Sheffield, and an MA in Anthropology and Archaeology from the University of Edinburgh. She currently undertakes fieldwork in Cyprus, Syria and Iran, and has set up a number of bioarchaeological field laboratories in Syria, Iran and Cyprus, where she directs and collaborates in a number of international projects in physical anthropology, bioarchaeology and archaeological sciences, which form the main subjects of her publications. She holds the position of Assistant Professor at the Cyprus Institute and is the Director of the Souskiou-Laona Human Bioarchaeology Fieldschool.

Lena Larsson Lovén is Assistant Professor in Classical Archaeology and Ancient History, the Department of Historical Studies, University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Her main research focus lies with gender studies, iconography, textiles and dress studies, and socio-economic history in the Roman world.

Fulvia Lo Schiavo is an archaeologist and former Research Director at the Institute for Aegean and Near Eastern Studies (IceVO) in the National Council of Research (CNR, Rome) 1999–2005. She was Archaeological Superintendent in Tuscany (Florence) from 2006–2010, and in Sardinia (Sassari and Nuoro) from 1987–1999. She specializes in the study of the Mediterranean Bronze Age, with special interest in Sardinian archaeology, and is engaged in the excavations of *nuraghe Arrubiu* at Orroli (Nuoro) and in the scientific publication of the results, and also in the project to set up a local museum for the Sardinian site of *Sa Domu'e Su Nuraxi Arrubiu*. At the moment, her major engagement is the catalogue of Nuragic Bronzes. Her research and publications range from ancient metallurgy and the archaeology of Sardinia to Etruscan archaeology and metallurgy, including *Oxhide Ingots in the central Mediterranean* (F. Lo Schiavo, J. Muhly, R. Maddin, A. Giumlia-Mair, eds) Biblioteca di Antichità Cipriote 8, IceVO-CNR (2009); *Le Fibule dell'Italia meridionale e della Sicilia, dall'età del bronzo recente al VI secolo a.C.*, Prähistorische Bronzefunde, Abteilung XIV, Band 14, Stuttgart 2010; *I complessi archeologici di Trestina e di Fabbrecce nel Museo Archeologico di Firenze* (A. Romualdi and F. Lo Schiavo, eds) Monumenti Antichi dei Lincei, Serie Miscellanea Vol. XII (LXVI Serie Generale) (2009); *Archeometallurgy in Sardinia from the*

Origins to the Beginning of the Early Iron Age (F. Lo Schiavo A. Giumlia-Mair, U. Sanna, R. Valera, eds) Monographie Instrumentum 30 (2005), ed. Monique Mergoil.

Adrienne Mayor is a research scholar in the Classics Department and the History and Philosophy of Science and Technology Program, Stanford University. She is the author of five books, most recently *The Amazons: Lives and Legends of Warrior Women across the Ancient World* (2014) and *The Poison King* (2010), a nonfiction finalist for the National Book Award. She is the author of numerous articles. In 2014 she co-authored an article in *Hesperia* deciphering the names of Amazons and Scythians in Caucasian languages inscribed on Greek vase paintings. Mayor's work is frequently featured in *National Geographic*, *Foreign Affairs*, *Smithsonian*, and she is often interviewed on BBC and NPR. Her books are translated into 11 languages and she is a regular contributor to the award-winning history of science website *Wonders and Marvels*.

Andrew McCarthy is an archaeologist and art historian with a specialisation in the glyptic of the ancient Mediterranean and Near East. He is involved in excavation, analysis and publication of several archaeological projects in the Near East and Cyprus and also publishes on artefacts and theory. He has a PhD in Archaeology from the University of Edinburgh where he is a Fellow of the School of History, Classics and Archaeology. He is currently the Director of the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute (CAARI) in Nicosia.

Anna McCullough received her PhD in ancient history from the University of St Andrews, Scotland, and was assistant professor of Classics at The Ohio State University (2008–15). Her research interests include ideals of gender in ancient Rome, classical receptions in modern American culture, sport and spectacle, and pedagogy. She is currently with the Office of International Programs at Kansas State University, and minion to two demanding but benevolent felines.

Kevin M. McGeough is Professor of Archaeology in the Department of Geography at the University of Lethbridge, Canada. He is the author of *Exchange Relationships at Ugarit* and *Ugaritic Economic Tablets*. He is also the editor of the *Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research*.

Carol Meyers is Mary Grace Wilson Professor of Religious Studies at Duke University, USA, and is a prominent researcher, teacher and author in biblical studies, women's studies and Syro-Palestinian archaeology. Her book *Rediscovering Eve* (2013) is a landmark study of

women in ancient Israel.

Patrick M. Michel teaches Ancient Near Eastern languages and history at the University of Geneva, Switzerland. He is working on the ARCANÉ project (*Associated Regional Chronologies for the Ancient Near East and the Eastern Mediterranean*). He is also working on the publication of a retrospective of the work of Emmanuel Laroche, a renowned French Hittitologist and writing a chapter on Late Bronze Age Syria for the *Oxford Handbook of Religions in the Ancient Near East*.

Matteo Milletti, a researcher in Etruscology, has collaborated for many years with the Cattedra di Etruscologia dell'Università di Roma 'La Sapienza', in the archaeological excavations of the sites of Populonia-Poggio del Telegrafo (Livorno) and Veii- Piazza d'Armi (Roma, Formello). He is also engaged, with the Cattedra di Etruscologia dell'Università degli Studi di Siena, in the excavations at Marsiliana-Poggio del Castello (Manciano) and at Roselle (Grosseto). He is currently participating in several research projects, including analysis of finds from the site of Veii-Piazza d'Armi (University of Rome 'La Sapienza'), and on results of excavations by the Soprintendenza Archeologica della Toscana in the necropolis of Populonia-S. cerbone. He is also a member of the research team in the *Farfalla Project* (Università degli Studi di Siena) on the conservation of Etruscan and Roman *cultivars* in modern Tuscany. He was Research Fellow at the Università di Roma 'La Sapienza' and Università degli Studi di Sassari. Since 2011 he has held a position as teaching assistant at the Università degli Studi of Siena. In the 2013 he obtained the national scientific qualification to function as associate professor in Italian Universities. He has published numerous articles and edited proceedings of congresses, study seminars and exhibitions. In recent years, he has devoted special attention to the analysis of the relations between Etruscan civilization and the great islands of the Tyrrhenian Sea during the Iron Age, and to the metallurgy of the Italian Peninsula during the Final Bronze Age and Early Iron Age.

Janet Monge, PhD University of Pennsylvania 1991, is Keeper and Associate Curator of the Physical Anthropology Section, Penn Museum, Adjunct Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania and a Visiting Professor in Anthropology at Princeton University. Her research interests include physical anthropology, human evolutionary studies, skeletal biology, forensic anthropology and human biological variation in Europe and Africa. She has conducted fieldwork in many locations in Europe, Kenya and Australia. Her primary interest is in the development of methodologies to preserve and broadcast datasets to the physical anthropology

community using Computed Tomography, traditional radiology and human dental micro-anatomy, as well as in the distribution of the highest quality castings of human fossils to universities and museums all over the world. She teaches courses in forensic anthropology and has been engaged in many forensic case studies involving skeletal, burned, mutilated and mummified human remains.

Camilla Norman is the Project Officer of the Australian Archaeological Institute at Athens and Production Manager of the journal *Mediterranean Archaeology*. She was educated at the University of Sydney, completing a BA (honours) in 1994 and a PhD in 2013 on the Iron Age Stelae of Daunia, and has held numerous positions within that institute from Archaeology Slide Librarian to Sessional Lecturer. Her primary research interest is pre-Roman Italy and the Iron Age Adriatic. More recently, she has shifted her gaze towards Sicily. Camilla has been involved in numerous fieldwork projects across Italy and Greece, as well as in Jordan. She is a long-time member of the Dulwich Hill Bicycle Club.

Suzanne Onstine is Associate Professor of History at the University of Memphis, USA, and is Director of the University of Memphis Mission to Theban Tomb 16 (Panehsy), a Ramesside tomb in Luxor, Egypt, that was reused until the Hellenistic era.

Marc Orriols-Llonch earned his PhD in Egyptology from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain. He is currently Lecturer in Egyptology of the Master of Arts in Language and Civilization of Ancient Egypt at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain. His main line of research is gender studies, particularly on sexual intercourse.

Jacke Phillips is Research Associate in the Department of Art History and Archaeology, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and Visiting Fellow at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, University of Cambridge. She has been conducting fieldwork in Sudan since 1985, as well as in Ethiopia, Greece, Egypt and Qatar. Her interests focus on comparative typologies and cross-acculturations within Northeast Africa, the East Mediterranean and beyond the Red Sea and has published extensively on these and other topics.

Janet Picton is a Teaching Fellow at the Institute of Archaeology UCL and has excavated at Bronze Age sites in Israel, the UAE and Egypt. She is the Deputy Director of the Gurob Harem Palace Project and Director of the Gurob Textiles Project. She edits the London Diary for the Ancient Near East and is on the Steering Committee for the British

Association for Near Eastern Archaeology. Her main research interests are interconnections in the Bronze Age across the wider Near East, settlement archaeology, material culture, textiles and the textile economy. She has jointly edited *Living Images: Egyptian Funerary Portraits in the Petrie Museum* (2007) and *Unseen Images: Archive Photographs in the Petrie Museum* (2008), resulting from her long association with the Petrie Museum as student, volunteer, lecturer and Secretary of the Friends of the Petrie Museum.

Federica Pitzalis graduated in 2001 from the University of Rome ‘La Sapienza’ with a thesis in Etruscology and Italic Archaeology, followed, at the same university, by a Diploma of Specialization (2009) and the Doctorate in Research (XXth cycle – 2008). In 2011 she became a Research Fellow in the Dipartimento di Scienze dell’Antichità, publishing the monograph on women in eighth- to seventh-century central Italy, *La volontà meno apparente. Donne e società nell’Italia centrale tirrenica tra VIII e VII secolo a.C.* (award from L’Erma di Bretschneider, 2009). Since 2008, she has coordinated the study of data from the excavations of the University of Rome ‘La Sapienza’ at Populonia-Poggio del Telegrafo and Veii-Piazza d’Armi. In recent years, she has participated in various conferences and publications on the themes in gender archaeology, including G. Bartoloni, F. Pitzalis, ‘Mogli e Madri nella nascente aristocrazia tirrenica’, in *Dalla Nascita alla Morte: Antropologia e Archeologia a Confronto*. Incontro di studi in onore di Claude Lévi-Strauss, Atti del Convegno (Rome, 21 May 2010), 2011, pp. 63–86; G. Bartoloni, F. Pitzalis, *Il Matrimonio (Etrusco)*, in *ThesCRA* VI, 2011, pp. 95–100; F. Pitzalis, ‘Spose straniere in Etruria tra VIII e VII sec. a.C.’, in S. Rafanelli (ed.) *Navi di Bronzo. Dai Santuari Nuragici ai Tumuli Etruschi di Vetulonia*, catalogue of exhibition (Vetulonia, 16 July–6 November 2011), Viterbo 2011, pp. 97–99; G. Bartoloni, F. Pitzalis, ‘Le donne etrusche: Spose e madri’, in *Forma Urbis* XX. n. 3 (March 2015), pp. 20–22; F. Pitzalis, ‘L’artigianato tessile in Etruria. Il contributo femminile all’economia domestica tra VII e VII sec. a.C.’, in Ria Berg (ed.) *The Material Sides of Marriage: Female Goods and Women’s Economic Role in the Domestic Sphere in Greek, Roman and Byzantine Times* (conference, Rome, 21–23 November 2013), in press.

Lourdes Prados Torreira is Professor of Archaeology in the Department of Prehistory and Archaeology at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. Her research mainly focuses on protohistory of the Mediterranean and, in particular, on issues of religion and gender in Iberian culture (sixth to first centuries BC), as well as on archaeological heritage and museology.

John Prag was Keeper of Archaeology and then Professor of Archaeological Studies at Manchester Museum, 1969–2005. Now Hon. Professor at the Museum and Professor Emeritus of Classics in the University, his first love remains Greek art, but he has always been interested in cross-disciplinary work. He began collaborating with Richard Neave on facial reconstruction of archaeological skulls around 1979 and hasn't stopped since.

Gillian Ramsey researches Hellenistic-period social history, women's history, and political systems in the eastern Mediterranean and Near East. She is Assistant Professor of Classics at Campion College at the University of Regina.

Kathryn Lafrenz Samuels is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Maryland, USA. Her work combines sociocultural anthropology and archaeology to study the contemporary sociopolitical contexts of archaeological heritage. She is co-editor of *Making Roman Places: Past and Present* (2012, JRA Supplement Series) and *Heritage Keywords: Rhetoric and Redescription in Cultural Heritage* (2015).

Page Selinsky is a Lecturer in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at Princeton University and also in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, teaching courses in Human Evolution and Human Adaptation. Her area of expertise is human osteology and her research interests include bioarchaeology, human evolution and skeletal biology. In particular, she has done research on paleodemography and patterns of ageing in the human skeleton. She has studied and published the human remains from the sites of Gordion in Turkey and Hasanlu in northwestern Iran. She lives in a multispecies household with Ginger (hamster), Haven (cat) and Holly (dog).

Nancy Serwint teaches ancient art and archaeology at Arizona State University, USA. Her research focus has been the coroplastic art of ancient Cyprus with emphasis on technical issues and stylistic correspondences with material from the Near East. Since 1983, she has been working at ancient Marion and Arsinoe with the Princeton Cyprus expedition and is publishing the vast terracotta sculptural corpus from the site.

Cynthia W. Shelmerdine is Robert M. Armstrong centennial Professor of Classics, *emerita* at the University of Texas at Austin, and Adjunct Professor of Classics at Bowdoin College. Her research specialties are Aegean Bronze Age archaeology, and the language,

history and society of Mycenaean Greece. She is the loving mother of a very talented golden retriever.

Joanna S. Smith is a Consulting Scholar at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, USA. She earned her PhD and MA in Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology from Bryn Mawr College and her AB from Princeton University (both USA).

Louise Steel is a Reader in Mediterranean Archaeology at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, UK. She has worked extensively in Cyprus, where she is currently directing excavations at Arediou Vouppes. She is also the author of *Cyprus before History: From the Earliest Settlers to the End of the Bronze Age* and *Materiality and Consumption in the Bronze Age Mediterranean*.

Claudia E. Suter is an independent scholar associated with the Universities of Basel and Bern, Switzerland. She studies art and literature of the ancient Near East, with a focus on visual and verbal communication and ideologies of ruling classes.

Saana Svärd is an Adjunct Professor of Assyriology at the University of Helsinki, Finland, currently working as the principal investigator of the project 'Construction of gender in Mesopotamia from 934 to 330 BCE' (funded by the Academy of Finland). Her research interests relate to women, gender and continuity/change from first-millennium Mesopotamia to later historical periods.

Judith Swaddling did a Combined Classics and Classical Archaeology degree at University College London, followed by a PhD on the techniques, uses and marketing of bronze statues in antiquity. A two-year course on bronze-casting at the Sir John Cass School of Art provided practical insight into the challenges faced by ancient founders and sculptors. On taking up her post at the British Museum, her first major task was to organise an exhibition in 1980 on the ancient Olympic Games: centred on a specially-commissioned model of ancient Olympia, it attracted almost 350,000 visitors and triggered a travelling Olympics exhibition, while at the British Museum itself Judith has organised special displays on different aspects of the Games to coincide with each successive Olympics. Her book *The Ancient Olympic Games* in its various editions has continued to be a best seller for over 30 years. Over the same period Judith has also been curator of the Etruscan and pre-Roman collections at the British Museum, facilitating and supporting the work of hundreds of colleagues and researchers. She organised the permanent Etruscan exhibition which

opened in 1991 and has been responsible for a number of international conferences, the latest being in 2015, *An Etruscan Affair: The Impact of Early Etruscan Discoveries on European Culture*. As well as numerous articles and edited volumes, she has authored a British Museum volume of the *Corpus of Etruscan Mirrors* and co-authored *Etruscan Myths* with Larissa Bonfante, and *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa. The story of an Etruscan noblewoman*, with John Prag. In 2014 she collaborated with colleagues at the MAEC, Cortona, on the exhibition and catalogue *Seduzione Etrusca*. She is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and corresponding member of the Istituto Nazionale di Studi Etruschi ed Italici.

Deborah Sweeney has been lecturing in Egyptology in the Department of Archaeology and Ancient Near Eastern Cultures at Tel Aviv University, Israel, since 1996. She is writing a book on gender and religious practice at Deir el-Medîna.

Jacopo Tabolli received his PhD in Archaeology in 2012 from the University of Rome 'La Sapienza', where he is currently a Research Associate. Editor of *Officina Etruscologia*, his first book on the necropoleis of Narce during the Early Iron Age and the Early Orientalizing Period appeared in 2013 (*Narce tra la prima età del Ferro e L'Orientalizzante antico. L'abitato I Tufi e La Petrina*). He has published articles on the chronology and archaeology of the *Ager Faliscus* and Internal Etruria in the First Iron Age and Orientalizing period. In 2012 he founded the Museo Civico Archeologico-Virtuale di Narce (MAVNA) in Mazzano Romano and since then he has been the scientific director of the museum. He has been excavating for several years at Veii and is currently co-directing different excavation projects in the site of Narce at the sanctuary of Monte Li Santi-Le Rote and at the necropolis of Cavone di Monte Li Santi. He has recently been appointed as Visiting Research Fellow at the Trinity Long Room Hub at Trinity College Dublin.

Jean MacIntosh Turfa received her PhD in Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology and Latin from Bryn Mawr College, and has participated in excavations in the US and abroad, including Corinth and Poggio Civitate (Murlo). She has taught in the US and abroad, and has delivered the Lorant Lecture (British Museum) and Haynes Lecture (Oxford). She was a consultant for the Kyle M. Phillips Etruscan Gallery of the University of Pennsylvania Museum, where she is currently a Consulting Scholar. She has published extensively on various topics of Etruscan culture, including architecture and shipbuilding, trade and the Etruscan-Punic alliance, anatomical votives and health in Etruria, votive offerings and divination in

Etruscan and Italic religion, and has appeared on the *History* and *Discovery Channels*. Her books include *A Catalogue of the Etruscan Gallery of the University of Pennsylvania Museum* (2005), *Divining the Etruscan World: The Brontoscopic Calendar and Religious Practice* (2012) and *The Etruscan World* (editor, Routledge, 2013). She is proud to be a foreign member of the Istituto di Studi Etruschi ed Italici.

Joyce Tyldesley is a Senior Lecturer in Egyptology at the University of Manchester, UK, where she teaches a suite of online Egyptology courses and supervises PhD students. She is an Honorary Fellow of the Manchester Museum and President of Bolton Archaeology and Egyptology Society.

Jennifer M. Webb is an Adjunct Professor at La Trobe University, Australia and a Senior Research Associate at the University of Cyprus. She is also editor-in-chief of *Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology* (Uppsala, Sweden). She has excavated extensively in Cyprus. Her most recent book is *Ambelikou Aletri: Metallurgy and Pottery Production in Middle Bronze Age Cyprus*.

James Whitley is Professor of Mediterranean Archaeology at Cardiff University, and was (between 2002 and 2007) Director of the British School at Athens. Any tendency on his part to make lofty generalisations about women in any period are held in check by his wife and two daughters.

Nancy L. Wicker, Professor of Art History at the University of Mississippi, examines the reception of Roman art in Scandinavia during the Migration Period (fifth–sixth centuries AD). She participated in the Getty Foundation's 'Arts of Rome's Provinces' three-year seminar.

Assaf Yasur-Landau is Associate Professor in the Department of Maritime Civilizations at the University of Haifa, Israel. His interests include the study of interactions between the Aegean and the Levant, ancient economy and coastal archaeology. He co-directs excavations at tel Kabri and underwater surveys at Tel Dor and Tel Achziv. His publications include *The Philistines and Aegean Migration in the Late Bronze Age* (2010).

Marguerite Yon is the Directeur de Recherche at the centre national de la recherche scientifique (Maison de l'Orient, Lyon). Excavator of the ancient city of Salamis and the Phoenician sanctuaries of Kition Bamboula on Cyprus, from 1978 to 1998 she was director of la mission française de Ras Shamra-Ougarit (Syria). She has published

copiously on the archaeology of Cyprus and Syria.

John G. Younger is in the Classics Department at the University of Kansas and directs the Program in Jewish Studies. He has excavated widely and publishes in Aegean and classical art. He has three dogs (one is said to be visiting) and a cat.

Katharina Zinn is Senior Lecturer for Egyptian Archaeology and Heritage at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, UK. She teaches and publishes in her areas of interest (art, gender, identity, religion, Amarna, material culture, museums) using ancient Egypt as the civilisation which provides her case studies.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Stephanie Lynn Budin and Jean MacIntosh Turfa

This book was born from insomnia. Specifically, I was up as usual one morning at around 3 a.m. and started thinking about the latest book on “women” in “Antiquity” that had recently come out, and why I was dissatisfied with it. For one thing, “Antiquity” consisted primarily of Greece and Rome, giving exceptionally short shrift to the rest of the ancient world—places like Mesopotamia, Egypt, Israel, Cyprus, Etruria, and the Celts. For another thing, most of the “women” covered in the book were not actually women: they were literary characters, fictional constructs invented by men mostly for other men.

The situation was not simply frustrating for an ancient historian who is generally trying to avoid fiction in research and writing, it was almost insulting. So many books on the supposed topic of the female sex in the ancient world slighted real women in preference for myth and literature, as though real women simply could not be as interesting as Homer’s Andromakhê or Vergil’s Dido. And so, as it was 3 in the morning and all common sense was, unlike the present editor, fast asleep, I came up with the idea of this book, a book about *real* women—their bodies, names, occupations, interests, sex lives, religious functions, and legal capacities. The following day, the adrenaline still coursing through my system, I went out to lunch with Jean, plied her with beer, and asked her to co-edit the present volume. Jean said “Yes,” probably because she thought I would eventually come to my senses and get over it. Instead, we created the volume you are reading presently.

The “Antiquity” this book covers is that which is relevant to Jean’s and my areas of study: the ancient Near East, Egypt and Nubia, the Aegean, Italia, northern Africa, the Mediterranean Sea, and Europe. The book is very roughly chronological and geographically organized, starting with Mesopotamia and Egypt and working its way west from there. The individual sections are arranged from the physical to the more economic, with chronological considerations as well. In some cases, chapters are overviews of general topics, such as maternity or economic roles. In other instances, we included chapters on topics specific to a region, such as Mesopotamian tavern-keepers and

Daunian women's tattoos and female gladiators. Some chapters deal with women in specific locales, such as Urkesh and Gurob, and several focus on the notion of "Daily Life." The "coda" deals with a topic that crosses all boundaries and is still relevant in modern times. All in all, we wanted to present a survey that allows the reader to see several different aspects of women in the ancient world. All those women being real, down to their bones and teeth. Our catchword was "useful"; we want this book to be useful.

At no point in this book is the matter of "woman" problematized. Women are human beings with two X chromosomes, X/O chromosomes, or occasionally a human with a Y chromosome but resistant to testosterone. Both editors accept that biological sex exists, and that gender is a mutable social overlay associated, but not co-terminus, with biological sex. Anyone who has a problem with this should probably just put down the book right now.

I am still somewhat amazed that we were able to get as many of the authors as we did to contribute to this project (there were originally supposed to be more—the present book has only 74 of the original 86 chapters). And the authors are simply amazing. Some are scholars I have personally revered for ages¹ and who have achieved virtual divinity in their own fields, such as Rosalie David, Trevor Bryce, Gary Beckman, Jennifer Webb, Marguerite Yon, Carol Meyers, Peggy Day, John Younger, Cynthia Shelmerdine, Ed Cohen, Jean MacIntosh Turfa, and Miranda Aldhouse-Green. I am still stunned that these people were actually willing to work with me. Other authors are new scholars fresh from their dissertations, such as Josué J. Justel, Anne-Isabelle Langlois, Saana Svärd, Page Selinsky, Marc Orriols-Llonch, Jacopo Tabolli, Linnea Åshede. Their work here is simply extraordinary, and I am so pleased to have had the chance to meet and work with them. Please note: I mean to slight no one—ALL of our authors have been phenomenal to work with, and I cannot overstate how much I enjoyed, and how much I learned, working with them on this book. And I am truly grateful that they took my editorial micro-managing with such grace and patience. I truly thank, and love, every last one of our authors.

A few other people deserve a world of thanks for their help bringing this volume to light. Amy Davis-Poynter and Elizabeth Thomasson at Routledge were amazingly optimistic and patient about this book, and will hopefully remain so when I tell them that they really need additional volumes to cover Asia, Africa, and the New World as well. I am grateful to Agnès Garcia-Ventura for editing and feedback, and just generally for being such an excellent person with whom to discuss

gender things. I thank Jean for putting up with me during this project, even when I did my editorial best to alienate all of her friends (sorry about that!). Most of all, I thank and bless my husband, Paul Butler, who is responsible for most of the drawings in this book, most of the maps, far too much technical support, and any tiny scraps of sanity I have left (although he would probably point out that I didn't start with many to begin with). He has with patience and humor provided me with illustrations of full-frontal naked women, group orgies, masturbating Egyptian gods, and Neolithic genitalia. I literally could not survive without him.

Stephanie Lynn Budin

Many basic topics relating to the Near East and eastern Mediterranean have been made accessible here for general readers, such as daily life and economy (Ebeling, Meyers, Burke, Shelmerdine), the position of elite or royal women (Suter, Zinn, Tyldesley, Bryce, Svärd), the role of religion in female lives (Gadotti, Onstine, Collins, Michel, Meyers, Boëlle-Weber, Dillon), female sexuality (Budin, Orriols-Llonch), prostitution (Glazebrook Åshede), and motherhood (Couto-Ferreira, Feucht, Beckman, Budin, Hong). Additional topics cover the Neo-Elamite and Persian era (Brosius), the Philistine Levant (Yasur-Landau), Minoan culture (Younger), siege warfare and deportation (Day), and women in Cypriot art (Serwint).

Many more books could (and some should) be written to include topics that had to be omitted here: the gender-related and familial aspects of Punic infant sacrifice/burial traditions (touched on by Lafrenz Samuels and Ferrer Martin), the sociological implications of domestic abuse (as at Iranian Hasanlu, see Monge and Selinsky), the reconstruction of physical appearance and ancient concepts of beauty and health (Prag, Swaddling), the divide between women rulers and ruled (cf. Joyce Tyldesley on Egypt to appreciate how much we are missing for other groups). We are indeed fortunate to have chapters on the interpretation of human remains from Egypt (David), Nubia (Phillips), Cyprus (Lorentz), Greece (Fox, Whitley), Sardinia (Lo Schiavo and Milletti), the *Ager Faliscus* (De Lucia Brolli and Tabolli), and the Black Sea (Mayor). Fresh discoveries and special projects prevented Estelle Lazer and Marshall Becker from providing chapters here on Pompeian and Etruscan human remains: another field for future publications.

In addition to the women of the Near East and Classical Civilization, we cannot overlook their contemporaries in North Africa, Iberia, Gaul, and Europe, whether through synthetic analyses or the latest data

from excavations and technical studies. Even on topics such as “Etruscan Women,” there is much yet to be researched and written, and the chapters here on the lives of women in Italic tribes (Faliscans, Daunians—De Lucia Brolli and Tabolli, Norman), and in Nuragic Sardinia (Lo Schiavo and Milletti) are some of the first to address these fields, with surprising additions or corrections to make to the received opinions of past scholarship. New finds of artistic representations, and recent research and excavation in Etruria have yielded startling insights into the lives, childhoods (Bonfante) and death of women of both the ruling (Bartoloni and Pitzalis) and the servile classes (Benelli), as well as the cult opportunities open to Etruscan worshippers and priestesses (Edlund-Berry). The everyday activities of queens and commoners have become dramatically visible to us through new research into textile production, which touched every woman and girl in the Italian Mediterranean (Gleba). Through bodies (such as Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa, Swaddling) and circumstantial evidence (false teeth, votive models betraying surgical section, Turfa), we must reconstruct a picture at times similar to modern life, at others puzzlingly alien. The Roman successors of Italic and Etruscan civilization continued in this variegated situation, as seen in daily life (Hemelrijk), motherhood and family traditions (Larsson Lovén, Dolansky) and economic activities ranging from business administration (Becker) to prostitution (Åshede). (Contrast the findings for the Bronze Age Levant, Egypt, Cyprus and Aegean: Yon, McGeough, Meyers, Kelly-Buccellati, Justel, McCarthy, Langlois, Picton, Sweeney, Webb, Steel, Smith) or historical Greece (Cohen, Ramsey). The Roman system also elicits discussion of the effects of the military on women (Greene) and the tradition of female fighters (McCullough) . . . to be considered along with the earlier, Greek traditions of “Amazons” (Mayor.)

Even the prejudiced Roman literary sources pointed us to the importance of women’s activities and social power among the horsewomen of the Black Sea and adjacent regions (Mayor), the Iberian cultures of the Bronze and Iron Ages (Prados Torreira, Ferrer Martin), the wives and female rulers of the celtic groups of Europe (Aldhouse-Green), and, setting the stage for the medieval period, the women of Scandinavia (Wicker), just now beginning to emerge as their burials are being excavated.

Our scholars have shared the results of their own unique research projects or excavated discoveries, and/or their fresh surveys of the real evidence for women’s experience across a wide swathe of the ancient Old World. We are sure these realistic studies will interest you, and hope that our approach will provoke yet more investigation

of the real ancient world.

Jean MacIntosh Turfa

Chronological designations

Final note: Because we wanted the chapters here to be as useful as possible to everyone, not just people in the respective fields of Assyriology, Classics, Etruscology, etc., we have included introductory chapters at the beginning of each section (the Bronze and Iron Age periods are combined for the Levant and Greece), laying out the general chronology and chronological conventions, and a very brief historical summary. Please note that Bronze Age chronology is inevitably approximate, with numerous theories and datings available and used. We generally tried to stick to the “Middle Chronology” in these introductions, which basically means those Bronze Age dates where Hammurapi of Babylon reigned from c.1795–1750 BCE. You will see different dates both in these chapters and in alternate publications. Our goal here was simply to have a relatively coherent set of dates to help orient the reader, and a list of the shibboleths used in the various fields (e.g., Ur III in Mesopotamia, Second Intermediate Period in Egypt, Prepalatial Crete). We hope this proves useful and helpful.

Note

- 1 This is not intended to make anyone feel old!

PART I

Mesopotamia



Map by Paul C. Butler.

Chronology

2900–2334	Early Dynastic
2334–2159	Akkadian Empire
2159–2112	Gutian Invasions; Reign of Gudea of Lagas (c.2150–2125)
2112–2004	Third Dynasty of Ur
2017–1792	Isin-Larsa Period
1813–1781	Old Assyrian Empire (Age of Samsu-Addu)
1792–1595	Old Babylonian Empire (Age of

1595–1155	Hammurapi)
1365–1031	Kassite Era
934–612	Middle Assyrian Empire
614–539	Neo-Assyrian Empire
550–331	Neo-Babylonian Empire
331–64 BCE	Achaemenid Empire (Persia)
	Hellenistic/Parthian/Sassanian Period

Introduction

“The Land Between the Rivers,” as the Greeks dubbed what we now call Iraq and eastern Syria, vied with Egypt as the land with the earliest known writing system (late fourth millennium BCE), and is second only to Anatolia as the place where the world’s oldest elements of civilization appeared—group projects, specialized craft, and socio-political hierarchy. From the dawn of the Early Dynastic period, its political organization consisted of numerous independent city-states, each under the authority of a king—*Lú.GAL* or “Big Man” in Sumerian. Some of the most important cities were Ur, Uruk, Lagaš, Umma, and Kiš (š = sh). It was in this last city where tradition held that kingship first descended from heaven, and the title “King of Kiš” remained in the royal titulary since the third millennium. Already from the Early Dynastic period both prestige display and warfare were prominent in Mesopotamian society. The royal burials from Ur, dating to Early Dynastic III (c.2600), revealed copious gold and imported semi-precious stones adorning the body and coterie of the interred Lady Puabi. Texts and iconographic sources, such as the stele of Ur-Namma (end of the third millennium), depict ancient battles, often over water rights.

Unification of Mesopotamia first began under Lugalzagesi of Umma, who conquered the disparate city-states of southern Mesopotamia. This king was soon displaced by his own cup-bearer—Sargon of Akkad, beloved of the goddess, Ištar (or so claim the legends). As king, he established his capital at Akkad (probably close to modern Babylon), and it was under his rule that the cuneiform script used for the Sumerian language was adapted to express the Semitic language Akkadian, mostly by using existing logograms (images that mean an entire word) to represent phonemes (individual sounds) as well. It was also Sargon who first established his daughter as high priestess (*entu*) of the moon god Šin at Nippur. This Enheduanna would become the world’s first named poet.

The Akkadian Empire, which reached its zenith under Sargon's grandson, Naram-Sîn, fell to a combination of internal strife and external threat, notably the arrival of the "barbaric" (at least to the Mesopotamians) Guti to the East. After a brief period of relative, but not universal, mayhem (Lagaš thrived during this period under its king Gudea), unification and stability were brought back to Mesopotamia under the Third Dynasty of Ur (Ur III). Its first king—Ur-Namma—drove off the eastern barbarians. But the empire's true apogee was under its second king, Šulgi. It was he who truly unified Mesopotamia, establishing a religious capital at Nippur and its neighboring "customs center" at Puzriš-Dagan, modern Drehem. It was also he who reestablished the primacy of Sumerian culture, notably as a literary and religious language. Ur III eventually fell to internal strife, very much pertaining to Šulgi's Byzantine bureaucracy.

The first half of the second millennium is marked by the arrival of the Amorites, speakers of a Semitic language similar to Akkadian. To the north, Samsu-Addu (aka Šamši-Adad) established the Old Assyrian Empire, ruled from his capital in Ekallatum and from the city of Mari to the west, and co-ruled by his sons, Yasmah-Addu and Išme-Dagan. It was during this period that the Anatolian trading center (= *Karum*) Kaneš (modern Kültepe) was active, where Assyrian men would go to trade Assyrian wares, notably their wives' textiles, for Anatolian goods such as tin and silver.

To the south, the Old Babylonian Empire reached its zenith under Hammurapi (= Hammurabi), the king most famous for the law code that bears his name. As his Amorite forbear before him, he too conquered the Syrian city of Mari, extending his reach to the borders of Anatolia. Here the Semitic-speaking Mesopotamians came into contact with the Hurrians, founders of the Mitanni Empire, who spoke a language distinct from those of southern Mesopotamia (possibly related to the northern Urartian language). The Hurrians had been a significant power-player in Mesopotamia since the third millennium, when one of Naram-Sîn's daughters—Taram-Agade—married into the royal Hurrian family of Urkeš (modern Tell Mozan). The Hurrian element would continue to be a significant aspect of Mesopotamian and Levantine culture through the end of the Bronze Age.

The Old Babylonian Empire came to a close when the city was sacked by the Hittites, the Indo-European-speaking regime dominating central Anatolia in the latter half of the second millennium. The Hittites destroyed Babylon and carried off the (statue of the) city god Marduk as booty. The power vacuum was filled by the Kassites, a previously unknown population speaking a non-Semitic language.

Although originally declared a “Dark Age” in Mesopotamia by early Assyriologists, the Kassites appear to have ruled peacefully and stably for over four centuries. Included within this span is the so-called Amarna Age, the period of the mid-fourteenth century documented by the archival finds at Tell el-Amarna in Egypt (ancient Akhetaten). These documents reveal a Babylon with a stable economy based on silver and a stable monarchy based in part on highly political marriages and careful diplomacy.

To the north, the Assyrians overthrew the Mitanni Empire and filled the gap left in its wake, heralding in the Middle Assyrian Empire. The great powers of the Near East consisted of the Hittites, the Assyrians (having replaced Mitanni), Kassite Babylonia, and Egypt. Lesser powers of the region included the city-state of Ugarit on the coast and the Canaanites of the southern Levant. To the west, there were occasional references to a kingdom of Aḫḫiyawa, past the island kingdom of Alašiya (Cyprus).

The Kassite regime came to a crashing end like everything else at the end of the Bronze Age. Eventually, even Assyria lost its grip on power. It was not until the tenth century that Assyria, now the Neo-Assyrian Empire, reasserted its power under kings Aššurnāṣirpal II and Šalmaneser III. The apogee of the Empire occurred under its last four kings—Sargon II, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon, and Aššurbanipal, infamous for their roles in the biblical texts. It was under Sargon that Israel was destroyed in 721, while it was Sennacherib who trapped King Hezekiah of Judah within his fortress “like a bird in a cage.” The Empire came to its final end when the puppet kings of Babylon reasserted themselves on the world stage. A combined force of Babylonians, Medes, and Skythians defeated the land of Aššur in 612, inaugurating the rise of the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

The most (in)famous king of this regime was Nebuchadnezzar, who conquered Judea in 586 and deported the population into Mesopotamia—The Babylonian Captivity. The empire did not long survive this monarch, however. In 556 the pious king, Nabonidus, took power, a king more concerned with religion than the maintenance of his kingdom. In 539 Babylon was conquered by the combined Medeo-Persian Empire under the authority of King Cyrus “the Great.” Mesopotamia would remain under Achaemenid Persian rule until the conquest of Alexander “also the Great” in 331 BCE.

Syria became part of the Hellenistic Seleukid Empire for the last three centuries before the Common Era, while Mesopotamia, after a brief period of Hellenistic rule, reverted back to the Persians during

the Parthian and then Sassanian Empires. Syria became a Roman *provincia* after the victories of Pompey (who wanted to be “Great”) in 64 BCE, while sections of western Mesopotamia came under Roman rule under Emperor Trajan (briefly) and more permanently under Emperor Septimus Severus in the late second century CE. The region remained Roman/Byzantine until the Muslim conquests of the seventh century.

Suggested further reading

- Charpin, D. (1995) This history of ancient Mesopotamia: An overview.
In J. Sasson (ed.) *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Peabody, MA:
Henrickson Publishers, Inc., pp.807–829.
- Kuhrt, A. (1995) *The Ancient Near East c. 3000–330 BC*. London:
Routledge.
- Podany, A. (2013) *The Ancient Near East: A Very Short Introduction*.
Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

FEMALE SEXUALITY IN MESOPOTAMIA

Stephanie Lynn Budin

Sources

Erotic poetry—bridal songs and the royal love songs

One of the most explicit categories of evidence for early Mesopotamia are the second-millennium Sumerian love songs which set into verse the amorous relations between the young goddess Inan(n)a and her sweetheart Dumuzi, in modern scholarship often referred to as the *bridal songs*. The main methodological problem with this genre is that it potentially expresses not the quotidian sentiments of the average Sumerian girl, but the exclusive passions of a young goddess of sex. Furthermore, the ritual contexts in which such poetry was used/recited strongly suggests male authorship, thus making the sentiments expressed doubly removed from the realms of the feminine.

Nevertheless, Jerrold S. Cooper has argued that in spite of the sacred and public context of this corpus, the emotions expressed may well derive from a women's tradition and so present a female voice. As he has noted:

We have no information about Sumerian women's secular songs or poetry, nor would we expect to, given the nature of our sources . . . [But] [t]he odds are very good that if the Sumerian love songs are in a women's voice, there could have been an actual genre of women's love and wedding songs that served as their model.¹

That is to say, the songs hymned to Inanna and Dumuzi may derive from a women's oral tradition of erotic poetry, here deemed especially important because of the sex of the goddess so honored.²

Furthermore, the literally romantic sentiments expressed in the love songs contrast with the more aggressive and fertility oriented themes in what might be dubbed more masculine erotic poetry from

Mesopotamia. Mythological hymns, such as *Enki and the World Order*, *Enki and Ninhursag*, and *Enlil and Ninlil*, present male deities reveling in their own phallic prowess, orgasms, and the resultant life, be it aquatic, vegetal, or offspring.³ Likewise, as we shall see below, the magico-medical texts present what might be dubbed “foreplay” as rough demands for quick penetration. By contrast, as Cooper notes, the love songs present the female experience of sexuality as sensual, fully corporal (as opposed to merely genital), and utterly devoid of the resultant fertility (= pregnancy) so significant in the male expression of sexuality.⁴ For these reasons, it is likely that the Sumerian love songs do indeed present a feminine experience of sexuality.⁵

More secular in context, the royal love songs, also deriving from the second millennium and composed in Sumerian, are addressed not to a deity, but to the royal family, most specifically the king in his most erotic guise. Such songs may alternate in dialect between the less common EME-SAL and the more standard EME-GIR. There is on-going debate as to the relationship between these two “dialects.” Some have offered that EME-SAL is a dialect of Sumerian from a region where the cult of Inanna was particularly strong, and thus its associations with her hymns. Others suggest that EME-SAL was a stylized form of the standard dialect.⁶ But the most common current interpretation is that EME-SAL is a specifically *feminine* dialect of Sumerian, used in certain genres of literature, especially when the female voice is expressed. As noted by G. Rubio, “Perhaps the most important evidence to support the idea that eme-sal was a women’s language is the fact that eme-sal features actually appear in the speech of real women in the ‘Dialogues Between Two Women.’”⁷ As such, EME-GIR might be understood to be simultaneously “standard” and “masculine,” while EME-SAL is feminine in nature.⁸ If this be the case (and more research is needed), then the dialogues of the royal love songs might be understood as conversations between the king and female members of his household. Thus we read the words supposedly sung by Queen Kubātum to her husband after the birth of their first child:

A gold ring and a ring of silver—the lord gave me a present!

O lord! Your present enhances the H1.L1 (sex appeal) so that you
look at me!

O Šu-Suen, your things enhance the H1.L1, so that you look at
me!⁹

Gwendolyn Leick has suggested that the royal love songs originated in the competitive context of the polygynous royal household, where the

king's wives were in competition for their lord's affections.

Polygyny fosters sexual competition to win the favours of the “master”, and expertise in erotic matters is an important factor . . . Some of the love-songs, especially when they are directed at the king, could be understood as a manifestation of seduction through poetic artifice. Others, such as those which are set in the form of a dialogue between lovers, are a stylistic variation of the same scenario . . . We know that royal wives “composed”, or at least commissioned, literary compositions . . . I would like to believe that they represent the “true” voice of Sumerian women.¹⁰

Magico-medical texts

The Mesopotamians had an extensive corpus of texts pertaining to health and healing. These include anatomical lexica, medical diagnostic and prognosis documents, identification of demons who could afflict the human body, and both medical and magical (different to us, not them) cures for these various and sundry ailments and afflictions. Much like the Mesopotamian law codes, entries in the lists of ailments begin with a *šumma*—“If”—clause, list the symptoms, and provide the diagnosis at the end. Thus:

If the top of his head continually feels as if split in two all day/night long, he continually has sexual desires, and the bedding is continually turned around him, (and) like one who lays himself down on top of a woman he has an erection, [it is] the “hand” of Ardat Lili [a demon].¹¹

Some texts dealt more extensively with sexual matters than others. Notable in this instance are the *ša.ZI.GA* (Akkadian *nīš libbi*), or “rising of the ‘heart’” texts which mainly dealt with erectile dysfunction.¹² They date to the Middle Babylonian period and have come to light in both Mesopotamia and the Hittite capital at Boğaköy.¹³ From a medical perspective, their therapies might include rubbing the penis and lower body with an ointment made of plant oil and iron.¹⁴ Magically, and psychologically, the female partner recites arousing incantations, often using animal imagery. Thus “Get an erection like a wild bull!” or “Make love to me with the love-making of a wolf!”¹⁵ Such texts provide data on what could go wrong in the sexual realm, and what was believed to fix such problems.

More in the realms of magic than medicine were the love (*râmu*) and hate (*zêru*) spells, dating as far back as the Old Akkadian period.¹⁶ The former attracted a beloved; the latter broke-up a couple, or dissuaded possible liaisons. As noted by F. A. M. Wiggermann, some of the regular activities of the *āšipu* (magic-user) pertained to “love of a man for a woman,” “love of a woman for a man,” and “love of a man

for a man.”¹⁷ Both sexes could take the initiative in love magic, although there remains no evidence for lesbianism in this regard (or any other from Mesopotamia).

Omen texts

The Mesopotamians took a deep interest in divination, the king especially so, and thus numerous omen texts pertaining to all aspects of reality have come down to us from antiquity. Like the medical texts mentioned above, entries in the omen texts begin with *šumma* clauses, describe the scenario in question, and then offer the resultant prognosis. Thus, “If a man ejaculates in his dream and is spattered with his semen, that man will find riches; he will have financial gain.”¹⁸

The sex omens are a subset of the first-millennium *Šumma Ālu* series —“If a city . . .”, appearing on tablets 103 and 104. Tablet 103 has 32 omens pertaining to sexual acts with women (the subject of the omens is always assumed to be male), including different sexual positions. Tablet 104 contains 38 omens and documents a broader spectrum of sexual behaviors, including homoerotic acts and masturbation.¹⁹ Unfortunately, tablet 103 remains unpublished.

Legal codes

The legal codes provide data on the social construct of sexual norms. In them, we see how the Mesopotamians viewed matters such as adultery and rape, as well as issues of marriage, divorce, barrenness, and infertility. For a general introduction to these codes and how they pertained to women, see Josué Justel’s chapter in this volume.

Iconography

At first glance it appears that Mesopotamia left the modern world an embarrassment of riches when it comes to erotic iconography. Images of nude females/goddesses abound in terracotta and the glyptic, while sex scenes in various poses were common in clay and lead. This latter category might be divided into three subcategories. First were the images of *coitus a tergo*, where a man is shown penetrating a woman from behind while she herself bends over to drink beer from a vat through a straw. Such iconography first appeared at the end of the third millennium in Nippur.²⁰ The second subcategory, also in the

terracotta repertoire and mainly prominent in the early Old Babylonian period, shows a pair of lovers (male and female) making love while facing each other, often shown upon a rectangular bed. Here the female has her legs wrapped around the male, albeit they are shown in profile or, more awkwardly, criss-crossed upon the bed. Finally, there were the lead reliefs dating exclusively to the Middle Assyrian period. Of the approximately 20 that have come to light, 17 plus 1 mold were discovered in the ruins of the palace at Aššur, while an additional 2 were found at Kar Tukulti Ninurta. Due to a lack of good communication skills on the part of the excavator, Walter Andrae—who assumed that the plaques depicted orgiastic sex with sacred prostitutes—for a long time it was believed that the plaques came from the temple of Ištar.²¹

All in all, there is actually less iconographic erotica from Mesopotamia than one might expect: Julia Assante reckoned approximately 72 images from the late third millennium through the first.²² Furthermore, one must contend with the fact that these images had symbolic meanings and practical-magical uses that influenced their iconography more so than any attempts at necessarily portraying reality. For example, in her analysis of the *coitus a tergo* scenes, Assante argues that both aspects of the sex-cum-drinking iconography appeal to the goddess Inanna/Ištar, who claims in one of her hymns of self-praise to be a “loving *ḫarimtu* in the tavern”²³ (on the *ḫarimtu*, see below). The combination of joyful sexuality and beer consumption thus draws the goddess’s gaze and goodwill, serving as a source of blessing for the context in which such a terracotta was displayed.²⁴ By contrast, concerning the Middle Assyrian lead plaques, Assante notes that, “The truth is, such lead reliefs show foreign captives performing bizarre sexual acts for Assyrian viewers and thus carry strong political messages that equate sex and visual possession with territorial conquest.”²⁵

The erotic iconography cannot be used as simple, *de facto* portrayals of sex in Mesopotamia. Nevertheless, they might be used to consider the norms and extremes of copulation, especially when considered side by side with the written data.

Terminology

Virginity

The ancient Near Eastern languages had no word for a person who had not had sex—a physical virgin. The vocabulary in the

Mesopotamian, Levantine, and biblical texts refer only to age grades. Words such as Sumerian KI.SIKIL.TUR or Akkadian *batultu* or (w)*ardatu* referred to adolescent, unmarried females, just as *eṭlu* and *šaḥurtu* referred to adolescent, unmarried males. To express our concept of physical virgin, literary and legal texts had to enumerate what the person had not done: no kissing, no sex, no spouse. However, as girls before marriage were expected to be sexually innocent, the terminology for “maiden” was probably understood to refer to physical virginity as well, and thus the terms *batultu* and *ardatu* are typically taken as “virgin” or “maiden” in the texts.²⁶

*Love, sex, and sex appeal*²⁷

As noted by Joan Goodnick Westenholz in her essay on “Love lyrics from the Ancient Near East”:

In the Ancient Near East, love was more than a passing emotion individuals felt for each other; it was not divided between the sacred and the profane, human and divine, emotional and physical. Love engulfed men and women, gods and worshippers, rulers and ruled, parents and children. Further, love, the emotion, and sexuality, the physical attraction, that occur between two individuals (gender distinction not being particularly important) were not perceived as separate forces.²⁸

The basic word for “(to) love” in Mesopotamia was KI.Aḡ in Sumerian, *rāmu* in Akkadian. The word could imply erotic love, but also the love felt by a human for a deity, or even the love a king might feel for justice. A synonym is the Sumerian HI.LI KAR, translated into Akkadian as *menû*, “to love, to be attracted to.” AL DUG = *erēšu* is “to desire.”

HI.LI KAR itself begins with the cuneiform signs for HI.LI—Akkadian *kuzbu*—which refers to luxuriousness, to pleasure, and thus contains the notion of “sex appeal.” HI.LI/*kuzbu* pertains both to the deities, notably Inanna/Ištar, and to mortals.

If one’s *kuzbu* were sufficient, it might lead to LA.LA, Akkadian *lalû* or *dādu*—lust, which itself might lead to the verb ḡEŠ.DU(G) = *reḥû*—to copulate. The Sumerian form of the word is formed by the signs ḡEŠ₃, “penis,” and DUG₄, “to speak”; combined they have the meaning “to pour out,” thus “to inseminate,” thus “to make love to.” The ḡEŠ.DUG verb was typically followed in the Sumerian literature by the verb NE SUB = *našāqu*, “to kiss.” The fact that the (typically male) lover NE SUBed his beloved only after he ḡEŠ.DUGed her²⁹ may have a lot to say about the Mesopotamian male construct of sexuality and the role of foreplay therein.

Vulva

The Mesopotamians were explicit in their designation of anatomical parts, both in Sumerian and Akkadian. Sumerian GAL₄.LA = Akkadian *ūru* was the standard word for the female genitalia, including the labia, clitoris, and vagina together. Sumerian equivalents were GURUŠ-GARAŠ and, less commonly, BE₅.EN.ZE₂.ER and MUG₂; the Akkadian synonyms are *ḫurdatu*, *hurri-dādu*, and especially *biššūru*, notably when referring to the vagina.³⁰ The GAL₄ sign is the cuneiform rendering of the pubic triangle, and is the sign used to indicate MUNUS —“woman” for feminine names.

More specifically, DIŠ.UR = *ḫanduttu* may refer to the clitoris (although this is not certain). The Sumerian terms PA.PAḫ (“sanctuary”), KUR.PA.PAḫ (“sanctuary mound”), and MĪN.É (“twin temple”) refer either to the labia themselves or the labia plus vagina. Their Akkadian equivalent for labia is *lipiššatu*, with *biššūru* referring to the vagina as noted above. As noted by Cooper, in the Manungal letter the goddess “opens her *lipiššatu* and asks that her *ḫanduttu* be stroked.”³¹

The vulva was clearly the focus of erotic attention in Mesopotamia. As noted by Ilona Zsolnay, “Derrières, penises, and bosoms are far less the subject of erotic verse than vaginas.”³²

Sexual desire

Mesopotamian literature emphasizes the pleasurable aspects of female sexuality. The bridal songs relate Inanna/Ištar’s desire for her groom, and her fantasies of what they will do together in bed. The love songs proclaim the female’s sexual anticipation and fulfillment. Often these poems contain the girl’s praise of her sexual attributes, noting how her breasts and pubic hair have grown. Trysts may occur in the garden, as in the biblical *Song of Songs*, or in the girl’s bed, with the permission of her parents. Thus we read of King Šu-Suen (*Šu-Suen* B):

Man of my heart, my beloved one,

O! that to make your charms, which are sweetness, are honey,
still more sweet—

Lad of my heart, my beloved one,

O! that to make your charms, which are sweetness, are honey,

still more sweet!

You, my own lord and sergeant at arms would march against me!

Man, I would flee from you—into the bedroom!

O! that you would do all the sweet things to me,

My sweet, dear one, you bring that which will be honey sweet!

In the bedroom's honey-sweet corner

Let us enjoy over and over your HILLI and sweetness!

. . .

Man who has become attracted to me,

Speak to my mother, she would let you!

She has worn down my father.

She knows where you would be happy;

To sleep, love, in our house until morning;

She knows where your heart would rejoice,

To sleep, lad, in our house until morning.

When you fell in love with me

Could you but have done, lad, your sweet thing to me!

O! my lord and good spirit, my lord and guardian angel,

My Šu-Suen, who does Enlil's heart good,

The place where, could you but do your sweet thing to me,

Where, could you but—like honey—put in your sweetness!

O squeeze it in there for me, as flour into the measuring cup!

O pound and pound it in there for me, as flour into the old, dry
measuring cup!³³

That the female achieved fulfillment in orgasm is also preserved in the poetry, where we read:

The “brother”³⁴ brought me into his house,

He lay me down on the honey-fragrant bed,
And when my dear sweet-heart had lain very close to me,
One-by-one, making tongue, one-by-one,
My fair faced “brother” did fifty.
As if dumb struck, I moved toward him,
Trembling below, I pushed quietly to him.
My “brother,” hand placed on his thigh,
My dear sweet-heart, so did I pass the time there.³⁵

Sexual pleasure, as well as maternity, was deemed so important for females in Mesopotamia that those denied these pleasures turned into Lilitu or Ardat-Lilî demons, maleficent ghosts who broke into homes to terrorize young women and men. The description given in the medical corpus defines the Ardat-Lilî such:

Ardat-Lilî slips in a man's window; young girl not fated (to be married); young woman who was never impregnated like a woman; young woman who was never deflowered like a woman; young girl who never experienced sexual pleasure in her husband's lap; young girl who never removed a garment in her husband's lap; young woman whose garment-pin a good man never loosened; young woman in whose breasts there never was milk, who cries in pain; young girl who was never filled with sexual pleasure in the lap of a young man, who never had her fill of desire.³⁶

As noted above, the “hand” of Ardat-Lilî sickened her victims, often in a sexual fashion, such as the young man with headaches and priapism.

Sexual longing resided not merely in the realm of the dead: Living people also suffered heartache (and still do). Love sickness (*muruş rami*) was regarded as an actual ailment in the Mesopotamian medical texts, which dutifully recorded symptoms, prognoses, and even possible cures. Thus we read for both males and females that:

If he continually flutters about, he is continually insolent, he continually talks with himself (and) he continually laughs for no reason, he is sick with love sickness; it is the same for a man and a woman. If depression continually falls upon him, his breath is continually short, he eats bread (and) drinks water/beer but it does not agree with him, he says, “Ua, my heart!” and he is dejected, he is sick with love sickness; it is the same for a man and a woman.³⁷

Since approximately 2250 BCE, spells existed to solve the problem of unrequited love, a.k.a. love charms, which were for both males and females.³⁸ Such rituals included both an incantation and ritual actions

to bind the reluctant beloved. An incantation for a woman desiring a man:

I have hit you on the head, I have driven you out of your mind!

Set your thinking to my thinking

Set your reason to my reason!

I hold you in restraint, as Ištar held Dumuzi,

(As) liquor binds him who drinks her.

I have bound you with my mouth for breaths,

With my vulva for urination,

With my mouth for spitting,

With my vulva for urination.

May no rival come to you!

Dog is crouching, pig is crouching,

You too keep crouching on my thighs!³⁹

Just as unrequited love could lead to physical symptoms, so too could lack of sexual enthusiasm. The ša.ZI.GA texts, which mostly focus on male sexual problems, make one reference to female frigidity, “to [bring about] sexual excitement for a woman.”⁴⁰ Unfortunately, the text breaks here, so we are left with our own creativity and imagination.

Types of sex

Vaginal

The mere fact that the Mesopotamians managed to reproduce successfully is clear evidence that they engaged in vaginal intercourse. Frequent reference in the love songs to females either divine (Inanna) or mortal reveling in their vulvae show the importance of the female genitals in women’s sexual pleasure. A common motif in the poetry is that such-and-such a woman’s vulva is “sweet like beer,”⁴¹ and, as noted in the love charm above, the vulva was a primary agent of sexual attraction. So much is confirmed in the sex omens, where the text claims, “If a man repeatedly stares at his woman’s vagina, his health will be good; he will lay his hands on whatever is not his.”⁴²

Nevertheless, there appears to have been a general disapproval (on the part of males?) for female superior sex. The same corpus of omens claims that, “If a man, a woman mounts him, that woman will take his vigor; for one month he will not have a personal god.”⁴³ Other positions referred to in tablet 103 of *Šumma ālu* have the female standing, bent over (much as with the drinking terracottas), lying on her back, seated upon a chair, or even in a doorway, on a boat, or in an animal pen.⁴⁴

Cunnilingus

The idea that a woman’s vulva could be “sweet like beer” may serve as a reference to cunnilingus. One of the most explicit such references appears in the royal love song to Šu-Suen mentioned above. Here of the bar-keep Il-ummiya the text proclaims:

The beer of my . . . Il-ummiya, the “tapstress” is sweet!

And her vulva is sweet like beer—and her beer is sweet!

And her vulva is sweet like her mouth and her beer is sweet!

Her *kašbir*-beer and her (regular) beer are sweet.⁴⁵

Fellatio(?)

A possible (but uncertain) reference to fellatio appears in the Sumerian tale of *Inanna and Enki*. Here, the god, drunk, gives away the core elements of civilization—the ME—to Inanna. Along with various priesthoods and musical instruments are sexual intercourse and ̑EŠ₃.KI[?].SU.UB = “kissing the penis.”⁴⁶ This, plus possible allusions to fellatio in the *coitus a tergo* drinking scenes, are the sole evidence for female reciprocation of the above-mentioned cunnilingus from Mesopotamia.

Anal

More evidence exists for anal intercourse. There is no condemnation of heterosexual anal intercourse in the Mesopotamian documents, although it is presented as being less fulfilling than genital intercourse. In the love poem to Šu-Suen, reference is made to Il-ummiya’s *kašbir*-beer, generally recognized as inferior to “regular” beer. In this we may have reference to Il-ummiya’s *bāb šuburri*—the

“anal door” as opposed to her *bāb ūri*, the “genital door.”

The inferior quality of anal sex to vaginal sex also appears in the Akkadian magico-medical texts, where one finds a curse that the desired man’s penis “strike (the rival) woman so-and-so in the anus, so that he cannot satisfy himself with her”:

I am the daughter of Ningirsu, the releaser. My mother is a releaser; my father is a releaser. I who have come, I really can release. May the penis of ^mPN be a stick of *martū*-wood. May it “kill” the anus of ^fPN; may he never be sated with her charms.⁴⁷

An unusually practical omen text claims: “If a man ‘goes’ to the rectum of a woman . . . from out of the rectum he ‘goes’ to the vagina —(demon) Saghulhazu will enter her; either the male or the female will die.”⁴⁸

Helping the menfolk get it up

As with all medical issues, erectile dysfunction was treated with a combination of magic and medicine. In both aspects, the female was instrumental in helping to provide a cure, both in applying the medicinal potions to her lover and possibly herself, and in reciting the spells necessary to effect an erection. Basically, she talked dirty. The ša.ZI.GA texts were extensive in their cataloguing of both paths to recovery (e.g.):

Let the wind blow; let the mountains “quake.” Let the clouds gather; let the raindrops fall. Let the donkey stiffen up so that he can mount the jenny; let the gazelle buck repeatedly mount the she-goat of the plain. May a goat buck be tied at the head of my bed; may a ram be tied at the foot of my bed. The one at the head of my bed get it up! Love me! The one at the foot of my bed get it up! Adore me! My genitals are the genitals of a bitch; his penis is the penis of a dog. (May my genitals hold his penis fast) as the genitals of a bitch hold fast the penis of a dog.

Its ritual: You pour powdered magnetic hematite (and) powdered iron {into} pūru-oil. You recite the recitation seven times over it. If the “man” repeatedly rubs his “penis” (and) the woman her vulva (with it), he “should be able to mount (her) repeatedly.”⁴⁹

If the cures worked properly, “(if) the man’s and the woman’s hearts both wish,” then the remedies should have the effect of increasing sexual pleasure for both parties: “the sexual parts of the man and woman you stroke, then they will find satisfaction together.”⁵⁰

Sex and the law

One might argue that the law codes came into play when men attempted to control women's sexuality (in a way that did not involve magic). It was in the law codes that the patriarchal Mesopotamian societies decreed what was and was not acceptable regarding sexual access to women's bodies, be this in terms of marriage, divorce, adultery, or rape.

The language of the codes (and often outside of the codes) makes it clear that females were seen as the passive objects of their own sexuality. That is to say, the verbs that referred to sexual acts almost exclusively had males as subjects when in the active voice, female only when passive. Thus *naqābu* ("to deflower, to rape"), *nāku* ("to fornicate"), *šuhḥû* (to engage in illicit sexual intercourse) have male subjects with women as the objects of the verbs.⁵¹ In spite of this apparent passivity, females were held strictly accountable for sexual misconduct, often more so than their male "partners."

Adultery

A constant in Mesopotamian law is that wives were harshly punished for adultery, a fact that stands in stark contrast to the varying degrees of punishment (or not) faced by their paramours. In the Laws of Ur-Namma, dating to c.2100 BCE, it is declared in §7 that, "If the spouse of a young-man on her own initiative pursues a man and has sexual intercourse with him, they shall kill that woman; that male shall be given his freedom."⁵²

§28 of the Laws of Ešnunna (c.1800 BCE) equally call for the death of a formally married wife, "the day she is seized in the lap of a man, she shall die, she will not live."⁵³ By contrast, the roughly contemporary Laws of Hammurapi (c.1750) offer the choice of life or death to the accused woman's husband. §129 declares that:

If the wife-of-a-man should be seized lying with another male: They will bind them and cast them into the water [the River Ordeal]; if the husband of the wife allows his wife to live, then the king will allow his slave to live.⁵⁴

By the time of the Middle Assyrian Laws (MAL A, c.1050 BCE), the regulation of adultery had become more refined. §13 declares that the wife who visits a man in his own home for illicit sex will be killed along with her lover, whereas §14 declares that should their tryst occur in more neutral territory (such as an inn), the woman's husband

is free to punish both parties as he sees fit. If, according to §15, the husband catches wife and lover *in flagrante delicto*, he is free to kill both of them with no further consequences. However, if it is made clear that the wife specifically seduced the lover, the man will be regarded as blameless, and the husband may impose whatever penalty upon his wife he chooses (§16).

Martha Roth has noted that no such adultery clauses were present in the Neo-Babylonian laws. Instead, ten marriage contracts dating between 635 and 523 BCE contain a clause declaring that, should the wife be discovered (passive voice again) with another man, “she will die by the iron dagger.”⁵⁵ This would seem to indicate that the death penalty was automatic in such circumstances, denying the husband any opportunity to spare his spouse.

Rape

Females’ passivity was duly recognized in cases of rape, both for virgins and for wives. What differed over time was how the rapist was treated by the laws. Much as was the case with adultery, punishments varied throughout the codes from mandatory sentencing including the death penalty to allowing the victim’s father or husband to decide the fate. Thus in the Code of Hammurapi it is stipulated that:

§130: If a man pins down the wife-of-a-man who has not known a male and who resides in her father’s house (i.e. a fiancée), and they seize him lying in her lap: that man will be killed, that woman will be released.⁵⁶

By extreme contrast, the same scenario in the Middle Assyrian Laws provoked the following:

§55: If a man forcibly seizes and rapes a maiden who is residing in her father’s house, . . . who is not spoken for, whose [womb(?)] is not opened, who is not taken (in marriage), and against whose father’s house there is no outstanding claim—whether (the rape occurs) within the city, or in the countryside, or at night, whether in the main thoroughfare, or in a granary, or during the city festival: the father of the maiden shall take the wife of the maiden’s rapist and give her over to be raped; he shall not return her to her husband, he shall take her (for himself). The father shall give his daughter, she who was the victim of the rape, to her rapist in *ahuzzatu* [marriage of a non-virgin]. If (the rapist) has no wife: the rapist shall give “triple” the silver as the value of the maiden to her father; her rapist shall take her (in marriage); he shall not reject her. If the father does not desire this: he shall accept “triple” silver for the maiden, and he shall give his daughter (in marriage) to whomever he chooses.⁵⁷

Even outside of the law codes the culpability of the rapist was socially recognized, and one way or another his karma was bound to catch up

with him. Thus we find in the sex omens: “If a man seizes a woman in the crossroads and has sexual relations [with her], that man will not prosper; either the hand of his god or the hand of the king will catch him.”⁵⁸

The Ḫarimtu question

One interminable debate in Near Eastern studies that will continue long after the sun has swallowed the rest of the solar system is the matter of prostitution. As best summarized by Martha Roth:

The Mesopotamia[n] world had a definite and appropriate place for women who exchanged sexual favors for pecuniary considerations, that is, “prostitutes.” This simple statement is not uncontested. Although Lambert stated in 1992 that “there is one word for ‘prostitute’ which is not in doubt, the Babylo-assyrian *harimtu*, which corresponds to the Sumerian *kar-kid*” . . . in her 1998 work Assante argued that the *kar.kid/harimtu* is not (or not only) a prostitute, and that she is “more than” Westenholz’s “[a] wom[a]n whose sexuality is not regulated”: she is . . . the not-the-daughter, the not-the-wife, “in modern parlance ‘the single woman’.”⁵⁹

Furthermore, as Roth went on to note:

In the vast corpus of millions of legal, administrative, economic, and literary cuneiform texts from Mesopotamia, prostitution—that is, sex in exchange for wealth—is clearly documentable in only one passage: a song (or songs) addressed to the goddess Inanna (as Nanaja).⁶⁰

Even the qualification of “clearly” must be reconsidered in light of the current translation of the passage in question: “My resting against the wall is one lamb. My bending over is one and a half giḡ. Do not dig a canal, let me be your canal. Do not plough a field, let me be your field.”⁶¹ As noted by Assante, the word “*ḫarimtu*” does not appear in this passage.⁶²

In short, the Mesopotamians did not write much—anything—about the profession of prostitution. This absolute lack of data, however, has not in any way restrained a century’s worth of Assyriologists *inter alia* from writing reams about the Whore of Babylon and her horde of whore minions. For decades, almost every professional title ascribed to a female in either Sumerian or Akkadian was translated as “(sacred) prostitute,” apparently on the grounds that women could serve no other function in the business world.

Although the notion of the *sacred* prostitute is now dying (see most recently and completely Budin 2008), the specter of the secular prostitute—the KAR.KID/ḫarimtu—still haunts the tablets of

Assyriology. As noted by Roth, it is this word that continues to be translated as “prostitute” and to serve as evidence for prostitution in Mesopotamia. However, an alternative translation has been proposed by Julia Assante, whereby the words KAR.KID/ḫarimtu refer not to prostitution or to any profession, but rather a social status—that of a female who is not under the authority of either a father or a husband, in short: the single, liberated woman.

The erotic Ḫarimtu

The notion that the ḫarimtu (and KAR.KID) was a specifically sexual entity came about in part because of the tendency mentioned above to identify ALL Mesopotamian females as sexual, and in part because the role of the ḫarimtu in literature was strongly sexualized. The most famous ḫarimtu was Šamhat from the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, she who was brought to “tame” Enkidu through a week’s worth of constant sexual intercourse (for which, please note, she received no recompense, monetary or otherwise). As mentioned above in the section on iconography, the goddess Inanna/Ištar herself claimed:

When I sit at the door of the tavern,

I am a KAR.KID who known the man (Sumerian)—or—

I am a loving ḫarimtu (Akkadian).⁶³

The practical Ḫarimtu

However, as discussed at length by Assante, the non-literary, non-fictional works that deal with the KAR.KID/ ḫarimtu have nothing to do with eroticism, and little to do with sex. Instead, ḫarimtu appear in legal documents pertaining to adoption and marriage, as well as professional lists where ḫarimtu status is associated with certain professional categories.

In the adoption contracts, girls adopted exclusively by non-married females have the potential of becoming ḫarimtu. One such Old Babylonian document declares that the adopted daughter will become a ḫarimtu and will care for her adoptive mother. A Middle Babylonian adoption contract from Nippur has an unmarried woman adopt a daughter from the girl’s father. The contract stipulates that the adoptive mother may give the girl away in marriage, or make her a ḫarimtu, but she may not reduce the girl to slavery.⁶⁴ A similar

arrangement appears in an adoption contract from Nuzi, wherein the wealthy but apparently unmarried woman, Tulpunnaya, adopts the girl, Ši-Damqat, whom, as stipulated by the contract, she may marry off or make a *ḫarimtu*. In either case, she will care for Ši-damqat for life.⁶⁵ Put simply, *ḫarimūtu* status appears exclusively when no father figure is present, and is consistently contrasted with the status of wife (and slave!).

The contrast with wifely status also appears in the Middle Assyrian Laws. A §40 states:

A wife or a [widow] or [Assyrian] women who go out into the main thoroughfare [shall not have] their heads [bare]. Daughters of a man [with] either a . . . -cloth or garments of . . . shall be veiled, . . . their heads . . . When they go about . . . in the main thoroughfare during the daytime, they shall veil themselves. A concubine who goes about in the main thoroughfare with her mistress is to be veiled. A *qadiltu* [= *qadištu*] whom a husband has taken [in marriage] is to be veiled in the main thoroughfare, but one whom a husband has not taken is to have her head bare in the main thoroughfare; she shall not veil herself. A *ḫarimtu* shall not veil herself, her head shall be bare.⁶⁶

Once again, the status of the *ḫarimtu* is contrasted with that of the wife or daughter-of-a-man. Like the specifically unmarried *qadiltu*, she is unveiled.

A Neo-Assyrian document in Sumerian probably deriving from the Old Babylonian period sheds considerable light on the status of the *ḫarimtu* (MSL I 96–97: 23–28):

He brought her in from the street [not a family household] in
her status as a KAR.KID.

He married her in her status as a KAR.KID.

He gave her back her tavern

He had her enter his house.

He arranged her marriage contract.

He carried in her marriage gift.⁶⁷

Once again, we see that the *ḫarimtu* has no paternal household, as the husband does not take her from her father's house as is normally stipulated in marriage documents. It is stated that the husband arranged the marriage contract; there is no mention of the bride's family, father, or mother. Yet again, the father is absent. Finally, we note that the bride owns a tavern, ownership of which the husband

does not claim upon marriage to the KAR.KID. The wife will continue her previous profession—restaurant owner and operator—after her marriage. All that changes is her status as *ḫarimtu*, as she is now a married woman.

Other KAR.KID (designated GÉME.KAR.KID) appear in a ration list from Šuruppak, where they were associated with the NU.GIG priestesses and appear to have served as musicians and singers for the palace.⁶⁸ There is no evidence of any sexual function.

Finally, we might consider §27 of the Laws of Lipit-Ištar:

If a man's spouse does not bear him a son and a *ḫarimtu* "from the street" does bear him a son: he shall give grain rations, oil rations, and wool rations to the *ḫarimtu*. The son whom the *ḫarimtu* bears to him is his heir. As long as his spouse is living, the *ḫarimtu* shall not reside in the house with the first-spouse.⁶⁹

If the *ḫarimtu* were in fact a prostitute, it is unlikely that the paternity of any child she bore could be determined, and certainly not to the point that a son would be designated a citizen's heir. By contrast, if a man took a *ḫarimtu* as a(n exclusive) paramour, his relationship to the offspring would be readily recognizable and socially accepted. The *ḫarimtu* herself would have no other male line (father, husband) to claim rights over the child.

Although the literary evidence emphasizes the erotic nature of the unregulated and thus sexually liberated *ḫarimtu*, **especially** when that *ḫarimtu* happens to be Ištar, the weight of the evidence suggests that there is nothing meretricious about this category of women in Mesopotamia. Unlike Greece and Rome *inter alia*, we have no clear word for "prostitute" in the Mesopotamian vocabularies, and no evidence for the sale of sex in the Land between the Rivers.

Notes

- 1 Cooper 1997: 89, excerpted.
- 2 Wiggermann 2009: 412.
- 3 Budin forthcoming, *passim*.
- 4 Cooper 1997: 95.
- 5 For much more on the Inanna-Dumuzi love songs, see Sefati 1998.
- 6 Rubio 2001: 271.
- 7 Ibid: 270.
- 8 For more on this subject, see Whittaker 2002, *passim*.
- 9 Leick 1994: 114.

- 10 Leick 1994: 112–113. For additional data on women as the composers of Sumerian and Akkadian literature amongst other genres of writing, see Lion 2011.
- 11 Scurlock 2014: 102.
- 12 Biggs 1967: 1–3.
- 13 A recently studied text in the University of Pennsylvania Museum—UM-29-13-717—from Nippur dating to the Old Babylonian period contains similar content to the later ša.ZI.GA texts and may indicate that the recipes are older than the Middle Babylonian period. See Peterson 2008, *passim*.
- 14 Biggs 2002: 76.
- 15 Ibid: 73.
- 16 Zsolnay 2014: 280.
- 17 Wiggermann 2009: 414.
- 18 Guinan 1998: 49.
- 19 Guinan 2002: 186.
- 20 Assante 2000: 289.
- 21 Bahrani 2001: 52–53.
- 22 Assante 2000: 289.
- 23 Glassner 2002: 156.
- 24 Assante 2002: 30–36.
- 25 Assante 2003: 15. For similar theories regarding the “eroticization” of captive women in the Neo-Assyrian iconography, see Cifarelli 1998: 220–223. For a refutation of Cifarelli, see Day, this volume.
- 26 Zsolnay 2014: 282; Cooper 2002, *passim*.
- 27 For copious terminology on sex, the body parts involved therein, and their euphemisms, see Wiggermann 2009: 411 and Zsolnay 2014: 280–281.
- 28 Westenholz 2006: 2471.
- 29 Zsolnay 2014: 279; Wiggermann 2009: 411.
- 30 On this word, see Civil 2006: 55–58.
- 31 Cooper 2002: 106.
- 32 Zsolnay 2014: 283.
- 33 Jacobsen 1987: 88–89, slightly adapted.
- 34 A term of endearment, not incest.
- 35 Cooper 1997: 94; UM 29-16-8.
- 36 Scurlock 2014: 103, with references.
- 37 Scurlock 2014: 106.
- 38 Westenholz 2006: 2476.
- 39 Foster 1993: 141.
- 40 Biggs 2002: 77.
- 41 Mesopotamian beer was made from dates and contained no bittering agents like hops. So their beer was, in fact, sweet.
- 42 Guinan 1998: 42.
- 43 Ibid: 41.
- 44 Guinan 2002: 187–188.

- 45 Assante 2002: 34; Leick 1994: 114.
46 Glassner 1992: 63.
47 Scurlock 2014: 108; see also Biggs 2002: 72.
48 Guinan 2002: 188.
49 Scurlock 2014: 107–108.
50 Biggs 1967: 40.
51 Roth 1988: 192.
52 Roth 2014: 148.
53 Ibid: 151.
54 Ibid: 153.
55 Roth 1988: 186–188.
56 Roth 2014: 153.
57 Ibid: 169–170.
58 Guinan 1998: 50.
59 Roth 2006: 24.
60 Ibid.
61 Translation from <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.4.07.8#>
62 Julia Assante, in the midst of a debate with Jerrold Cooper at a conference at Johns Hopkins University.
63 Glassner 2002: 156; Assante 1998: 74.
64 Assante 15–16.
65 Ibid: 17.
66 Roth 2014: 165–66, adapted.
67 Assante 1998: 37.
68 Glassner 2002: 154.
69 Roth 2014: 150, adapted.

References

- Assante, J. (1998) The KAR.KID/Ḫarimtu, prostitute or single woman? *UF* 30: 5–96.
- Assante, J. (2000) *The Erotic Reliefs of Ancient Mesopotamia*. PhD Dissertation, Columbia, NY: Columbia University.
- Assante, J. (2002) Sex, magic and the liminal body in the erotic arts and texts of the Old Babylonian Period. In S. Parpola and R. M. Whiting (eds) *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East*. Helsinki, Finland: University of Helsinki, pp.27–54.
- Assante, J. (2003) From whores to hierodules: The historiographic invention of Mesopotamian female sex professionals. In A. A. Donohue and M. D. Fullerton (eds) *Ancient Art and Its Historiography*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp.13–47.
- Bahrani, Z. (2001) *Women of Babylon: Gender and Representation in*

- Mesopotamia*. London: Routledge.
- Biggs, R. D. (1967) *ŠÀ.ZI.GA: Ancient Mesopotamian Potency Incantations*. Locust Valley, NY: J. J. Augustin Publisher.
- Biggs, R. D. (2002) The Babylonian sexual potency texts. In S. Parpola and R. M. Whiting (eds) *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East*. Helsinki, Finland: University of Helsinki, pp.71–78.
- Budin, S. L. (2008) *The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Budin, S. L. (forthcoming) The big bang: Phallic fertility in Egypt and the Ancient Near East. In N. Hopwood, R. Flemming and L. Kassell (eds) *Reproduction from Antiquity to the Present*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Cifarelli, M. (1998) Alterity in the art of Ashurnasirpal II of Assyria. *The Art Bulletin* 80(2): 210–228.
- Civil, M. (2006) BE₅/PE-EN-ZÉ-ER = BIŠŠŪRU. In A. K. Guinan *et al.* (eds) *If a Man Builds a Joyful House*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp.55–61.
- Cooper, J. S. (1997) Gendered sexuality in Sumerian love poetry. In I. L. Finkel and M. J. Geller (eds) *Sumerian Gods and Their Representations*. Groningen, The Netherlands: Styx Publications, pp.85–97.
- Cooper, J. S. (2002) Virginity in Ancient Mesopotamia. In S. Parpola and R. M. Whiting (eds) *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East*. Helsinki, Finland: University of Helsinki, pp.91–112.
- Foster, B. (1993) *Before the Muses: An Anthology of Akkadian Literature*. Bethesda, MD: CDL Press.
- Glassner, J. J. (1992) Inanna et les Me. In M. de Jong Ellis (ed.) *Nippur at the centennial*. Philadelphia, PA: Occasional Publications of the Samuel Noah Kramer Fund, 14, pp.55–86.
- Glassner, J. J. (2002) Polygynie ou prostitution: Une approche comparative de la sexualité masculine. In S. Parpola and R. M. Whiting (eds) *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East*. Helsinki, Finland: University of Helsinki, pp.151–164.
- Guinan, A. K. (1998) Auguries of hegemony: The sex omens of Mesopotamia. In M. Wyke (ed.) *Gender and the Body in the Ancient Mediterranean*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, pp.38–55.
- Guinan, A. K. (2002) Erotomancy: Scripting the erotic. In S. Parpola and R. M. Whiting (eds) *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East*. Helsinki, Finland: University of Helsinki, pp.185–201.
- Leick, G. (1994) *Sex & Eroticism in Mesopotamian Literature*. New York: Routledge.
- Lion, B. (2011) Literacy and gender. In K. Radner and E. Robeson

- (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp.90–118.
- Peterson, J. (2008) An early ša₃-zi-ga prescription from Nippur. *ZfA* 98(2): 195–200.
- Roth, M. T. (1988) ‘She will die by the iron dagger’: Adultery and Neo-Babylonian marriage. *JESHO* 31: 186–206.
- Roth, M. T. (2006) Marriage, divorce, and the prostitute in Ancient Mesopotamia. In C. A. Faraone and L. K. McClure (eds) *Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp.21–39.
- Roth, M. T. (2014) Women and law. In M. Chavalas (ed.) *Women in the Ancient Near East*. London: Routledge Sourcebooks for the Ancient World, pp.144–174.
- Rubio, G. (2001) Inanna and Dumuzi: A Sumerian love story. *JAOS* 121(2): 268–274.
- Sefati, Y. (1998) *Love Songs in Sumerian Literature: Critical Edition of the Dumuzi-Inanna Songs*. Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University Press.
- Scurlock, J. (2014) Medicine and healing magic. In M. Chavalas (ed.) *Women in the Ancient Near East*. London: Routledge Sourcebooks for the Ancient World, pp.101–143.
- Westenholz, J. W. (2006) Love lyrics from the Ancient Near East. In J. M. Sasson (ed.) *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, 2nd edition. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, pp.2471–2484.
- Whittaker, G. (2002) Linguistic anthropology and the study of Emesal as (a) women’s language. In S. Parpola and R. M. Whiting (eds) *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East*. Helsinki, Finland: University of Helsinki, pp.633–644.
- Wiggermann, F. A. M. (2009) Sexualität A: In Mesopotamien. *Reallexikon der Assyriologie*, Bd. 12: 410–426.
- Zsolnay, I. (2014) Gender and sexuality: Ancient Near East. In J. M. O’Brien (ed.) *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Gender Studies*, volume 1. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp.273–287.

BEING MOTHERS OR ACTING (LIKE) MOTHERS?

Constructing motherhood in ancient Mesopotamia

M. Erica Couto-Ferreira

How to define motherhood in Ancient Mesopotamia

Historiographical hints on previous bibliography

Assyriological studies have tended to turn to mythological and literary texts, on the one hand, and to visual representations, on the other, in order to analyze and reconstruct the images and concepts of motherhood in ancient Mesopotamia. However, motherhood has not been a top concern in Assyriology except for its relation to a number of topics, such as divine maternity (Rodin 2014); the iconography of the *kourotrophos* or woman with child and other iconographical motifs linked to motherhood, such as the cow and calf (Winter 1987, esp. 385–413; Bahrani 2001, 81–82; Budin 2011); and the representation of deported women and families in Neo-Assyrian reliefs (Albenda 1987). It is highly revealing, in fact, that the *Reallexikon für Assyriologie* displays a number of entries on “Muttergöttin” (Krebern timer 1995), but none on “Mutterschaft” or “Mutter,” as if ideas of maternity in ancient Mesopotamia were circumscribed or could only be approached or understood through the realm of the divine. In this way, the specificities of maternal experience have often been relegated and marginalized in academic accounts of women’s lives, activities and concerns. Marten Stol, for instance, in his article on women in Mesopotamia, provides very brief and general considerations regarding child bearing, never making use of the term “mother” (Stol 1995: 128–129). When dealing with the issue of birth, the same author focuses on aspects of childbirth, procreation, nursing and

rearing, with little attention paid to maternity strictly speaking, although he sporadically gives some hints and bibliographical notes on the issue (Stol 2000); while in his recent book on women, he examines motherhood in just two pages (Stol 2012: 98–99), mainly focusing on literary examples, although he dedicates full chapters to marriage and marriage gifts (Stol 2012: 39–70, 71–94, respectively).

Most authors focus on what comes before motherhood (engagement, marriage) and after (creation of a family, expansion of household), leaving aside the question of how a mother is culturally constructed. Thus R. Harris's thoughts on the life cycle of women are devoted to girls at marriageable age, the birth of children, and, finally, old age (Harris 2000: 26–31); while Van der Toorn distinguishes five phases in women's lives (nursing, youth, puberty, married life, and widowhood) without devoting further thoughts to the specificities of maternity (Van der Toorn 1994: 18). Motherhood, therefore, is implicitly understood in Assyriological studies as a bio-physiological matter, the "natural" consequence of marriage, and the main aim in any woman's life (Van der Toorn 1994: 77; Farès, in Briquel-Chatonnet 2009: 7).

How many ways of depicting "human" motherhood can be traced down in cuneiform sources? Cuneiform sources from the second and first millennia BCE show a wide range of types of maternity, especially in literary, mythological, and ritual sources, where several forms of divine motherhood are represented. Thus, the goddess Namma appears as counsellor to her son, Enki, as well as a relevant character in the creation of humankind in the Sumerian composition *Enki and Ninmah* (Benito 1969: 1–76); Tiamat figures as primeval mother, but also as the begetter of monsters, in the creation myth *Enūma eliš* (Lambert 2013: 3–144); Lamaštu, a female deity possessing evil traits with a tendency toward making pregnant women and children ill, represents a clear example of inverted motherhood (Farber 2014); while Gilgameš' mother, Ninsun, embodies motherly wisdom, always providing good advice to her son (*Gilgameš* I 259–260 in George 1999: 10, and *passim*). When it comes to exploring real, human mothers, however, documentary sources, inscriptions, and other pieces of information present a rather elusive, patchy picture, with some notable exceptions (see, for example, the study done by Sarah Melville on Esarhaddon's mother, in Melville 1999; and Franco D'Agostino's work on Nabonidus' mother, Adda Guppi, in D'Agostino 1994). The present chapter aims to explore different ways of picturing motherhood in non-mythological compositions, relying on cuneiform sources stemming from daily life and practice (medical texts, letters, contracts, and legal compositions). Even though these sources tend to provide a more elusive and less cohesive picture than that presented

in literary, more narrative sources, they nevertheless provide valuable hints at how maternity was perceived, lived, and even defined through the attitudes and practices of the agents involved.

First, motherhood can be approached from the perspective of its biological and/or physiological elements, such as creation and conception. Second, it can be analyzed through those attitudes related to care and provision that are representative and constituent of the exercise of maternity, and which serve to establish close bonds between the mother and her children. These activities and attitudes are concerned with aspects such as nurturing, love, and counselling. Lying somewhere between these two poles, evidence emerges that points to legal aspects of maternity and maternity-related issues (adoption, inheritance, paternity issues, regulation of fees for nurses, wet nurses, status of children born by first, secondary wives, slaves, etc.), which prove that motherhood could be effectively exercised independent of biological bonds.

The “physiology” of pregnancy and the “biology” of motherhood

Motherhood can be defined from the viewpoint of physiology of birth, in direct relation to the physical, bodily experience, of begetting and giving birth. Healing cuneiform texts depict pathological aspects that come up in the process of becoming a mother, therefore focusing on pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period, more than on medical issues springing from the exercise of maternity. Instead of the usual Sumerian and Akkadian terms for “mother” (AMA/*ummu*, CAD U sub *ummu*, pp.120–131), however, medical texts prefer expressions alluding to the woman as bearer, referring to cognates of PEŠ₄/*erû* “to be thick, fat; to be pregnant” (CAD E s.v., pp.325–326) and ù.TU/(w)*alādu* “to bear, conceive, to give birth to” (CAD A/1 s.v., pp.287–294) in clear reference to the state of pregnancy. In fact, the verb (w)*alādu* points to the acts of conceiving, begetting, giving birth, creating, fashioning, producing, and it is sometimes also employed in reference to men as creators. Thus, in therapeutic texts concerning pregnancy and childbirth, women are mainly *erītu* “pregnant (woman)” and *ālittu* “begetter, parturient,” but hardly ever *ummu* “mother.” The term *bantu* “creatix, begetter” (CAD B sub *bantu*, pp.80–81), from the verb *banû* “to make, shape, engender, create” (CAD B s.v. A, pp.83–90) is less frequent, being used in literary examples and applying mainly to mother goddesses in their role as creators of humanity.

On the contrary, the specific term “mother” reappears in the incantation-lullabies to appease children, especially as part of the expression “in the belly of your mother,” to make reference to that stage of pregnancy where the baby *in utero* was calm and did not cry (Farber 1989: 36, 40, and *passim*). From the contextual use of this phraseology, therefore, it becomes evident that AMA/*ummu* “mother” carries particular semantic notions of care that are absent in or hidden from the expression PEš₄/erû and ù.TU/(w)alādu, which would put the emphasis on a more physiological, reproductive-concerned concept of maternity. AMA/*ummu* would refer to the status acquired after having giving birth, namely after having produced children successfully, and its contextual use reinforces the idea of bonds linking begetter and begotten: a mother is always defined in relation to her sons and daughters. If the *ālidu/ālittu* (“begetter, pregnant woman, parturient”) conceives and brings pregnancy to full term, the *ummu* takes care of the child (*šerru*). AMA/*ummu*, therefore, expresses the accomplished state of having given birth and having children, being employed in contexts where the child is already an independent being out of his/her mother’s body.¹

Acting (like) mothers: motherhood and care

What a mother does

What are the functions attributed to and carried out by mothers? What specific traits, attitudes, conducts, and responsibilities turned a woman into a mother, according to cuneiform sources? Sources accounting for divine affairs provide, as noted above, valuable information on the different roles mother goddesses and female deities in general play in relation to their progeny,² but hints at their human counterparts are also sporadically found in documentary evidence.

Both mothers and fathers (or adults acting as such) are involved in bringing up the child, an action expressed through the verb *rubbû* (CAD R sub *rabû* 7, pp.45–48) which also applies to the harvesting of plants and trees (ibid. 7b, pp.47–48). *Rubbû* implies the nurturing, rearing, and provision of care to children until they reach full age, and it is often used in relation to paying for raising someone, turning up frequently in legal texts concerning the adoption and/or fostering of children. However, it should be pointed out that women and couples adopting and taking children under their care often have an ambiguous status when it comes to evaluating the place affection has in their choice, if we consider that children were also seen as workforce and economic resources (see “Legal aspects of maternity,

breastfeeding, and nursing” below).

Within the particular activities that mothers (as well as wet nurses who act like mothers) carry out when rearing children, nurturing functions are crucial. In this manner, mothers and acting mothers are often depicted in textual sources in the act of breast feeding (*enēqu* “to suckle”), providing mother’s milk (*šizib ummi*), or making the baby take the breast (*tulâ šabātu*).³ Mothers embrace their children (*kirimmi ummi* lit. “(crook of) the arm of the mother”),⁴ pick them up (*leqû*), and pat them with affection (*lapātu*).⁵ This is shown, for instance, in an Old Babylonian incantation that aimed at appeasing a crying child: “Be placid like the waters of a well until your mother comes, caresses you (*talappatka*), and picks you up (*talaqqeka*)” (Farber 1989: 86 §25: 362–363).

Mothers and sons

Old Babylonian letters offer a good grasp of what motherhood implied. Mothers were expected to show concern and provide for their children, even when they had grown up. In a missive that a certain Malāku writes to his mother, he informs her that he is well and staying in Halab, and asks her to send a piece of clothing: “As for the garment, you should order him to transport one garment of mine to me. Do you not know [that] it is you [whom] I rely on (*taklāku*)?”⁶ (*AbB* 13, 74: 10–15, in Van Soldt 1994: 68–69).

Reproaches to and accusations of negligence against the female parent were not infrequent. These examples already indicate issues of feeling, perception, and personal experience in intergenerational relationships. Some examples taken from Old Babylonian letters emphasize the need to keep affective bonds between mother and son alive when at a distance, while pointing at the same time to more immediate and materialistic needs that wait to be satisfied, as in the following case. A son reproaches his mother for her nonchalance in writing to him, and he does not prevent himself from alluding to other mothers behaving in a caring manner as a powerful argument to call for maternal feelings:

Speak to my mother: Thus says Awil- . . . , your son. May Šamaš and Marduk forever grant you good health. Since you . . . have offered me to Šamaš like a dropped out tooth. The service put a strain on me, so I couldn’t stop working. And you have never written to me, as (other) mothers do, you haven’t heartened me (*libbi ul tuballiti*)!⁷ Now I have dispatched Mannaši to you. Let her bring me 2 quarts [*sila*] of oil. I have contracted an illness and my life is endangered.

On similar grounds, a certain Iddin-Sîn accuses his mother, Zinû, of not loving him and asks her not to be mean and to send him clothes. This piece of evidence raises relevant issues of perception between biological and acquired motherhood, and what the main functions of a mother were, namely the acts of loving, caring, and protecting their progeny. The way Iddin-Sîn formulates his claim suggests that, in his perception, stronger loving care and attention should be expected from a mother that has actually conceived and born her child, in opposition to motherhood acquired through adoption. It is interesting to note that, contrary to the usual formulaic language, Iddin-Sîn does not identify himself as son nor mentions Zinû as mother in the heading of his message, even though the filial relationship is clear from lines 24–25. This omission could perhaps be taken as an expression of contempt against his mother:

The son of Adad-iddinnam, whose father is a servant of my father, has two new garments to wear, but you keep getting upset over just one garment for me. While you gave birth to me (*tuldinni*), his mother got him by adoption (*ummašu ana leqitim ilqēšu*), but you do not love me in the way his mother loves him (*kīma šati ummašu irammušu atti yāti ul tarammini*).

(Abb 14, 165: 19–31 in Veenhof, 2005, 156–157)

. . . and daughters

Examples of vexed sons and daughters, especially in those situations when they request their mothers to be diligent in sending goods, can also be found in the Old Babylonian letters from Mari and elsewhere. In a letter to her mother, daughter, Erišti-Aya, addresses two questions. First, she feels humiliated by her progenitor, who has not put on the clothes her daughter sent to her, but decided to return them instead. This is perceived by Erišti-Aya as a gesture that dishonours her: “Why haven’t you worn my dress but brought it back? You have inflicted me abuse/scandal (*pištam*) and a curse (*erretam*)” (ARM 10, 43: 7–11 in Dossin 1978: 78–79).

She also demands from her mother that she “be good to me” (*atti yāti dumiqini*, ARM 10, 43: 21–22 in Dossin 1978: 78–79, text 43, lines 21–22). In the very last lines of the letter, however, Erišti-Aya does not refrain from asking her mother to send her goods through the intermediation of her dry nurse (*tāritum*), who is to take to her all the articles Erišti-Aya requests (ARM 10, 43: 26–28 in Dossin 1978: 78–79). The fact of having blood bonds is brandished as a powerful argument to sustain Erišti-Aya’s claims, as well as to demand

attention. Similarly, in another Old Babylonian letter, a mother is also asked to send garments (*AbB* 13, 74 in Van Soldt 1994: 68–69). Other examples, however, focus on the exchange of presents between mother and sons/daughters as a way of both providing and redistributing goods, on the one hand, and of keeping contact when distance separates them, on the other (*ARM* 10, 21 and 30 attest to the exchange of commodities between Princess Šibtu and her mother, Kašerum/Gašera, in Dossin 1978: 50–51 and 58–59).

Although less attested in the documentary textual record (in opposition to mythological compositions: *Enlil and Sud*, 77; *Enki and Ninmah*, 17–23; Ninsun and Gilgameš, etc.), there are some instances where mothers emerge as counsellors of their children, providing advice and making their opinions heard. In these cases, *malāku* “to give advice, to ponder, deliberate” is the word/term employed (*CAD* M/1 sub *malāku* A, pp.154–158, esp. 1 pp.154–155). In the following example, when Gimil-Marduk writes to Warad-Sigar on an unspecified matter, he makes clear that: “When you did me wrong, I did not turn to my family, [nor] did I take counsel with my mother (*itti ummiya ul amtalik*)” (*AbB* 12, 124 in Van Soldt 1990: 102–103).

As discussed above, emotion and love relate closely to the exercise of motherhood.⁸ Cuneiform texts show how love manifests as a feeling equally experienced by men, women, fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, sons, daughters, servants, masters, and lovers. When it comes to parent–child relationships, love expresses filiation, protection, and trust, but it also becomes a matter of power games and emotional manipulation.

The deep significance of filial bonds and maternal worries emerge sporadically in the textual and archaeological records. Two Old Babylonian dedicatory inscriptions testify to the deep concern Rīm-Sîn-Šala-bāštašu, the wife of king Rīm-Sîn, showed for the poor health of her daughter, Liriš-gamlum. This material evidence represents the attempt to reverse a situation that might have caused great distress in the family. Although originally placed on nine bronze cups, one of the inscriptions survives just as a copy on a tablet. It specifies with notable detail the nature of the ailments Liriš-gamlum suffered from:

(Rīm-Sîn-Šala-bāštašu) [for the life of Rīm-Sîn, king of Larsa, and Liriš-gamlum] [her] daughter, made bronze milk cups, table ornaments, in order to make the *šahal* disease⁹ leave her eyes, to banish the danger of sickness, to pass on to one who does not revere him the ASAG [demon] that is in her body and to preserve her life, she dedicated [them] for the life of Liriš-gamlum and for her own life.

The second inscription, which reports similar concerns, was inscribed on a water basin that was placed in the é-ME-UR₄-UR₄ temple in Larsa:

In order to save Liriš-gamlum from the hand of evil-doers and brigands, to hand over the *asakku* and *ašbur* [diseases] that are in her body to [a demon] who fears nothing, to expel the šà.HAL that is in her eye, to protect her life.

(RIM E4.2.14.23, 30–35 in Frayne 1990: 302)

Nurses, wet nurses, and the provision of care

Functions of suckling and general provision of education and care to children can entitle a wet nurse to be called *ummu* “mother.” The bond that is established between caretaker and child unifies elements of physiology, manifested in the administration of mother’s milk, with the aspects of affection, protection, and tutelage that are constructed outside biological and consanguineous relationships.

The wet nurses active in the royal circles were often remembered and even continued to be closely related to the fates of royal family members.¹⁰ An emblematic case is offered by the Princess Bēltum, whose wet nurse, receiving the title of *ummu* “mother,” comes with her from Qatna to Mari in order to be near her at the royal court. Her *ummu* is said to have reared her (*urabbiši*, from *rubbû*) since childhood (ARMT 26, 298 in Charpin 1988, 26–27; Durand 1990, 276, quoted in Ziegler 1997, 52 fn. 40 and Stol 2000, 189 and fn. 116):

Bēltum’s *ummu* [*ummi Bēltim*], who has come from Qatna, has reared her since Bēltum was a child and she [the *ummu*] knows her way/will (*ṭēmša amrat*). It would have been better to keep this woman away after Bēltum’s departure from Qatna, [but] she is being sent to Mari, and she doesn’t know the customs of the palace.

(ARMT 26, 298: 29–39 in Charpin 1988: 26–27)

Another letter from Mari deals with the case of an intercession of Princess Ahāssunu in favour of her *ummu*¹¹ (ARM 10, 97 in Dossin 1978: 73);¹² just as Bahlī-bašti is sent to Princess Narāmru so that she can act as her nurse (lit. for the motherhood/mother care (toward) Narāmru) (*ana ummūt Narāmru*, ARMT 23, 84 in Bardet *et al.* 1984: 72–74); and Tabūra, who is mentioned as *mušēniqum* (wet nurse) of the baby Prince, Yagīd-Lim, receives the title *ummu* later on in life (Dossin 1978: 74). All these cases, among many others (Dossin 1978, letter 105; Bardet *et al.* 1984: 346; Ziegler 1997: 51–52), prove that the provision of nourishment and education, the physical proximity

established during rearing, the aid to the growth and development of children, contributed to the establishment and strengthening of non-biological bonds that could have a deep impact on the individual's life. The title of "mother," therefore, is conferred not only on women who have given birth, but also, as in the case of the *ummu* from Mari's palace, to women that have undertaken the duties of a caring mother-like guardian.

Legal aspects of maternity, breastfeeding, and nursing

Mesopotamian documentary evidence also furnishes information on aspects such as regulation of adoption, inheritance, and other family issues, and maternity-related activities such as compensation to wet nurses for breast feeding. These sources provide a different impression on social values and experiences related to motherhood, since they focus more on the legal and economic dimensions and implications of parenthood, and less on the personal and affective relationships established between mother and son/daughter.

Legal regulations, adoption, and wet nursing contracts, as well as other legal cases, have already made relevant a number of aspects associated with the provision of care which relates so intimately to the exercise of motherhood. The Laws of Ešnunna (§32 B ii 13), the Code of Ur-Namma (George and Civil 2011: 251 §E2), the Code of Hammurabi (§194 in Roth 1995: 120), among others, regulate the responsibilities and payment wet nurses should receive for suckling and rearing children, as well as the fees deemed to be paid to tutors or to those figures responsible for bringing up infants. (For wet nursing contracts, see Gruber 1989: 76–77; for payment of wet nursing fees, see Obermark 1992: 42; for other aspects of wet nursing, see Stol 2000: 181–190.)

Both motherhood and fatherhood are implicated in adoption and parenthood-related processes. Although the adoption of adults was very frequent, being a strategy to transfer property between two parties that did or did not imply the promise of the adoptee to take care of the adopter in old age (Obermark 1992: 11–26, with previous bibliography), there is clear evidence of adoptions by childless couples who take children under their care ("type 2 adoptions" in Obermark 1992: 13–14; for women as adopters, see Obermark 1992: 70–77; Wunsch 2003–2004: 187; Klein-Sharlach 2007: 4–9, CBS 11324 i 1–25 for a Sumerian model contract regarding the adoption of a foundling by a woman; Suurmeijer 2010: 16–19 for examples from Old Babylonian Sippar). Adoption contracts emphasize those formal

aspects that create the legal frame necessary to establish and confirm filiation before the authorities, and which secure the position of both parents and child. In this regard, it is worth noting, for example, the clauses introduced in some contracts that make reference to the punishment the adoptive parents or the adopted child should receive in the event of refusal of the transaction by one of the two parties. Those aspects closely related to nurture and care and, therefore, are normally deemed irrelevant in the establishment of legal bonds, although sporadic references to obligations related to the upbringing of the child can be included (nam-bùlug/*tarbītu* “child-rearing” in CAD T sub *tarbītu* A, pp.223–225; Obermark 1992, 42–43). Adoption often bridges the apparent gap that exists from a legal viewpoint between the biological dimension of child bearing and the status of parenthood. As in the letter quoted above (*AbB* 14, 165 in Veenhof 2005: 156–157), adoptive mothers show attention and care toward their children in an equal, or even higher degree, if we are to trust Iddin-Sîn’s accusations against his mother, than biological mothers.

The reality of mothers who cannot or will not take care of their children is also attested in cuneiform sources. This fact could lead them to leave their babies, or to trust them to relatives or couples in want of a child. In the following Neo-Babylonian adoption contract between a woman named Balṭā and her brother, Innin-šum-ibni, the latter agrees to take care of her son Dannu-ahhê-ibni:

As long as Balṭā continues being a single woman [*harimtu*, see Budin, “Sexuality” this volume on this term], he [Innin-šum-ibni] will raise Dannu-ahhê-ibni. Should Balṭā go the house of a *mār banī* [citizen], he [the *mār banī*] will pay one-third mina [text: shekel] of silver [to Innin-šum-ibni] in consideration of the sustenance and upbringing costs of Dannu-ahhê-ibni and [in consideration of the expenses incurred for] the food, beer, salt, cress oil [and] garments of Balṭā.

(translation according to Roth 1988: 133, lines 9–15)

Old Babylonian text VAS 6, 116 (Joannès 1989) illustrates the abandonment of children by their mothers and/or fathers in antiquity, on the one hand; and the ambiguous status the fostered child could have, on the other. More than an adoption contract, tablet VAS 6, 116 functions as a sort of birth certificate that, by the symbolic act of placing her feet on clay, legalizes the status of foundling, Šēpītaia, proving she was found and raised by a woman named Šīraia. This legal document, which recognises a *de facto* situation before the law, authorizes Šīraia to employ the grown-up Šēpītaia as domestic personnel. Even though compassion, affection, and even sentiments of motherliness may very well have been present in Šīraia’s decision to

take Šēpītaia with her, the significance of fostered children as economic resource becomes undeniable. (See Wunsch 2003–2004 for a thorough analysis on child abandonment, fostering of foundlings, and the economic value of adoption, among other topics, in Neo-Babylonian documents. See also Joannès 1997 for aspects of childhood in Mesopotamia, esp. pp.124–125 for the text VS 6, 116.)

The *mār banî* [citizens], before those [representing] Nabû-nādin-šumi, son of Mušēzib-Marduk, son of Gahal; and Širaia, his wife, daughter of Nabû-bān-zēri, son of the Blacksmith, on their agreement concerning Šēpītaia, who Širaia took from the street, reared (*turabbu*), and placed her feet on clay (list of witnesses follows).

(VS 6, 116: 1–10)

Conclusions

Being socially and culturally constructed and not exclusively biophysiologicaly determined, motherhood in ancient Mesopotamia shows a notable degree of complexity. Maternity is established not exclusively by blood ties, but also by duties, legal status, and disposition to provide care. Even when there is neither biological affiliation nor an acknowledged legal condition as mother, some sort of maternal recognition can be acquired by the exercise of those activities closely related to maternity, namely nurturing, care, protection, counselling, and love.

Notes

- 1 See, for instance, the use of the term AMA/*ummu* in relation to breast-feeding in TDP 222: 40 “you put (the medicine) on the tip of his mother’s breast (*ina appi tuli ummišu*), so that he will suck it with milk” (reference taken from CAD E sub *enēqu* 1). But cf. Izbu XVII 84 *šumma izbu ina libbi ummišu issīma ummišu ipul* “if an anomaly cries out from its mother’s insides and its mother answers”; see also the expression *ummu alittu* (CAD A/1 sub *ālidu*, lexical section, p. 340 and b 2 pp.341–342).
- 2 See, for example, Civil 1964; Çig and Kramer 1976; Miller and Wheeler 1981; Gadotti 2011.
- 3 On breasts, suckling, and medical problems related to these, see TDP pp.218–228.
- 4 CAD K sub *kirimmu*, p. 406 “hold, position of the arms of a mother to cradle a small child.”
- 5 For a mythological example of (divine) mothers rearing their children, see, for example, *Enlil and Sud*, 3–5, which describes the care Nun-bar-še-gunu/Nisaba provided to her daughter, Ninlil.
- 6 CAD T sub *takālu*, pp.63–68 “to trust, to rely.”

- 7 The expression employed is *libba balātu* “to encourage, literally to revive the insides.”
- 8 See CAD R sub *rāmu* “to love,” pp.137–145.
- 9 See *sahālu* in CAD S s.v., pp.28–30 “to pierce, stab, prick.”
- 10 See, for example, Gišadu, who was the wet nurse of the Ebla King Irkabdamu.
- 11 Bardet 1984: 72–74; Durand 1985: 413–415; Durand 1990: 276.
- 12 In ARM 10, 97 (Dossin 1978: 146–149), Ahāssunu asks the king for permission to free her (wet) nurse of her service (lit. *qīštu* “gift”), probably due to old age. Ahāssunu calls her *ummu* “mother.” In lines 23–27, a fragment of a previous letter sent by the *ummu* to Ahāssunu is quoted, asking her to intercede before the king. It brings to light, therefore, a strong net of care supply between women.

References

- Albenda, P. (1987) Woman, child and family: Their imagery in Assyrian art. In J.-M. Durand (ed.) *La femme dans le Proche-Orient Antique. XXXIII RAI*. Paris: Editions Recherche sur les civilisations, pp.17–22.
- Bahrani, Z. (2001) *Women of Babylon: Gender and Representation in Mesopotamia*. London: Routledge.
- Bardet, G., Joannès, F., Lafont, B., Soubeyran, D. and Villard, P. (eds) (1984) *Archives Royales De Mari 23. Archives Administratives De Mari 1*. Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations.
- Benito, C. A. (1969) “*Enki and Ninmah*” and “*Enki and the World Order*.” Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania.
- Briquel-Chatonnet, F. (ed.) (2009) *Femmes, cultures et sociétés dans les civilisations Méditerranéennes et Proche-Orientale de l’Antiquité*. Paris: De Boccard.
- Budin, S. L. (2011) *Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity, and Gender in the Ancient World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Charpin, D. (1988) *Archives Epistolaires de Mari*. ARMT XXV1/2. Paris.
- Çig, M. and Kramer, S. N. (1976) The ideal mother: A Sumerian portrait. *Bellesten* 40(159): 413–421.
- Civil, M. (1964) The “message of Lú-Dingir-ra to his mother” and a group of Akkado-Hittite “proverbs.” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 23: 1–11.
- D’Agostino, F. (1994) *Nabonedo, Adda Guppi, Il Deserto E Il Dio Luna: Storia, Ideologia E Propaganda Nella Babilonia Del 6. Sec. A.C.* Pisa, Italy: Giardini.
- Dossin, G. (1978) *Correspondance féminine*. Paris: Geuthner.
- Durand, J.-M. (1990) Documents pour l’histoire du royaume de Haute-

- Mesopotamie II. *Mari, Annales de Recherches Interdisciplinaires* 6: 271–301.
- Farber, W. Lamaštu. (1989) *Schlaf, Kindchen, Schlaf! Mesopotamisch Baby-Beschwörung und -Rituale*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Farber, W. Lamaštu. (2014) *An Edition of the Canonical Series of Lamaštu Incantations and Rituals and Related Texts from the Second and First Millennia B.C.* Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Frayne, D. R. (1990) *The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia: Old Babylonian Period (2003–1595 BC)*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
- Gadotti, A. (2011) Portraits of the feminine in Sumerian literature. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 131(2): 195–206.
- George, A. (1999) *The Epic of Gilgamesh: The Babylonian Epic Poem and Other Texts in Akkadian and Sumerian*. London: Allen Lane Penguin Press.
- George, A. R. and Civil, M. (eds) (2011) *Cuneiform Royal Inscriptions and Related Texts in the Schøyen Collection*. Bethesda, MD: CDL Press.
- Gruber, M. I. (1989) Breast-feeding practices in biblical Israel and in Old Babylonian Mesopotamia. *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University* 19: 61–83.
- Harris, R. (2000) *Gender and Aging in Mesopotamia: The Gilgamesh Epic and Other Ancient Literature*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Joannès, F. (1989) Šêpê ina ٲiٲi šakânu. *NABU* 4: 81–82.
- Joannès, F. (1997) La mention des enfants dans les textes néo-babyloniens: Enfance et éducation dans le Proche-Orient ancien. *Ktèma* 22: 119–133.
- Klein, J. and Sharlach, T. M. (2007) A collection of model court cases from Old Babylonian Nippur (CBS11324). *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie* 97(1): 1–25.
- Krebernik, M. (1995) Muttergöttin A.I. in Mesopotamien. *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 8: 502–515.
- Lambert, W. G. (2013) *Babylonian Creation Myths*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Melville, S. C. (1999) *The Role of Naqia-Zakutu in Sargonid Politics*. Helsinki, Finland: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.
- Miller, D. G. and Wheeler, P. (1981) Mother goddess and consort as literary motif sequence in the Gilgamesh epic. *Acta Antiqua Scientiarum Hungaricae* 29: 83–108.
- Obermark, P. R. (1992) Adoption in the Old Babylonian Period. PhD dissertation. Cincinnati, OH: Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion.

- Rodin, T. (2014) *The World of the Sumerian Mother Goddess: An Interpretation of Her Myths*. Uppsala, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis.
- Roth, M. T. (1988) Women in transition and the “Bīt Mār Banî.” *Revue d’Assyriologie et d’Archéologie Orientale* 82(2): 131–138.
- Roth, M. T. (1995) *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.
- Stol, M. (1995) Women in Mesopotamia. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 38: 123–144.
- Stol, M. (2000) *Birth in Babylonia and the Bible: Its Mediterranean Setting*. Groningen, The Netherlands: Styx.
- Stol, M. (2012) *Vrouwen van Babylon: Prinsessen, Priesteressen, Prostituees in de Bakermat van de Cultuur*. Utrecht, The Netherlands: Kok.
- Suurmeijer, G. (2010) “He took him as his son.” Adoption in Old Babylonian Sippar. *Revue d’Assyriologie et d’Archéologie Orientale* 104: 9–40.
- Van der Toorn, K. (1994) *From Her Cradle to Her Grave: The Role of Religion in the Life of the Israelite and the Babylonian Woman*. Sheffield, UK: ISOT Press.
- Van Soldt, W. H. (1990) *Letters in the British Museum*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Van Soldt, W. H. (1994) *Letters in the British Museum*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Veenhof, K. R. (2005) *Letters in the Louvre*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Winter, U. (1987) *Frau und Göttin. Exegetische und ikonographische Studien zum weiblichen Gottesbild im alten Israel und in dessen Umwelt*. Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Wunsch, C. (2003–2004) Findelkinder und Adoption nach neubabylonischen Quellen. *Archiv für Orientforschung* 50: 174–244.
- Ziegler, N. (1997) Les enfants du palais. *Ktèma* 22: 45–57.

IMAGES OF QUEENS, HIGH PRIESTESSES, AND OTHER ELITE WOMEN IN THIRD- MILLENNIUM MESOPOTAMIA

Claudia E. Suter

Early Mesopotamia, women, and images

Representations of mortals in Mesopotamia include both historical individuals and unspecified people. Historical individuals, who may be named in captions or inscriptions on or next to their image, were the elite representing power, whereas unspecified people comprise their workforce, soldiers, and captives. This contribution will be concerned with historical, “real” people. A relatively large number of images of elite women, including queens and high priestesses, have come down to us from third-millennium BCE Mesopotamia. Before examining them, a few words are needed about these women’s positions in society and images in ancient Mesopotamia.

Sarah Melville (2005: 228) concludes her survey on royal women in the ancient Near East thus:

Women did wield power right alongside men, but they had different roles, different means of exercising influence, and different avenues of authority from men. According to deeply ingrained cultural principles, the head of a dynasty, tribe, or state had to be male; therefore even the most exalted woman was always second to at least one man. For the same reason, when women took part in administration or politics, they always did so to further the interests of the royal family as a whole.

This was generally the case in ancient historical societies which were, as far as we know, patriarchal. As Gay Robins (1993: 42–55) observes for Egypt, kingship was not open to women on normal terms. The exceptional case of Hatshepsut demonstrates this: adapting to a male gender role, this female king appeared on monuments as a man. Robins (1993: 42) makes another important point:

Egyptian monuments only record the ideal and omit what does not fit the official model, which had no interest in individual personalities. Thus we can never expect to find evidence of the careers of individual queens and their possible manipulation of power.

The same applies to elite women in Mesopotamia. When we look at their images, the discrepancy between representation and reality has to be kept in mind (Ross 2005; Suter 2012).

The images of early Mesopotamian women that have survived the test of time are largely carved in stone, a most durable material. They encompass statuary, objects in relief, inlays, and glyptic. In terms of quantity, statues, including many fragmentary ones, number about 300, reliefs about 26, inlays about 3, and seals about 214.¹ This record is, of course, only a fraction of what was once in existence. Statues of royal women were also made of metal, but of these, hardly any have survived (Braun-Holzinger 1991: 232–234). Moreover, we ignore whether women appeared on wall paintings or in other perishable materials that have since vanished. In general, surviving elite women's images were small in size and made of less precious stones than the finest monuments of kings.

Who commissioned images of royal women? Statues and reliefs belonged to the objects that a donor dedicated to a deity in a temple (Braun-Holzinger 1991), inlays were largely prestige objects on display in royal palaces before being buried in royal tombs (Dolce 1978),² and seals guaranteed identification and authentication in state administration (Pittman 2012). All female statues that textually identify the donor were dedicated by women (Braun-Holzinger 1991: 219). By contrast, relief images depicting scenes in which women feature were generally dedicated by the women's husbands; the only identified female donor of a relief image of herself is Enheduana (see Gadotti, this volume). Seals depicting scenes in which women appear could belong to the woman depicted in the image, but more often belonged to her subordinate. Inlays remain anonymous.

It is generally assumed that donors of dedicatory gifts were also the patrons of these works, although this conflation cannot be ascertained. At least from the Akkad period onwards, the circle of donors of inscribed dedicatory gifts was confined to the king and those who were affiliated to the crown by either kin or position (Braun-Holzinger 1991: 18–21). The latter's inscriptions usually stated the reason for the dedication as being the wish for a long life for the king, often followed by the same wish for the donor. I would not exclude the possibility that the king was the ultimate patron of at least some objects dedicated for his life by others.³ From the Akkad to Ur III

period, the king was also the patron of seals that he granted to his entourage, including his concubines (Zettler 1977; Mayr and Owen 2004); their generally high quality of carving bespeaks royal workshops. Artisans remain anonymous; they were perceived as practitioners of a specialized skill (Matthews 1995).

The target audience for dedicatory gifts is difficult to establish, because hardly any of them have been found in their original setting, their inscriptions only address the gods and future generations, and we do not know who had access to temples, whether it was the population at large, the elite, or only a small circle of elites (Michalowski 2013: 174–175). The generally small size of female statues, as well as reliefs on which royal women feature, suggest indoor rather than outdoor placing. If access to indoor areas were indeed restricted to a small circle of elites, sculptural images of royal women would not have been widely visible. Inlays must have been visible only to those who had access to palaces. With regard to seals, one could surmise that, based on the large variety of seal owners' professions, together with marked differences in carving quality, all kinds of people could own a seal. However, it seems more likely that only people associated with urban administrations owned seals, and that most seal owners belonged to the entourage and/or were employees of the ruling elite. Seal images may thus have been seen by a wider circle than dedicatory gifts or inlay work, yet not by the population at large. Unlike in ancient Egypt or Rome, images of third-millennium Mesopotamian elite women were not on public display.

The narrative contexts in which these women were depicted encompass largely four types of scenes. An overview is provided in [Table 3.1](#). This list of 240 images is meant as a representative sample. It is unlikely to be complete, especially for Early Dynastic glyptic, for which the sources were compiled 30 years ago.

Banquet scenes

Banquet scenes make up more than half of the images under review. Their protagonists are a royal couple, women only, or a high priestess with her god. The banquet of a royal couple depicted on 15 door plaques, over 100 seals, and inlays,⁴ was a hallmark of the Early Dynastic period (Selz 1983). It celebrated the king's power networks and conveyed that king and queen together represented the gods on earth (Suter 2016: 341–345). A number of clues imply that the queen's presence was owed to her indispensable role in procreation: king and queen hold gendered attributes, a date cluster and date

spathe, or a female and male date blossom, respectively. One plaque (no. 575), and conceivably also an Akkad-period seal (no. 12), seem to combine a royal banquet with a birth scene. An Early Dynastic female statue wears a huge pendant depicting an embracing nude couple (Asher-Greve 1985: 136–137 no. 547). The largest two statues of the Tell Asmar hoard, a male and female forming a pair, each holding the cup of banqueters and evidently representing a royal couple as depicted on door plaques,⁵ had a child standing beside her mother.

Table 3.1 Narrative scenes in reliefs and glyptic by period..

<i>Scenes</i>	<i>Reliefs</i>	<i>Glyptic</i>	<i>Total</i>
Banquet of royal couple	ED (565–79): 15	ED (598–600, 602–606, 608–652, 654–663): 63 Akk (4–31, 35–36): 30	78 30
Banquet of royal women	ED (556): 1	ED (588, 594–595, 601, 607, 653): 6 Akk (32, 37–39): 4 Akk (1–37): 3	7 4
Banquet of high priestess with god	Akk (fig. 4): 1 Ur III (fig. 14): 1	Akk (1–37): 3	4 1
Libation offered by royal couple	ED (558): 1?	Akk (46–47): 2	3
Libation offered by royal women		ED (5847): 1 Akk (40–45): 6	1 6
Libation offered by high priestesses	ED (557, 5617): 1+1 Akk (fig. 1): 1	ED (585–586): 2	4 1
Presentation of royal couple		Akk (33, 80–90): 12	12
Presentation of women		ED (587): 1 Akk (48–49): 2 pAkk (50–63): 14 Ur III (64–77): 14	1 2 14 14
Audience with royal woman		Akk (91, 94–106, 107–1087): 16 16 pAkk (109–117, 118–1197, 120–131): 23	16 23
Audience with high priestess		Akk (92): 1 Ur III (fig. 7): 1	1 1
Audience of royal woman with king	ED (5597): 1	Ur III (132–137): 6	1 6
Other	ED (582, 563): 2 Lagaš 2 (ST.15): 1	ED (589–593, 597, 665): 7	9 1
<i>Total</i>	26	214	240

Numbers in parentheses refer to catalogue numbers or figures in the following sources: Asher-Greve 1985 for ED reliefs and glyptic; Suter 2000 for the Lagaš II relief; idem 2007 for other Akk to Ur III reliefs; idem 2008: table 2 for Akk to Ur III glyptic. Abbreviation: ED = Early Dynastic, Akk = Akkad, pAkk = post-Akkad.

In the Early Dynastic period, female statuettes amount to about 40 percent of the extant corpus (Asher-Greve 1985: 66). Individually seated males and females with cup and date attribute may have

formed banquets of royal couples in three dimensions,⁶ not unlike the sculptures in the round of seated couples with the same attributes (Asher-Greve 1985: 84 nos. 551, 555).

Can we identify females of royal couples with historical queens? Only one door plaque and a few seals are inscribed. That the donor of the plaque (no. 568) was an elite man rather than a king may have been atypical (Suter 2016: 343). Most of the seal inscriptions (in Table 3.1: ED nos. 620, 626, 629, 631–632, 636; Akk nos. 4–7, 35–36) are confined to a personal name with no determinative, which rarely permits the determination of sex. Four seal owners were definitely women based on the addition of a gender-specific title or the identification as wife of their husband: Queen Puabi of Ur (no. 626 = [Figure 3.1](#)); Gankunsig, *ereš-dingir* (see Gadotti and Michel, this volume) of the god Pabilsag (no. 631); Uqnitum, wife of king Tupkiš of Urkeš (no. 35–36); and Nin-melila, wife of Ur-dada (no. 7). Whether these women were the same person as the female banqueter can be ascertained only for the peripheral Queen Uqnitum, who appears not only on several seals of her own but also on the seal of her children's wet nurse Zamena (see below).



[Figure 3.1](#) Seal of Queen Puabi from Ur, 4.9 cm high. (Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.)

I tend toward taking most seal owners to be subordinates of the depicted royal couple based on their anonymity or lack of a title and the generally mediocre quality of the seals, especially in the Akkad

period. Exceptions other than Uqnītum may be Puabi and Gankunsig, whose seals not only identify them with a title, but are also of high quality, made of precious lapis lazuli, and come from the Royal cemetery. It is noteworthy that the second scenes of their two-registered seals are both staged in a male sphere, and that Puabi is the only Sumerian queen whose seal depicts banquet imagery. Seals of other Early Dynastic queens as well as women of the Akkad court, who received their seals from the king, depict virile animal combats, the preferred seal image of kings (Otto 2013: nos. 1, 4, 6, 11, 20; Rohn 2011: nos. 230, 234). If Gankunsig is depicted on her seal, this Early Dynastic *ereš-dingir*-priestess was not differentiated from queens and other elite women in attire and hairstyle, much like later holders of this office, who were apparently not entitled to insignia in contrast to the en, the foremost high priestess (Suter 2007: 318–319, 339).

One relief and ten seals depict banquets confined to a female sphere. Four of them are inscribed: the four-sided stela of Ur-Nanše of Lagaš from al Hiba (no. 556 = [Figure 3.2](#)) which commemorates his temple building, and three seals from Urkeš (no. 37–39), two belonging to Queen Uqnītum and one to Zamena, the wet nurse of her children. Ur-Nanše's stela includes the king's wife and daughter seated facing each other in a self-contained sub-scene below the king and his cupbearer, who approach, together with three other male figures, the enthroned goddess on the main side. While the king and his male entourage encounter the goddess, his wife and daughter share with her the enthroned position and the banqueter's attributes, evoking the theme of procreation and succession to the throne. The seals from Urkeš depict the banqueting queen surrounded by her children. It is telling that when Uqnītum is depicted banqueting with her husband (nos. 35–36), it is her husband who raises the cup and the crown prince is shown touching his lap, whereas when she is staged in a female sphere (nos. 37–39), she raises the cup and her daughter touches her lap (Ziffer 2005: 138–139; see also Kelly-Buccellati, this volume).



Figure 3.2 Ur-Nanše's stela from al-Hiba, 91 cm high (drawing by author).

Banquets of a high priestess with her god are confined to the hegemonies of the Akkad and Ur III Dynasties, the two short periods during which Mesopotamian kings deified themselves. en-priestesses who were daughters of kings are first attested under the Akkad Dynasty. This institution served both practical and ideological purposes: to bring major temple estates of the Sumerian cities under the control of the crown and to make the hegemonic kings fathers-in-law of major gods. One of the two reliefs (Suter 2007, fig. 4) seems to be a provincial epigone of now lost door plaques of high priestesses of the house of Akkad, while the fragmentary Ur III plaque (Suter 2007, fig. 14) preserves only the typical figure of an en-priestess.⁷ In contrast to queens and other elite women, the foremost high priestesses are seen wearing their hair loose, a special headgear, and a flounced robe (Suter 2007); headgear and robe were insignia of their office. These high priestesses are the only individuals aside from the king that are depicted with insignia and in an enthroned position in statuary. All statuettes of high priestesses depict them enthroned, possibly alluding to their banquet with a god. The occasion for such banquets must have been the high priestess's enthronement which was recorded in year names and ceremonially celebrated in analogy to a wedding feast (Sallaberger and Huber Vulliet 2005: 622–623; see also Michel, this volume).

Libation scenes

The few libation scenes date to the same periods as the banquets and feature the same protagonists: either a royal couple, women only, or a high priestess. The libation can thus be perceived as another episode of either a state cult festival, a women's festival, or a festival revolving around a high priestess.

The two seals depicting a libation offered by a royal couple show the ruler with a sacrificial animal, followed by his consort with a pail, before a deity, whereby either the king himself or an acolyte preceding him pours the libation (no. 46–47, [Figure 3.3](#)). The fragmentary door plaque from Tello (no. 558), which preserves a male figure carrying a sacrificial animal followed by a female figure, may have depicted such a libation.

Six Akkad-period seals depict a woman, either alone or followed by a woman with a pail or by a protective Lama goddess, pouring a libation to an enthroned goddess, whom some seals identify as Ištar. This recalls the close relationship of Ur III queens with Inana-Ištar (Weiershäuser 2008). One of the three inscribed seals belonged to the woman Ištar- x?-dug₃ (no. 42), one to a man (no. 41), and one to a supervisor who could have been either male or female (no. 40). In the case of male owners, the female libationer is likely to represent their superior, and the same may apply to female seal owners.

Whereas on Akkad-period seals libations are more frequently offered by men than by couples or women, under the Lagaš II and Ur III Dynasties the king alone is seen offering a libation into a vessel with date palm shoots (Suter 2010: 323, 338–339). It thus appears that the king gradually appropriated the symbol of procreation previously associated with the royal couple.

The only identified high priestess offering a libation is Enheduana, daughter of Sargon of Akkad and high priestess of Nanna in Ur, who is wearing the typical attire of the *en*-priestess on the unusual, two-sided object bearing her inscription and found much damaged in the Gipar of Ur ([Figure 3.1](#)), home of the high priestess of Nanna. Irene Winter (1987) observed the close parallels of the libation scene carved on this object with those on an Early Dynastic door plaque from the same Gipar (no. 557) and an Early Dynastic seal (no. 585), arguing that the anonymous images also depicted high priestesses. The libation scene presided over by a high priestess and poured by a male acolyte may represent another episode of the festivities of the high priestess's enthronement, in which the local ruler and his wife could take part as

the Early Dynastic door plaque suggests.



Figure 3.3 Seal of Daqum, 3.1 cm high. (Courtesy of the Yale Babylonian Collection.)

Presentation scenes

Typical presentation scenes depict the introduction of a mortal by a Lama goddess to an enthroned deity. Variations include more than one presentee, other intermediaries, and standing deities. The presentation scene can be understood as a mortal's petition for divine blessing, while at the same time conveying this mortal's nexus to the divine world. Presentations of women make up about 18 percent of the images under review. They date mainly from the Akkad and post-Akkad periods, but also from the Ur III period, by which time the presentation scene had superseded the banquet scene (Zajdowski 2013). In contrast to kings, whose presentation to a deity can be carved on monumental stelae, presentations of women are confined to glyptic.

The protagonists of presentations featuring women are either royal couples or women. Royal couples are usually introduced to a god; women are invariably introduced to a goddess. Royal couples can carry the same offerings as in libation scenes: the ruler, a sacrificial animal; his wife, a pail (in [Table 3.1](#), nos. 80–90). In presentations of women, the exceptional second woman also carries a pail (no. 48).

While seals depicting presentations of couples could belong to men and women other than the presentees (nos. 33, 80–82), those depicting presentations of women belonged to women who were in all likelihood the presentees themselves (nos. 48, 50–55, 59, 64–72, 76–77). The seal depicting two female presentees (no. 48 = [Figure 3.4](#)) belonged to Takunai, the wet nurse of the female estate administrator, Timmuzi's, daughter. It is a superb seal of lapis lazuli and depicts Lama's introduction of a distinctively dressed woman, followed by a commonly dressed woman with pail, to the birth goddess, Ninhursag. The formulation of its inscription suggests that Timmuzi presented it to her subordinate. Did the women represent Timmuzi and Takunai or Takunai and an anonymous subordinate of her? In any case, this seal highlights that the order in which presentees appear was guided by hierarchy. Thus royal wives following with a pail behind their husband must have been considered inferior in rank to them.



Figure 3.4 Seal of Takunai, 3.3 cm high. (Courtesy of the Bible Lands Museum Jerusalem.)

Audience scenes

The audience scene is a type of presentation in which a presentee pays homage to a superior mortal rather than to a deity.⁸ The presentee's recognition by his/her superior confirmed the authority and hierarchy established by the ruling class. If a ceremony lay behind this scene, it

may have been the petitioner's installation in office. The presentee always represents the seal owner. High officials often received such seals from the king. Although the best attested audience scenes show Ur III kings receiving their subordinates, it may well be that the image of the king receiving a subordinate in audience was introduced by Naramsin of Akkad (Braun-Holzinger 2007: 87–88 based on Boehmer 1965: fig. 656). Audience scenes featuring women amount to about 20 percent of the images under review and date to the same periods as presentation scenes. Women appear both as superior and as presentee, the former mainly in the Akkad and post-Akkad period, the latter in Ur III times.

Women holding audience were queens or high priestesses. They generally receive women in audience, only exceptionally a man. Two women of the house of Akkad are depicted on seals of their subordinates: Šarkališarri's Queen Tutašarlibbiš on the seal of her male estate manager, Dada (no. 91), and Naramsin's daughter, Tutanapšum, high priestess of Enlil in Nippur, on the seal of her female servant, Aman-Aštar (no. 92 = [Figure 3.5](#)). Since Dada's seal names the king before his consort and her servant, the king granted it to Dada. Neither Aman-Aštar's seal nor that of the brewer, Lillum, seen in audience with an Ur III high priestess of Inana (Suter 2007: 328–329, fig. 7) mention the king. Whereas on seals depicting the Ur III king holding audience, the petitioner is usually introduced by a Lama and only high functionaries stand directly before him (Suter 2010: 339–342 with further literature), on the seals depicting identified royal women holding audience, the petitioner stands directly before them. Whether this direct access was due to the seal owner's high rank or to the fact that their superior was a woman, cannot be answered. By contrast, 12 post-Akkad audiences depict the introduction of a woman by a woman to an enthroned woman ([Table 3.1](#) nos. 120–131).



Figure 3.5 Seal of Aman-Aštar. (After Ball 1899: 153.)

Thirteen Akkad-period seals and nine post-Akkad seals, all anonymous, show a row of women standing before an enthroned woman (nos. 94–106, 109–117). The combination of this scene, together with a libation poured by a woman (no. 45 = [Figure 3.6](#)) suggests that such gatherings formed part of women's cult festivals as attested in Ur III times. Several clues hint at procreation as the theme of such festivals. The enthroned woman sometimes has a child on her lap (nos. 105, 106), like the banqueting Queen Uqnītum (nos. 35, 39). Many scenes include a tree or vegetal element (nos. 45, 98, 100, 102, 111, 116, 117). Variants on the same topic combine a row of four standing women plus a tree with three women around a date palm (no. 118), or two women flanking a vessel with a date palm shoot (no. 119), just like that into which Lagaš II and Ur III kings offer libations.

By Ur III times, royal women cease to appear on seals of their subordinates (Suter 2008: 14, note 25). Instead, the king's concubines, sisters, and other elite women received seals from the king that depicted them as petitioners before him (nos. 132–137, [Figure 3.7](#)), just like elite men. The door plaque of Ur-Nanše that shows him as temple builder and banqueter, each time facing a group of family members and high officials, may be a precursor of such an audience if the second prominent figure is indeed his daughter whom he installed as a high priestess (no. 559). The only relief image of the Akkad to Ur III period that features women is a stela fragment attributable to Gudea of Lagaš, probably depicting court musicians (ST.15).

In contrast to the Early Dynastic period, few stone statues have survived from the Akkad to Ur III period. Those of women are generally small statuettes, while those of kings can be over life-size. The majority of female statuettes come from Lagaš and date to its

Second Dynasty (Suter 2008: 7–11, 24). This picture, however, may be deceiving, since texts inform us that statues of royal wives of Akkad and the Third Dynasty of Ur, were made of metal, like those of kings. Figures of the type of Ur III royal women depicted in contexts that suggest the depiction of protective spirits on post-Ur III seals and terracottas, imply the existence of memorable statues of Ur III royal women (Suter 2008: 11, 17; 2010: 328–329).



Figure 3.6 Seal from Ur, 4.5 cm high. (Courtesy of the Penn Museum, Image #253519.)



Figure 3.7 Seal of Waqartum, ancient impression c.2 cm high (composite drawing by author).

Conclusions

The surviving images featuring early Mesopotamian royal women are largely carved in stone. With one exception, they were not intended for public display. The discussed narrative images comprise 25 non-monumental reliefs originally set up inside temples, as were the c.300 statuettes only touched upon in this contribution, 1 monumental one, and 214 cylinder seals used in urban administration. The patrons of most reliefs and seals were in all likelihood not the women depicted, but their husbands, fathers, or subordinates. The women represent queens, royal concubines, local ruler's wives, high priestesses, and their high-ranking female subordinates. Their look was stereotypical. High priestesses are seen wearing insignia of their office that distinguished them from other royal women, whereas queens are seen wearing the same garments and hairstyles as their subordinates; only exceptionally is a superior's garment more elaborate.

The narrative contexts in which royal women appear—banquet, libation, presentation, audience—can be interpreted as episodes of cult festivals or court ceremonies. At the same time, they visualized established authority and social hierarchy. While the message about power networks remained the same over time, the depicted activities shifted from banquets in which royals represented deities, to scenes of worship in which they are seen performing offerings or simply standing before a deity. Three spheres of protagonists can be

discerned across these scenes: the royal couple in state festivals, the queen in women's festivals, and the high priestess during her enthronement celebrating her marriage to a god. With the shift of scene, the perspective changed from group to individual. This change may explain why more than half of the discussed images depict banquets and date to Early Dynastic times when Mesopotamia was composed of a plurality of competing city-states.

The more mundane audience scene was introduced at the beginning of this shift. Both queens and high priestesses are seen receiving subordinates in audience, like kings. In contrast to royal wives, high priestesses are never seen in audience with the king, with the possible exception of an Early Dynastic precursor, and seals of their subordinates were apparently commissioned by them rather than by the king. The decreasing importance of royal wives and increasing importance of high priestesses under hegemonic, self-deified, and polygamous kings was doubtlessly related to the diverging principal role of these women: royal wives were to produce heirs to the throne, while high priestesses related the king to major gods of his realm. All royal women did indeed "further the interests of the royal family as a whole."

Notes

- 1 For statues, see Asher-Greve 1985: nos. 301–555, Suter 2007: table 1, idem 2008: table 1; for inlays, Asher-Greve 1985: nos. 564, 580–581; for reliefs and glyptic, see [Table 3.1](#).
- 2 While some larger-sized inlays made of light colored stones decorated wall panels in palaces and temples, the majority were made of shell, sometimes also mother of pearl or ivory, and decorated wooden luxury goods of royals; see also Moorey 1994: 136–137. The fragmentary inlays of royal women belonged to the latter.
- 3 Candidates for male statues dedicated by elite men, but possibly having the king as patron, are Gudea Statue R and the statue of Šulgi-kiursagkalama, see Suter in press. If so, then the king may also have been the ultimate patron of statues of queens and royal daughters.
- 4 Inlay fragments of seated women likely belonged to this type of banquet (Asher-Greve 1985: 94 no. 564, and 97 nos. 580–581). The damaged figure on the upper left behind the king on the Standard of Ur probably depicted a queen.
- 5 So also Winter (2000: 22, note 3), and Romano (2010: 56–58); I cannot agree with Evans (2012: 168–170), who sees semidivine, mythological beings in these two statues.
- 6 See Asher-Greve 1985: 73–76, with table 3, for females, and Marchesi and Marchetti 2011: 204 with pl. 61: 1 for a male.
- 7 For illustrations and descriptions, see Suter 2007: figs. 4 and 14, and idem 2016: 339–341.

- 8 The terms “presentation scene” and “audience scene” have been variously defined by different authors (Rohn 2011: 65–66). My use is based on meaning rather than form (composition, posture, and gesture), distinguishing between divine and mortal superiors.

References

- Asher-Greve, J. M. (1985) *Frauen in Altsumerischer Zeit*, Malibu, CA: Undena Publications.
- Boehmer, R. M. (1965) *Die Entwicklung der Glyptik während der Akkad-Zeit*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Braun-Holzinger, E. A. (1991) *Mesopotamische Weihgaben der Frühdynastischen bis Altbabylonischen Zeit*. Heidelberg, Germany: Heidelberger Orientverlag.
- Braun-Holzinger, E. A. (2007) *Das Herrscherbild in Mesopotamien und Elam: Spätes 4. bis frühes 2. Jt. V. Chr.* Münster, Germany: Ugarit-Verlag.
- Dolce, R. (1978) *Gli intarsi mesopotamici dell'epoca protodinastica*. Rome: Istituto di studi del Vicino Oriente.
- Evans, J. M. (2012) *The Lives of Sumerian Sculpture: An Archaeology of the Early Dynastic Temple*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Marchesi, G. and Marchetti, N. (2011) *Royal Statuary of Early Dynastic Mesopotamia*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Matthews, D. M. (1995) Artisans and artists in the Ancient Near East. In J. M. Sasson (ed.) *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, pp. 455–468.
- Mayr, R. H. and Owen, D. I. (2004) The royal gift seal in the Ur III Period. In H. Waetzoldt (ed.) *Von Sumer nach Ebla und zurück: Festschrift Giovanni Pettinato zum 27. September 1999 gewidmet von Freunden, Kollegen und Schülern*. Heidelberg, Germany: Heidelberger Orientverlag, pp. 146–174.
- Melville, S. C. (2005) Royal women and the exercise of power in the Ancient Near East. In D. C. Snell (ed.) *A Companion to the Ancient Near East*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, pp. 219–228.
- Michalowski, P. (2013) Networks of authority and power in Ur III Times. In S. Garfinkle and M. Molina (eds) *From the 21st century BC to the 21st century AD: Proceedings of the International Conference on Neo-Sumerian Studies held in Madrid, July 22–24, 2010*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, pp. 169–205.
- Moorey, P. R. S. (1994) *Ancient Mesopotamian Materials and Industries: The Archaeological Evidence*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.

- Otto, A. (2013) Königssiegel als Programm: Überlegungen zum Selbstverständnis altorientalischer Herrscher und zur Deutung der Tierkampfszene. *ZA* 103: 45–68.
- Pittman, H. (2012) Seals and sealings in the Sumerian world. In H. Crawford (ed.) *The Sumerian World*. London: Routledge, pp. 319–341.
- Robins, G. (1993) *Women in Ancient Egypt*. London: British Museum Press.
- Rohn, K. (2011) *Beschriftete Mesopotamische Siegel der Frühdynastischen und der Akkad-Zeit*. Fribourg, Switzerland: Academic Press.
- Romano, L. (2010) Who was worshipped in the Abu Temple in Tell Asmar? *KASKAL* 7: 51–65.
- Ross, J. C. (2005) Representations, reality, and ideology. In R. Bernbeck and S. Pollock (eds) *Archaeologies of the Middle East: Critical Perspectives*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, pp. 327–350.
- Sallaberger, W. and Huber Vulliet, F. (2005) Priester. *A. I. Mesopotamien*. *RLA* 10: 617–640.
- Selz, G. (1983) *Die Bankettszene*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Freiburger Altorientalische Studien 11.
- Suter, C. E. (2007) Between human and divine: High priestesses in images from the Akkad to the Isin-Larsa period. In M. Feldman and J. Cheng (eds) *Ancient Near Eastern Art in Context: Studies in Honor of Irene J. Winter*. Boston, MA: Brill, pp. 315–359.
- Suter, C. E. (2008) Who are the women in Mesopotamian art from ca. 2334–1763 Bce? *KASKAL* 5: 1–55.
- Suter, C. E. (2010) Ur III kings in images: A reappraisal. In H. D. Baker, E. Robinson and G. Zólyomi (eds) *Your Praise Is Sweet: A Memorial Volume for Jeremy Black from Students, Colleagues, and Friends*. London: British Institute for the Study of Iraq, pp. 319–349.
- Suter, C. E. (2012) Kings and queens: Representation and reality. In H. Crawford (ed.) *The Sumerian World*. London: Routledge, pp. 201–226.
- Suter, C. E. (in press) Statuary and reliefs. In A. C. Gunter (ed.) *A Companion to the Art of the Ancient Near East*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Suter, C. E. (2016) On images, visibility, and agency of early Mesopotamian royal women. In L. Feliu, F. Karahashi, and G. Rubio (eds) *The First 90 Years: A Sumerian celebration in Honor of Miguel Civil*. *Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Records* 12. Boston: Walter de Gruyter, pp. 330–355.
- Weiershäuser, F. (2008) *Die Königlichen Frauen der III. Dynastie von Ur*. Göttingen, Germany: Universitätsverlag.

- Winter, I. J. (1987) Women in public: The Disk of Enheduanna, the beginnings of the office of EN-Priestess and the weight of visual evidence. In J.-M. Durand (ed.) *La femme dans le Proche-Orient Antique: Compte rendu de la XXXIIIe Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale*. Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, pp. 189–202.
- Winter, I. J. (2000) The eyes have it: Votive statuary, Gilgamesh's axe, and cathected viewing in the Ancient Near East. In R. S. Nelson (ed.) *Visuality Before and Beyond the Renaissance*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 22–44.
- Zajdowski, K. (2013) Transformation of the Mesopotamian banquet scene into the presentation scene in the Early Dynastic, Akkadian and Ur III periods. *Akkadica* 134: 1–16.
- Zettler, R. L. (1977) The Sargonic royal seal: A consideration of sealing in Mesopotamia. In M. Gibson and R. D. Biggs (eds) *Seals and Sealing in the Ancient Near East*. Malibu, CA: Undena Publications, pp. 33–39.
- Ziffer, I. (2005) From Acmhöyük to Megiddo: The banquet scene in the art of the Levant in the second millennium BCE. *Tel Aviv* 32: 133–167.

WOMEN'S POWER AND WORK IN ANCIENT URKESH

Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati

Introduction: the uniqueness of Urkesh glyptics

Urkesh, modern Tell Mozan in northeastern Syria, was founded in the fourth millennium and reached its political apogee in the late third millennium BCE. The inscriptional and prosopographic evidence indicate that the population was predominately Hurrian. The royal family maintained close political and marital connections with the Semitic-speaking populations to the south, especially as allies of the Akkadian Empire.

The visual corpus from the Urkesh excavations stems mainly from the large number of seal impressions found broken on the floors of several rooms and a courtyard of the administrative portion of the Akkadian period palace (Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 1995/6, 1996, 1998, 2002; Kelly-Buccellati 2009, 2015).¹ We have interpreted this area of the palace as belonging to the administrative sector under the control of the queen, Uqnitum, based on the fact that the largest number of sealings is connected with her and her servants (Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 1995/6: 29). All the inscribed seal impressions had been used to seal containers, including baskets, jars, boxes, and sacks. These containers were opened in this area of the palace by breaking the sealings, so that they were scattered over the floors. While no original seal design was preserved intact, painstaking work on the reconstruction of the designs allowed us to recover inscribed seal designs of the royal family and their servants. The reconstructions were even more difficult because of the unique iconography of these inscribed Urkesh seals. The seal designs have a unique mix of cultural expressions which are both authentic and authoritative. The secular scenes belonging to the queen, Uqnitum, and the king, Tupkish, have a tangible immediacy with scenes rendered in a vivid and realistic

manner, and just as important, are personally specific to these monarchs. Seals of two other important women in the court have these same characteristics: Zamena, the wet-nurse of Uqnitum, and Tuli, the cook of Uqnitum. No other Mesopotamian corpus of seal designs, from any time period, have such a personal specificity as well as a detailed expression of the culture. Urkesh artists succeed in representing everyday events without trivializing them. Part of this is because each scene is unique in iconography. Each scene contains multiple registers of information which can be “read” in various ways by different groups (Kelly-Buccellati 2009, 2015). The distinctiveness of the iconography and its employment by a number of individuals in the Urkesh royal court points to the existence of an independent artistic tradition which had the freedom to create new designs that served the Urkesh patrons and were at the same time independent of the iconographic traditions in the south. In the case of Uqnitum, she has an Akkadian name, not a Hurrian one; if she did indeed come from the Akkadian court in the south, she did not bring with her southern iconographic design schemes, at least in the corpus of her seals and those connected with her. Additionally, the seal inscriptions contain more information about the seal owners and their relationships. In Urkesh, the vehicle for transmitting the messages of both Uqnitum and Tupkish was the seals belonging to them personally, as seen from the seal inscriptions. As we have reconstructed her seal use, it is not that Uqnitum herself used all the seals belonging to her, sealing herself the numerous containers attested in the palace, but she had a number of personal servants who could seal the containers in her name. Since these visual and textual messages were transmitted on seals which were used for the queen’s administration, there was a constant exhibition and reminder of these messages through the continuous stream of repeated images provided by the use of these seals by her officials.

The context of these sealings is clear in that the inscribed royal sealings came for the most part from rooms associated with a working courtyard in palace sectors E and F (Figure 4.1). They were not grouped, but rather were scattered over successive floors in sector B, in the kitchen (sector D), and in the working courtyard itself (sectors E and F). But the vast majority came from the large room in sector B. We have interpreted this room as functioning as an entry point for goods in containers arriving in the palace, probably from outlying villages and farms, sealed by her servants with her seals. The sealings found in the kitchen would probably have been on containers needed there. A group of the same sealings of royal individuals came from a different context and had a different depositional history in that they

were found in a group in a restricted area of A7, probably because they were stored in a bag of which we had no traces. From evidence of administrative practices elsewhere, it appears that they had been collected for registration.

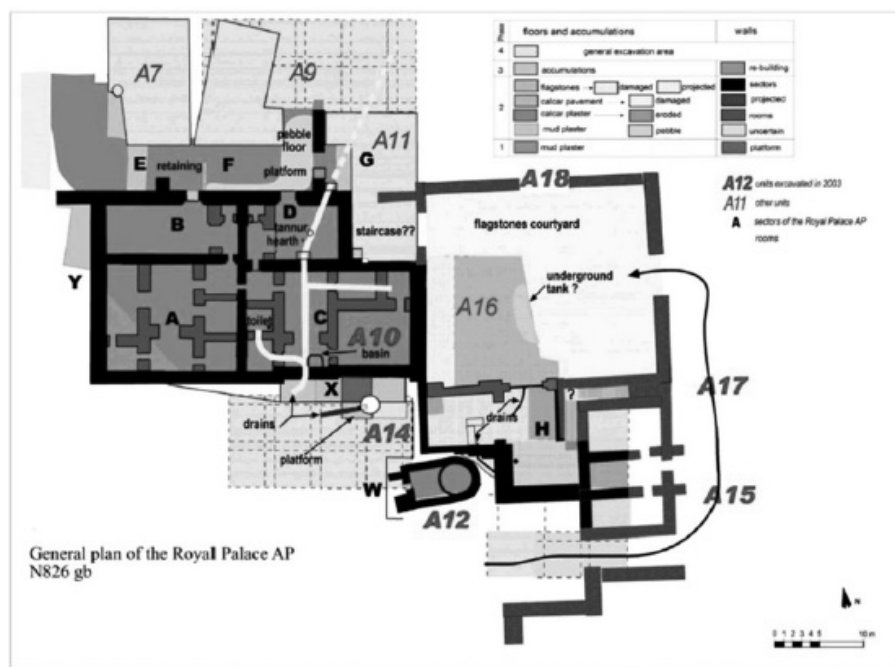


Figure 4.1 Urkesh palace plan, c.2250 BC.

While the role of these women in the palace is clear, it is not clear from the part of the excavations already completed where these women would have lived. We know from the texts connected with the Mari palace, dated to c.1800 BCE, that the royal household did live within the palace (Margueron 1982 vol. I: 367; Durand 1987: 44 and especially fn 19). From the Urkesh evidence, the number of high royal officials who were women would not have been very high, so the palace sector for their living quarters probably was small. It is also not clear whether other women, such as singers and musicians, would have lived in the palace. In the later palace of Mari, under the reign of Yasmah-Addu, Durand indicates based on oil distribution lists that there were approximately 44 women living there. In the reign of Zimri-Lim, the archives indicate a much larger number, approximately 232 women (Durand 1987: 84–87).²

Representations of women in Urkesh from cultic settings

Before discussing the “real women” of Urkesh, three important objects from the Urkesh excavations representing women should be mentioned. Two are clay objects fashioned in the image of a nude woman. One was excavated in a deep pit (A12f194) which we have reconstructed as a *favissa*, which is a pit where ritual objects, no longer in use, were interred; this one in Urkesh is dated to the fourth quarter of the third millennium (Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 2000: 156–161). The second image of a nude female is one of the rare ritual vessels found inside the deep underground structure identified as an *abi*, the Hurrian word for the necromantic pit used in Hurrian but not Mesopotamian rituals (Kelly-Buccellati 2002). Even though these two examples are not of actual women, they do have in common with the women discussed below the fact that they are shown “working.” And both the statuette and the vessel in the shape of a nude woman were both excavated in ritual contexts. Neither one is shown to be a divinity, but both are physically connected to the objects associated with their work: the bowl shape on top of the head of the female statuette and the small jar carried on the head of the nude female in the shape of a jar.

A small ceramic statuette of a woman (A12.30)

This nude woman (Figure 4.2) is a little more than 29 cm tall and has a hollow base and a deep bowl-like depression at the top of her head. The exact context of her original placement cannot now be determined, but it is clear that she was placed upright as the base is wide enough to firmly hold the solid upper part of her body and head. The bowl-like depression on the top of her head clearly must have held either an object or some material. The fact that she is using her head to carry or at least to support something, connects her with the small vessel in the shape of a nude woman.

The nude woman from the abi (A12.108)

A small jar, found inside the *abi*, was made in the shape of a nude woman carrying a smaller jar-shaped vessel on her head (Figure 4.3). The access to the contents of the vessel is through this small jar. I have interpreted this vessel as possibly a perfume container, since perfume is one of the offerings cited in the Hurrian texts found in Hittite archives used in the necromantic rituals held in the *abi* (Kelly-Buccellati 2002: 135).



Figure 4.2 Nude female statuette from the favissa in A12f194.



Figure 4.3 Small jar in the shape of a nude woman (A12.108).

Woman in the sacrifice scene

Women at work in ritual scenes carved on cylinder seals are rare, but in Urkesh we have excavated a seal of a sacrificial ritual as it is taking place ([Figure 4.4](#)). In it, two priests stand on either side of a newly sacrificed bull whose severed head has been placed at the base of a palm column with a jar positioned on top (Kelly-Buccellati 2005; Recht 2015: 25–27). While the sacrificing priests are male, seated next to the priest holding the sacrificial knife is most probably a woman; she is wearing a pleated robe and has her hair tied up. This is not the typical garment and hair style of priestesses in Mesopotamia, perhaps indicating here that she is a royal wife, who, in Ebla (an advanced urban center in third-millennium Syria) and the south, did have cultic duties (Archi 2002: 4–7; Suter 2007: 317–333). The woman in the Urkesh sacrifice seal is stirring something contained in a tall cylindrical vessel with what appears to be a hoof still attached to part

of the animal's leg. It should be noted that this vessel has a different shape from the one placed on the top of the palm column. The representation of two different vessels emphasizes the action of the woman; her role in mixing the contents of the vessel is a different contribution to the ritual than that of the priests, a fact which is highlighted by the symbolic nature of the palm column. While the goddess Ishtar is connected in seal imagery with the palm tree, this woman is not the deity as she has no horned crown, and she is actively participating in the ritual with an activity that is co-joined with that of the two priests but not subservient to it. Therefore, we see her working, as the two nude women discussed above.

Cultic scenes and women at work



Figure 4.4 Cylinder seal with the representation of a sacrifice (A15.270).

From these examples, we gain an initial perspective of women in the Urkesh society. In all three examples, women play an important role in the cult, not a passive role, but rather an active role, working, as it were, in cultic activities. They are not the subjects of divine worship, but rather human participants in the ritual. We shall see that this is also the case with other human women of Urkesh; they participated actively in the socioeconomic interactions within the palace and by extension the city.

Images of active, working women

Queen Uqnitum

For the queen of Urkesh, Uqnitum, we have attested from our excavations eight different seals, all reconstructed from the large amount of fragments found in the palace. In her own seal iconography, Uqnitum presents herself as queen by calling herself NIN (“Queen/Lady”) and “DAM Tupkish” (“Wife of [King] Tupish”) in her seal legends. Perhaps more importantly, she depicts herself in her own seals; this combination of image and text does not occur in the Akkadian imagery of seals in southern Mesopotamia or western Syria (Pinnock 2008). Additionally, in one of her seals, she is shown as equal to the king. This seal, which we have called the “family scene,” shows both Uqnitum and Tupkish with two children ([Figure 4.5](#)). This power is again demonstrated, in a different way, in the scenes where her daughter touches her lap with the same gesture as the son touching the lap of his father in the “family scene.”

We have preserved only one other image of Tupkish, very similar to the “family scene.” In this seal (k2), we have again the lap-touching scene, but without the queen (Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 1995/6). Tupkish is presumably also depicted as seated on the left in his seal where the scene is the presentation of what appears to be a skein of thread (k1) and may have been depicted on the other four seals belonging to him (*idem*). One male figure, Innin-shadu appears to be important from the evidence of the number of his container sealings excavated on the same floors as those of Uqnitum and servants connected with her. The only other male figure on the container sealings in the Tupkish palace is the bearded figure of a butcher on the seals of Tuli, the cook of Uqnitum (see “Tuli, the cook of Uqnitum,” [Figures 4.9](#) and [4.10](#) below). In the seals owed by Uqnitum, she is shown as wearing a tiered garment draped over one shoulder, long hair braided into one braid shown prominently going down her back with a large braid ornament. Her daughter, where she appears, has the same hairstyle and braid ornament. No other women in the court have this hair style. In her own scenes, Uqnitum sits on a stool with a patterned top, but in the “family scene” she sits on the same stool with vertical rectangular compartments as the king.



Figure 4.5 Urkesh “family scene” (q2).

Her role as queen

The most prominent and clearest expression of Uqnitum as queen occurs on what we have called the “family scene” where she is shown seated opposite the king wearing the very important tiered garment (Figure 4.5). She is holding a small child on her lap while observing another child touching the lap of the king. We have interpreted this as a gesture of filiation and an expression of the will of Uqnitum to have her son seen as the heir apparent. This same lap-touching gesture is reflected in a seal of Tupkish, without the queen (k2) and in the scenes of Uqnitum and her daughter (q4–7 and probably also q8). In the “family scene,” her status vis-à-vis the king is stressed by the fact that she is the same height and seated on the same type of compartmented stool. In this and all her own seals she wears the all-important tiered garment draped over one shoulder.³ Also very significant is q1 (Figure 4.6) where her seal inscription is positioned as if being held on the backs of two bent figures who are working, but in unclear activities. This is the only time she calls herself NIN (Buccellati and Kelly/Buccellati 1995/6).



Figure 4.6 Uqnitum inscription held on backs of two servants (q1).

Uqnitum is the most important woman in the court, as we have no inscribed seals with names of other women except those who are directly connected to her. From the sealings, we get a glimpse of the social order: Uqnitum is the pinnacle at the highest social level; just below her are female servants connected with her followed by unnamed servants, usually women, who are shown working in the seal iconography. Her status is also reflected in the evidence for her administration in the palace as discussed below, but it should be mentioned here that the joint role of king and queen in Ebla (Biga 1987, 1991) is clearly demonstrated in both the texts excavated there and in the placement of statues of both in the contexts of monumental entrances in the Ebla palace (Pinnock 2008: 22–23).

Her role as mother

Uqnitum presents herself as a queen, but one who is intimately connected to her children, both male and female. If we consider all the images of her with her children, then she probably had three children, a son, a daughter, and a very young child, possibly another son. Her visual identity and her proclamation of her status is closely connected with her role as mother (for the theme of women holding

children, see Pinnock 2008: 21–23; Budin 2011: 186–188; Nadali 2014). In the past, I have stressed the political nature of this role (Kelly-Buccellati 2015 with previous references). And surely this is clearly the case. For her son, she wanted the position of heir apparent while Tupkish was living and then to secure the throne for him after Tupkish. This message was communicated through the lap-touching gesture in the “family scene” in the most direct and powerful manner, but in other scenes as well (Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 1995/6; Kelly-Buccellati 2009). She may have been a younger queen and therefore had to maneuver within the palace circles to have this position for her son—though this may have been enhanced by her possible status as a member of the royal family of Akkad. A similar situation is documented in the Ebla texts. Dusigu, a late arrival in the harem of King Irkab-Damu, succeeded in having her son, Ishar-Damu, become the next king even though he was one of many sons and probably the youngest (Biga 2000: 62, 70).

The daughter of Uqnitum is singled out as important with the same lap-touching gesture in the queen’s seals ([Figure 4.7](#)) (Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 1995/6). Royal daughters were often married to other rulers for important political reasons; for example in the Ebla texts, a number of royal daughters are given in inter-dynastic marriages (Biga 1998, 2014 with previous bibliography). Here in the Urkesh seals we see the same gesture of lap touching on the part of her daughter as that seen with the father and son in the “family scene” and in one king’s seal (k2). Additionally, the fact that the young daughter wears her hair in a long braid with the same type of braid ornament as Uqnitum, emphasizes the intimate connection between them as daughter and mother as well as the political importance of Uqnitum and her daughter (Budin 2011: 186–188). That this is a mother–daughter connection is highlighted in the setting of these four seals of mother and daughter found within the palace sector connected with Uqnitum. We can deduce this from the fact that in them, they are surrounded by women, including a singer and lyre player, seem prominently in other seals connected with Uqnitum. Here, however, is a single important variation (q6, q7), the addition of a tall table decorated with bird legs (Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 1995/6). The height of this table emphasizes the fact that her daughter is young as she is barely taller than the table.

Her role as administrator

It appears in all likelihood that sectors B and D and possibly also A and C were centers of activity in the palace, probably controlled by

Uqnitum's administration (Figure 4.1). This complex of rooms is an area of the palace that has limited access through a working courtyard (F. Buccellati forthcoming). While we have no texts from this area of the palace, the very fact that there is such a large number of seal impressions found there and linked directly or indirectly with Uqnitum is impressive: linked directly through her seal inscriptions and indirectly through seal inscriptions of her servants mentioning clearly that they are her servants. Buttressing this interpretation is the fact that there were only a few seal impressions of the King, six but with few actual seal impressions in the context.⁴ It is not that we think the administration of the king was smaller or nonexistent, but rather it may have been located in another part of the palace, possibly connected with sector H and the associated flagstone courtyard.⁵ This to some extent corresponds to the later evidence we have from the distribution of tablets in the Old Babylonian palace of Mari (a royal city and second-millennium rival of Old Babylon in Syria), c.1800 BCE (Durand 1987: 80–89).



Figure 4.7 Uqnitum and her daughter (q4).

Uqnitum had a number of seals in this corpus; eight in all have been reconstructed. Many have very similar designs. This was an administrative device whereby high level administrators closely connected with Uqnitum had the authority to use a seal belonging to her, indicated both by the inscription and the seal design showing her as the central figure (Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 1995/6: 28). This unique administrative device assures that the power of these high level administrators and the details of the administrative process are

directly under her personal control. Texts from both Ebla and Mari indicate the various activities the queen is involved with in the palace administration, supported by other men and women. But in Ebla there is no concept of entitlement, only of ownership (Durand 2000: 259–504; Archi 2002; Pinnock 2008: 22–23).

Zamena, the wet-nurse of Uqnitum



Figure 4.8 Seal of Zamena, the wet-nurse of Uqnitum (h2).

Through her seal inscriptions, Zamena identifies herself as the wet-nurse of Uqnitum.⁶ In this way, she is directly connected with Uqnitum through her function in the queen's household. This connection is also emphasized visually in her seal iconography where Zamena is herself shown (Figure 4.8). She is depicted as a short figure standing in front of Uqnitum who is holding a small child. Zamena is not touching the queen, but rather has one hand on the child's lap, perhaps touching the hand, and one hand holding the child's wrist. Zamena is dressed as the other palace servants, even those not named in the seal inscriptions, with a fringed garment and hair tied in a chignon. It is interesting to note that Zamena is depicted on these seals belonging to her as shorter than either Uqnitum or the other servant standing behind the queen. There are various possible interpretations of this discrepancy in height. One is that Zamena herself was short in stature and this characterized her, so much so she had it represented in her seal. But another more nuanced

interpretation could be possible. Her duties in the palace are closely connected with the child, as seen in the inscription and the seal design. Her head is at the same height as that of the child, in this way emphasizing her role.⁷ The space between her head and that of the child contains a star, perhaps indicating a divine presence and possibly approval. There are several other unusual features of Zamena's iconography. While Zamena is wearing the usual fringed garment in her seals, Uqnitum wears this same type of garment. Uqnitum, on all the seals belonging to her wears the more prestigious tiered garment; this is the only case in which she wears the fringed garment. This may denote a more informal setting within her household emphasized by the fact that the servant behind Uqnitum in both the Zamena seals is braiding Uqnitum's hair. From the number of container sealings rolled with Zamena's seals in the palace, we see that she had an important role in the queen's administration. From small divergent details in Zamena's seal designs, we have evidence that she had more than one seal with very similar designs; this is also the case for Uqnitum but not the case for Tuli, see below. We can conclude from this that the role of Zamena in the queen's administration was one of control over the details, but was always connected with the overall administration of Uqnitum. We know from the Ebla texts that wet-nurses are important members of the court and are documented as living in the palace long after the lactation period, some until their death (Biga 2000: 65). Additionally, they can be part of the retinue an Ebla princess brings on her marriage to a foreign prince (Biga 1997: 37).

Tuli, the cook of Uqnitum

Tuli, like Zamena, was a very important administrator in the palace connected with Uqnitum. In her seal inscriptions she is defined as the cook of Uqnitum and her iconography deals with scenes connected with meal preparation, so in a sense a scene from daily life (Figures 4.9 and 4.10). But, unlike Zamena, she is not herself depicted on her seals, probably indicating an association through the administration but not a close personal connection with the queen, even though she is called the female cook of the queen. In other words, her function is more what defines her than a personal connection, but she was important enough to have Uqnitum named in her inscription. The functions she was in control of are depicted clearly and in detail on her seals. In what we assume is the earliest of her two seals, a woman is bending over two jars placed in one basket, probably churning butter (Figure 4.9). Above her, as if hanging, are two legs of meat. The

other figure is a bearded male holding in one hand a knife and in the other a small animal, probably a lamb. In front of this figure is a pedestal with a necked jar placed on its side; it is likely that the pedestal was used during the slaughter of the animal and the jar used to collect the blood (Recht 2015). It is no accident that Tuli chose these figures and their activities. We know this because her original seal was abraded so much so that her name was no longer legible. She had a second seal made for herself and this too contained two figures, a bearded butcher and a woman bending over performing some activity (Figure 4.10). In this later seal, the iconography is not preserved above her except for an incomplete shape, the same shape as the lower portion of the leg of meat in her first seal.



Figure 4.9 Earliest seal of Tuli, cook of Uqnitum (h3).

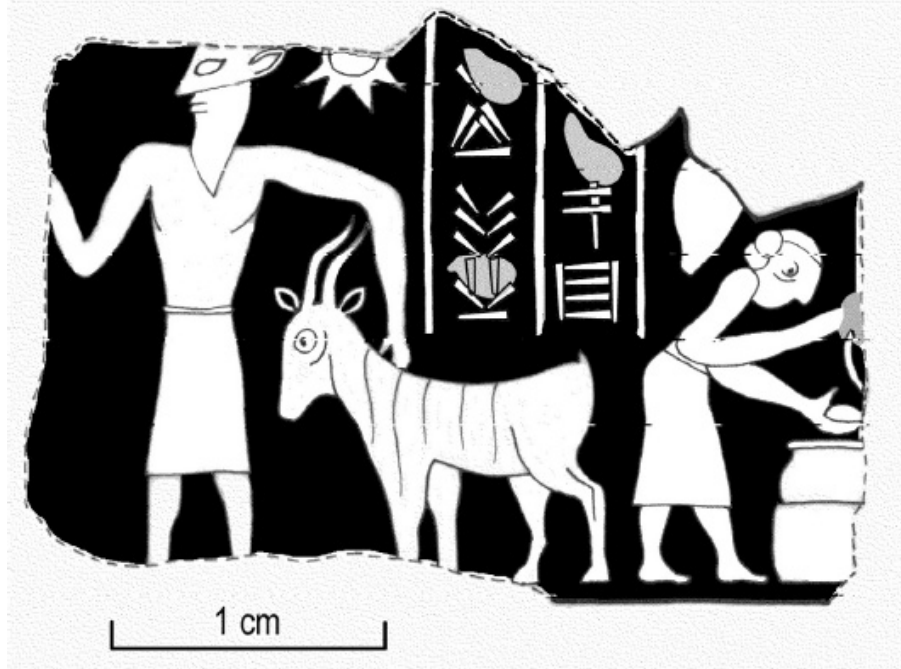


Figure 4.10 Later seal of Tuli (h5).

Tuli and Zamena had a consistent iconography in all the seals that connected them with Uqnitum and explicitly referred to their profession in the palace administrative structure. These two women in Uqnitum's court are connected personally and professionally with her in a very public way. From the number of sealings found on the palace floors in what we have reconstructed as her administrative sectors, clearly they were useful to her in an administrative capacity.

Tar'am-Agade, daughter of Naram-Sin

The other important woman in the Urkesh court is most likely to be understood as the wife of a later king, ENDAN, of Urkesh ([Figure 4.11](#)) (Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 2002). Her seal iconography is the standard Akkadian court image of a contest, an image controlled by the Akkadian chancery in the south. Her seal is carved by one of the most skilled seal carvers in the kingdom as opposed to the seals of the servants of other female members of the Akkadian Dynasty: Tutannapshum, Enmenanna, and Tuta-shar-libbish (Kelly-Buccellati 2009: 188–189). As is the case for Uqnitum, she owns her seal directly and this may be a reason that a master seal carver made her seal. The evidence we have for her comes from door sealings, indicating that

the seal was used in the palace and that more than likely she was there in Urkesh herself. In contrast, we have no door sealings associated with Uqnitum; it is possible that Uqnitum did have a seal with a southern seal design that she would personally have used in contrast to the ones owned by her but used by her officials. The seal iconography of Tar'am-Agade communicates in a clear way her political status, both because of the seal design and because she claims in the seal inscription to be a daughter of Naram-Sin (Kelly-Buccellati 2009). Thus her importance extends beyond Urkesh, as she connects Urkesh to the Akkadian south. It was a common practice to marry royal daughters to other rulers for political reasons. We know for instance from the Ebla texts that a royal daughter, Tagrish-Damu, was married to the son of the ruler of Nagar, Tell Brak, about 60 km south of Urkesh (Biga 1998).

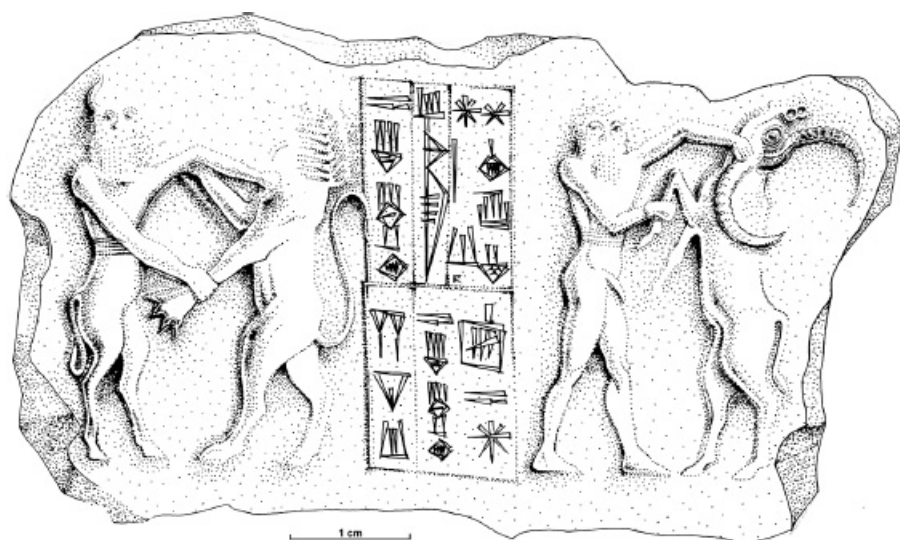


Figure 4.11 Seal of Tar'am-Agade, daughter of Naram-Sin.

Conclusions

From the immediacy of the Urkesh seal iconography, combined with the seal inscriptions, we can obtain a glimpse of the life of the women at that court. This is only the case of the Urkesh women—not the Urkesh men. The seal impressions we have for Tupkish himself (Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 1995/6: fig. 5) are realistic, but the male members of the court (Innin-shadu (idem, fig. 8), Unap-[]

(Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 2002: 25–27), and the seal of DUMU ENDAN (Hauser 2007: 240) all have heraldic scenes which do not reflect their “work.” Even though these seal impressions all came from the same contexts as those of Uqnitum and her attendants, these male retainers have chosen to represent themselves only with more conventional designs.

This is not the case of Uqnitum or her servants who show their power and profession in a very realistic and detailed manner. We see for instance within the physical surroundings of Uqnitum’s sector of the palace that she is relating to her various servants in a variety of situations. One of these was the intimate setting of her encounters with the wet-nurse, Zamena, during which she would hold a child while she was having her hair braided. Even though on the surface this appears to be a casual scene, this act of hair braiding is full of significance. Her long hair braided is characteristic of her and her daughter and one of the most important symbols of their status. No other women in the court have this hair style; the others have the usual tied up hair style which is common in this time period. The same braid ornament is worn by both mother and daughter. Other encounters within the palace with women servants can include her daughter. In the two scenes, which include the lap-touching gesture of her daughter, the iconography is the same except that in one a tall bird-legged table is included. This must have been an important piece of furniture as it appears in other, non-inscribed seals also. In Uqnitum’s personal seals and those of Zamena a singer and lyre player are placed under the inscription and add not only to the prestigious image she wants to project but also appears to situate the scene in her part of the palace (Kelly-Buccellati 2009: 186).

The city of Urkesh during the Akkadian period in the third quarter of the third millennium was a strategic keystone city for trade both north–south and also east–west. If we may assume that Uqnitum was not only Akkadian (her name is Akkadian), but that she was, like Tar’am-Agade, a member of the royal family of Akkad, then we may assume that she might have had an Akkadian-style seal like the later one of Tar’am-Agade. In any case, we may distinguish between a formal seal owned by the queen, and seals with her name used by entitlement by other members of the administration. It is the iconography of these seals where it appears that the role of the women is highlighted in a most realistic fashion. It may then be that the iconography was in fact introduced not only for, but also at the initiative of the women, who would then have had a direct input on the glyptic tradition of Urkesh. Uqnitum, with presumably Tupkish and other important figures in the court, successfully created a unique

system of personal identification and evidence of power. By surrounding herself with women who were probably Hurrian (both Zamena and Tuli have Hurrian names), she indicated that her sphere of influence was also multi-ethnic. The creation of this new, personal, and intimate seal iconography, and its close connection with the seal inscriptions, show her and indeed the contemporary women of the Urkesh court, as being a focal point of new ideas not found in the Mesopotamian south nor western Syria in this time period or before.

Notes

- 1 Most of the Urkesh publications can be found in digital format on the Urkesh website (www.urkesh.org/e-library).
- 2 For an overview of royal imagery, see Suter 2012.
- 3 This garment is also called a flounced robe in the literature, e.g. Suter 2007: 330–331.
- 4 Cf. Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 1998: 196 gives relevant numbers for Uqnitum, Tupkish, and the queen's household.
- 5 Cf. Durand 1987 for a discussion of Zimri-Lim's, the king's, apartments and administration in the Mari palace.
- 6 For the most detailed discussion of all the queen's household members, see Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 1998.
- 7 On another Akkadian seal of Dada, administrator of Tuta-šar-libbiš, his hierarchical position is shown as him being smaller than the seated Tuta-šar-libbiš, but taller than the female servant standing behind her (Amiet 1976, fig. 23; Suter 2008: 14).

References

- Amiet, P. (1976) *L'Art d'Agadé au Musée du Louvre*. Paris: Editions des Musées Nationaux.
- Archi, A. (2002) The role of women in the society of Ebla. In *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East, Proceedings of the XLVII Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale: Helsinki*. Helsinki, Finland: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, pp. 1–9.
- Biga, M. G. (1987) Femmes de la famille royale d'Ebla. In J.-M. Durand (ed.) *La femme dans le Proche-Orient Antique*. Paris, pp. 41–47.
- Biga, M. G. (1991) Donne alla corte di Ebla. In *Memoria di Ebla*, 46. Rome: La Parola del Passato, 285–303.
- Biga, M. G. (1997) Enfants et nourrices à Ebla. *Ktema* 22: 35–44.
- Biga, M. G. (1998) The marriage of the Eblaite princess Tagrish-Damu with the son of Nagar's King. *Subartu* IV: 17–22.

- Biga, M. G. (2000) Wet-nurses at Ebla: A prosopographic study. *Vicino Oriente* 12: 59–88.
- Biga, M. G. (2014) The marriage of an Eblaite princess with the king of Dulu. In S. Gaspa, A. Greco, D. Morandi Bonacossi and S. Ponchia (eds) *From Source to History Studies on Ancient Near Eastern Worlds and Beyond Dedicated to Giovanni Battista Lanfranchi on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday on June 23*. Alter Orient und Altes Testament, 412. Münster, Germany: Ugarit Verlag, pp. 73–79.
- Buccellati, F. (forthcoming) *Three-Dimensional Volumetric Analysis in an Archaeological Context: The Palace of Tupkish at Urkesh and Its Representation*. Bibliotheca Mesopotamica. Malibu, CA: Undena Publications.
- Buccellati, G. and Kelly-Buccellati, M. (1995/6) The royal storehouse of Urkesh: The glyptic evidence from the southwestern wing. *Afo* 42: 1–32.
- Buccellati, G. and Kelly-Buccellati, K. (1996) The seals of the king of Urkesh: Evidence from the western wing of the royal storehouse AK. *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Des Morgenlandes* 86: 65–100.
- Buccellati, G. and Kelly-Buccellati, K. (1998) The courtiers of the queen of Urkesh: Glyptic evidence from the western wing of the royal storehouse AK. *Subartu* 4: 195–216.
- Buccellati, G. and Kelly-Buccellati, K. (2000) The Royal Palace of Urkesh. Report on the 12th season at Tell Mozan/Urkesh: Excavations in area AA, June–October 1999. *Mitteilungen Der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft* 132: 133–183.
- Buccellati, G. and Kelly-Buccellati, K. (2002) Tar'am-Agade, Daughter of Naram-Sin, at Urkesh. In L. Al-Gailani Werr (ed.) *Of Pots and Plans, Papers on the Archaeology and History of Mesopotamia and Syria Presented to David Oates in Honour of His 75th Birthday*. London: Nabu, pp. 11–31.
- Budin, S. L. (2011) *Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity, and Gender in the Ancient World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Durand, J. M. (1987) L'organisation de l'espace dans le Palais de Mari: Le temoignage des textes. In E. Levy (ed.) *Le Systeme Palatial en Orient, en Grèce et à Rome*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 39–110.
- Durand, J. M. (2000) *Les Documents Epistolaires du Palais de Mari*. Presented and translated by J.-M. Durand. Paris: Les Editions du cerf, pp. 259–504.
- Hauser, R. (2007) *Reading Figurines: Animal Representations in Terra Cotta from Royal Building AK*. Vol. Bibliotheca Mesopotamica, 28.

- Urkish/Mozan Studies 5. Malibu, CA: Undena Publications.
- Kelly-Buccellati, M. (2002) Ein Hurritischer Gang in die Unterwelt. *Mitteilungen Der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft* 134: 131–148.
- Kelly-Buccellati, M. (2005) Urkish and the north: Recent discoveries. *Studies on the Civilization and Culture of the Nuzi and the Hurrians* 15. *General Studies and Excavations at Nuzi* 11(1): 3–28.
- Kelly-Buccellati, M. (2009) Uqnitum and Tar'am-Agade patronage and portrature at Urkish. In J. C. Finke (ed.) *Festschrift Für Gernot Wilhelm Anlässlich Seines 65. Geburtstages am 28. Januar 2010*. Dresden: ISLET, pp. 185–202.
- Kelly-Buccellati, M. (2015) Power and identity construction in ancient Urkish. In P. Ciafardini and D. Giannessi (eds) *From the Treasures of Syria*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, pp. 111–130.
- Margueron, J. (1982) *Recherches sur les Palais Mesopotamiens de l'Age du Bronze*. Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner.
- Nadali, D. (2014) Family portraits: Some considerations on the iconographical motif of the “woman with child” in the art of the third millennium BCE. In L. Marti (ed.) *La Famille dans Le Proche-Orient Ancien: Réalités, Symbolismes, et Images*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, pp. 227–239.
- Pinnock, F. (2008) Artistic genres in early Syrian Syria. Image and ideology of power in a great pre-classical urban civilisation in its formative phases. In J. M. Córdoba, M. Molist, M. C. Pérez and I. Rubio (eds) *Proceedings of the 5th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East*, III. Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, pp. 17–30.
- Recht, L. (2015) Identifying sacrifice in Bronze Age Near Eastern iconography. In N. Laneri (ed.) *Defining the Sacred Approaches to the Archaeology of Religion in the Near East*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow Books, pp. 24–37.
- Suter, C. E. (2007) Between human and divine: High priestesses in images from the Akkad to the Isin-Larsa period. In J. Cheng and M. H. Feldman (eds) *Ancient Near Eastern Art in Context: Studies in Honor of Irene J. Winter by Her Students*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 317–361.
- Suter, C. E. (2008) Who are the women in Mesopotamian art from ca. 2334–1763 Bce? *KASKAL* 5: 1–55.
- Suter, C. E. (2012) Kings and queens: Representation and reality. In H. Crawford (ed.) *The Sumerian World*. London: Routledge, pp. 201–226.

MESOPOTAMIAN WOMEN'S CULTIC ROLES IN LATE 3RD–EARLY 2ND MILLENNIA BCE

Alhena Gadotti

Introduction

Mesopotamia, the land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, has yielded thousands of written sources about many facets of its inhabitants' lives.¹ Among others, the roles and positions which women held in society are well documented (e.g., Stol 1995: 123). Archaeological and artistic evidence is also informative, as successfully demonstrated, for example, by J. Asher-Greve (1997) and Z. Bahrani (2001). It is, however, important to note that most of this evidence was produced by men, usually for men, and, in the case of art, it was most likely commissioned by men. Indeed, none of the extant documents was deliberately written or created with the intent to document Mesopotamian women's gender roles (*pace* Harris 2000a).

This chapter focuses on the religious and cultic roles of Mesopotamian women between the late third and early second millennia BCE (c.2350–1720 BCE). This chronological framework was chosen primarily because of the relative continuity of religious institutions during a time when Mesopotamia underwent numerous changes in political powers. The survey is by no means exhaustive, since it would be impossible in such a short communication. Still, some general conclusions will be drawn. In particular, it will emerge how little we know about Mesopotamian women's religious lives despite the plethora of extant documents.

The historical background

The year 2350 BCE traditionally marks the divide between the Early Dynastic Period, a time when Mesopotamia was ruled by a constellation of independent city-states vying for power, and the Old Akkadian Period. In the latter, Mesopotamia was unified in what has been labeled the “First World Empire” (Liverani 1993). Sargon of Akkad (ruled c.2350–2300 BCE) was able to conquer Southern Mesopotamia as well as the peripheral regions to the point that he could claim, in his royal inscriptions, that he controlled the world from the Lower Sea (the Persian Gulf) to the Upper Sea (the Mediterranean Sea).²

The empire Sargon built lasted for approximately 200 years, after which a period of internal fragmentation followed (c.2150–2100 BCE). Then, yet again, Southern Mesopotamia was unified under the so-called Third Dynasty of Ur (or Ur III state), which governed Mesopotamia for a century, before centripetal and centrifugal forces caused the state to collapse and the land to revert to independent kingdoms. The ensuing Old Babylonian Period was also a time of political fragmentation, and saw several Amorite dynasties rising to power in centers such as Isin, Larsa, and Babylon. The rulers of these cities followed the political and religious ideology of the kings of the Third Dynasty of Ur, but only one of them, Hammurapi of Babylon (c.1795–1750), was able to create a short-lived territorial state in Southern Mesopotamia, which did not survive his death. By the end of the eighteenth century BCE, the region’s health was in jeopardy and a period of regression—both economic and social—began.

During its history, Mesopotamia was always a polytheistic society, although deities enjoyed prominence in the pantheon depending on the political rise of their city—for example, the cult of Marduk became more popular as Babylon’s power increased.³ Mesopotamian religion was also always characterized by fluidity, as one would expect for a civilization with a 3,000-year-old history, and inhabited by several different ethnic groups—Sumerians, Akkadians, Amorites, and Assyrians, to name a few. Deities arrived in the region, and they departed, never to be seen again. Deities coalesced through the well-known phenomenon of syncretism. And they separated into new deities, not seen before.⁴ To be sure, some elements of continuity can be identified: deities were worshipped in temples, which are attested as early as the late sixth millennium BCE in the city of Eridu.⁵ The temple was the “house” of the deity, in which he or she resided during his or her sojourn on earth.⁶ The statue of the deity, in which the divine manifested during his or her earthly stay, was, after consecration, regularly taken on processions to display the numinous power of the gods among the people.⁷ And humans, both men and

women were selected to be at the gods' service.

Women and religion

Information about women is abundant, but limited to the elite. We are poorly informed about the lives of the lower class in general and of Mesopotamian lower-class women in particular, since, as it is often the case in ancient societies, the majority of the population was not literate.⁸

When it comes to religious roles, and women's relationship with religion, the data are even more problematic. To begin, it is important to emphasize the underlying distinction between public and personal religion. Although we are relatively well informed about the former, of the latter we know almost nothing, and we have no information about men *or* women's inner spirituality. Further, while we do know that women did have cultic responsibilities, no documents exist describing these responsibilities in detail. Even in well-known cases, such as the EN-priestess and the *naditu*, the sources are often opaque. Yet, a brief sketch is offered below, with one important tenet: Mesopotamian women did not obtain important cultic roles by virtue of their abilities, but rather because of their connection with powerful households. These women could and did become powerful agents in their own right, but they were ultimately subordinated to men.

Three main cultic roles may be ascribed to women: women as professional mourners; women as magic specialists and diviners; and women as priestesses (Marsman 2003: 487). Due to space limitations, this chapter focuses on the third category and touches upon the other two only briefly.

Women as mourners

The role of women as mourners is very well attested cross-culturally, and in the Mediterranean basin it is documented not only in Mesopotamian, but also in Egypt, Greece, and Rome.⁹ Indeed, the connection between women and mourning in Mesopotamia was so profound as to influence an entire literary genre, as recently suggested by Cooper (2006). Data about women employed as professional mourners comes from administrative documents.¹⁰ The practice is recorded in the archives of Garšana, a royal estate during the Third Dynasty of Ur.¹¹ For example, CUSAS 4: 257, 1–6 reads as follows:

1. 85 full-time female weavers
2. (and) 16 weavers at 1/3 wages
- 3.–5. employed for one day to beat their breasts
6. when the king died.

Similarly, CUSAS 4: 252, 1–7 records the following:

- 1.–3. 97 full-time female weavers (and) 15 female weavers at 1/3 wages
4. (and) [n] female spinners
5. employed for 9 ½ days
6. to beat their breasts
7. when Šu-Kabta died.

In both cases, women employed in the general day-to-day activities on the estate were selected for work in the funerary lamentations for the deceased. These were high-ranking individuals (the king, and the head of the household), while the women hired to “cry” at their funeral were clearly not. Indeed, the documents make it clear mourning was not their primary occupation, since they normally worked in the textile industry.

Mourning was not a gender-specific profession in Mesopotamia. This is demonstrated by other documents from the Garšana archives detailing the fact that men too could be employed in this capacity. Whether “to beat one’s breasts” was a ritual act to be performed in such a dire occasion or simply a gesture of grief is not clear from the documents. In addition, a class of male, professional, cultic, lament performers, called GALA, also existed.¹²

Women and magic

Mesopotamian women are also well attested as magic specialists and, to a lesser extent, as diviners.¹³ Y. Sefati and J. Klein recently pointed out that “whereas the law codes, as a rule, do not distinguish between men and women in the laws pertaining to sorcery (i.e., black magic), in the cultic-ritual and other sources the role of women in sorcery far exceeds that of men.”¹⁴ At present, the role of women in witchcraft during the third millennium BCE cannot be studied, as we lack the pertinent documents. Information becomes available in the Old Babylonian Period, when texts portrayed witches in a positive or negative light. The anti-witchcraft incantations discussed more

recently by Sefati and Klein illustrate the perceived perils sorceresses posed to people.¹⁵ Yet, the Sumerian literary composition *Enmerkar and Enšuhkešdāna*, known only from Old Babylonian copies, but possibly dating back to the third millennium BCE, depicts the old woman, Sagburu, who clearly has magical abilities, overpowering a sorcerer and thus obtaining victory for the hero of the tale, Enmerkar.¹⁶ It therefore seems that women who played with supernatural powers could be considered either agents of the gods or sources of danger.

We are less informed about the role of women as diviners, although texts from Mari provide evidence of both professional and lay prophetesses. Mesopotamian women also seem to have played a significant role in the realm of dream interpretation. As such, women's involvement with the sacred and cult went beyond the boundaries normally outlined in the scholarship.¹⁷

Women and the cult¹⁸

The bulk of the extant documentation makes mention of several women's religious offices. However, very little is said about what cultic duties these offices entailed. There is at the same time a certain level of continuity in women's religious roles, as well as some innovations in the period under investigation. Powerful religious offices, such as the EN-priestess and the EREŠ-DINGIR-priestess, are attested throughout (see also Michel, this volume).¹⁹ Conversely, offices such as that of the *nadītu* and the *ugbābtu* are attested only for the Old Babylonian Period. The present survey is by its nature limited and focuses on the better known among these titles: the EN-priestess, the EREŠ-DINGIR-priestess, the LUKUR, and the *nadītu*.

EN-priesthood was most likely the highest religious office in Mesopotamia.²⁰ The person who occupied it was the main religious figure in the cult of the city deity and he was usually a man if the deity was a goddess and a woman if the deity was a god. The best known is the EN-priestess of Nanna, the moon god and patron deity of the city of Ur, historically associated with Enheduana, daughter of Sargon of Akkad. The office most likely originated in the Early Dynastic Period (Winter 1987: 195–200; but see Steinkeller 1999: 124 for a different position), but it rose in power and visibility in the ensuing centuries.

That the EN-priesthood of Nanna was a crucial political, religious, and economic position at Ur and in Southern Mesopotamia is

evidenced by several factors: the fact that upon unifying his empire, Sargon of Akkad chose to install one of his daughters as EN-priestess (Winter 1987: 200); the way in which later literary traditions depicted Enheduana; and the fact that the installation of the EN-priestess was routinely commemorated in the years' names of the rulers of the Third Dynasty of Ur.

According to Mesopotamian tradition, Sargon of Akkad was a former official of the king of Kish, Ur-Zababa, who usurped the throne of Kish and then proceeded to consolidate his control over the rest of Northern Mesopotamia.²¹ His conflict with and victory over Lugalzagesi of Uruk, who had previously unified Southern Mesopotamia, allowed him to unite Northern and Southern Mesopotamia under the leadership of one ruler.²² Because he was a usurper and a conqueror of foreign lands, Sargon had to enact a series of measures meant to legitimize his power, and to better control the newly annexed lands. One of these strategies was to install his own daughter Enheduana as EN-priestess of the temple of the moon god, Nanna, one of the most important sanctuaries of southern Sumer. It has been argued that, "the political use of the religious traditions was an influential and powerful tool that was not to be underestimated and a tool that Sargon applied cleverly" (Heinz 2007: 82). Enheduana therefore found herself at the head of a powerful religious center because of her father's political ambitions.

Although the historicity of Enheduana is not under question, one debated aspect of her biography is whether she was the author of the literary documents attributed to her according to the Old Babylonian tradition. These are the *Sumerian Temple Hymns* and two Sumerian hymns in honor of the goddess, Inana, known among specialists as *Inana B* and *Inana C*.²³ J. Black (2002) questioned Enheduana's role as the composer of the *Sumerian Temple Hymns* and put forward convincing arguments as to why this is an unlikely possibility.²⁴ Similarly, it is questionable whether Enheduana authored the two Inana hymns attributed to her. The problem lays in the fact that the latter are attested only in copies dating to the Old Babylonian Period, more than 500 years after her death. There are no manuscripts from the Old Akkadian and Ur III periods connecting Enheduana to the Old Babylonian exemplars and therefore no direct evidence that the EN-priestess authored these documents. Yet, it is clear that later generations of scribes considered her the author of these compositions. Enheduana was attributed the authorship of these texts, possibly at a later date, not because of her alleged poetic genius but because of the fundamental political and religious roles she played in her father's empire. Indeed, I would go as far as to suggest that

Enheduana's role in Mesopotamian literature is comparable to that of her father, Sargon, who was routinely portrayed in a favorable, almost heroic light well after his death, because of the role he played in creating the first Mesopotamian empire (Van De Mieroop 1999). Similarly, Enheduana was endowed with unconventional literary abilities in the historical memory of the Mesopotamians because of her role in her father's accomplishments.

Sargon's practice of installing a daughter as EN-priestess of Nanna at Ur was such an effective political tool that it was implemented not only by his successors, but also by some of the rulers of the Third Dynasty of Ur and of the Old Babylonian Period. This is confirmed, for example, by the royal inscription found below, which indicates that the EN-priestess was the daughter of the king Ur-Namma, founder of the Third Dynasty of Ur:²⁵

- 1 To Ningal
- 2 His Lady
- 3 For the life of
- 4 Ur-Namma,
- 5 The strong man,
- 6 King of Ur,
- 7 King of Sumer and Akkad,
- 8 Her father,
- 9 En-nirgal-ana
- 10 The EN-priestess of Nanna,
- 11 His beloved child
- 12 Dedicated (this object).

Evidence that the position continued to be of the utmost importance is found in commemorative year names, a calendrical practice introduced in the late Early Dynastic Period.²⁶ Several rulers of the Third Dynasty of Ur named years after the installation of an EN-priestess.²⁷ For example, the 15th regnal year of Šulgi, the second ruler of the dynasty, was the year when "En-nirzi-ana, the EN-priestess

of Nanna, was chosen by extispicy.”²⁸ She was installed in the position two years later, as the name of Šulgi year 17 reminds us. Additional examples are: Šulgi 43b, celebrating the installation of a new EN-priestess of Nanna; Amar-Suena 4 (for which there are three different versions commemorating the choice of a new EN-priestess); Amar-Suena 8, commemorating the installation of the EN-priestess of Enki, the god of wisdom, in his sacred center, Eridu; and Šu-Sîn 1.²⁹

These examples allow for some preliminary remarks about the office of the EN-priestess during the late third millennium BCE. First, the fact that the appointment of a new EN-priestess through oracular procedures was deemed important enough to be commemorated by a year name points to the centrality of the office in the royal ideology. Second, the selection of the office holder seems to have been codified. As far as we can determine, the processes surrounding her election to the office were connected with ritual practices of which we know nothing. Third, an undetermined interval of time could pass between selection and installation, as indicated by Šulgi’s 15th and 17th regnal year names.

Unfortunately, information about the cultic responsibilities of these women is scant. The EN-priestess of the god Nanna resided in the Ur’s ġIPAR, a building specifically erected to house her and an integral part of the sanctuary of the deity the priestess served.³⁰ Although the archaeological remains of this edifice have been extensively studied (at least at Ur), little light has been shed as to what EN-priestesses did in it. *Inana B* briefly addresses this issue and describes some of Enheduana’s cultic responsibilities (see also [Figure 5.1](#)). The relevant section reads as follows (ll. 66–69):

- 67. I, Enheduana, the EN-priestess,
- 66. entered my sacred ġIPAR, in your service.
- 68. I carried the ritual basket and intoned the song of joy.
- 69. (However) my ritual meal was brought to me as if I had never lived there.

Enheduana’s description of her cultic duties is, however, very cryptic, and other documents are equally opaque. Winter (1987: 201) attempted to reconstruct the EN-priestess’s duties through artistic evidence and concluded that:

[t]he EN-priestess did not herself perform ritual libations; that the ritual sequence began with activities outside of the shrine and then continued inside the sanctuary; that animal sacrifice [associated to the cult] is likely to have

been performed out of doors, not inside.

More recently, J. G. Westenholz (1989: 539) focused “on Enheduanna in her public persona” and suggested that she “was considered the embodiment of the goddess Ningal [Nanna’s wife].” She further argued that:

[h]er cultic obligations entailed initiation and ordination rites in the Ekišnugal, the temple of Nanna, and during the period of her ministry she dwelt in her own residence, the *gipāru*, in the holy temenos in Ur, with her own household staff administering the worship service of Ningal and the sacrament of Nanna.

Although tantalizing, these suggestions must remain mere speculations until further documents are uncovered. As much as we may assume that the cultic role of the EN-priestess, at Ur as well as in other Mesopotamian cities, was an important one, no real information exists as to what exactly her duties were. What we do know is the office holder was the head of a powerful and rich household, the temple of the god she served, and that she obtained such position because of her family ties with the ruling royal family.

Equally obscure are the cultic responsibilities of the EREŠ-DINGIR, for which the epigraphic data go back as far as the Early Dynastic Period.³¹ A translation of the title, “lady (who is a) goddess” does not shed any light on the office. According to Steinkeller, “her role was that of a deity’s servant or attendant” (1999: 121), but we cannot be more specific than this. Yet, like the EN-priestess, the EREŠ-DINGIR too could control large estates, and the office holder may have exclusively been selected from the high echelon of the elite.³²



Figure 5.1 Calcite disc with relief scene of Enheduana. (Courtesy of Penn Museum, image no. 150424.)

Probably the most illustrious EREŠ-DINGIR-priestess of whom we have record is Ninšatapada, the daughter of Sîn-kāšid, king of Uruk during the Old Babylonian Period (c.1865–1833 BCE). We know nothing of the circumstances of her installation and very little about her life. However, it appears that she wrote a letter to Rim-Sîn, king of Larsa, who had conquered her hometown, petitioning him to restore her to her position.³³ In this letter, she claims to be:

16. . . . Ninšatapada, the scribe,
17. [The EREŠ]-DINGIR-priestess of Meslamtaea,
18. [Dau]ghter of Sîn-kāšid, king of Uruk.

She offers no information about her cultic responsibilities, but the fact that she used her title before, and not after, mentioning her filiation

suggests that the office she held was powerful. Indeed, as stated above, the available administrative evidence from earlier periods also indicates that the EREŠ-DINGIR controlled much wealth and had ties with the ruling family or, at least, with the ruling elites.

Another poorly understood but well documented office is the institution of the LUKUR.³⁴ Scholars have offered different translations for this term because of the inherent difficulties in interpreting the actual function of this office (Steinkeller 1981: 81). Lexical lists equate Sumerian LUKUR to different Akkadian terms, among which is *nadītu*, discussed below.³⁵ Yet, lexical equivalency does not mean the office of the LUKUR was identical to that of the *nadītu*. Both Sallaberger (1999: 182) and Sharlach (2008) suggest that the role of the Ur III LUKUR was much more complex than the Old Babylonian *nadītu*.

The earliest attestation of LUKUR dates to the Early Dynastic Period. However, since attestations come mostly from administrative documents, no information is available about their religious duties, although these women may have played the role of a god's junior wife (Steinkeller 1981: 81, followed by Sharlach 2008).

The office continues to be in use in the ensuing periods, but matters are complicated by the fact that the term LUKUR becomes, during the Third Dynasty of Ur, a common epithet for royal women. Steinkeller (1981: 81) suggests that kings' wives began to be labeled LUKUR rather than the more common term for wife (Sumerian DAM) as a consequence of the self-deification enacted by the second ruler of the Third Dynasty of Ur, Šulgi, since, "if the LUKUR-priestess was the god's junior wife, then it would be only natural for the wives of Šulgi to have become his LUKURS upon his deification." Yet, the precise meaning of the term has not been determined (Weiershäuser 2008: 238).

Indeed, Sharlach (2008) has recently highlighted the complexities of the word LUKUR. It seems that the term acquired different meanings depending on the context. LUKUR could designate not only the junior wife of the king (a meaning restricted to the Ur III period), but also different categories of priestesses, some of which could marry and have children, and some of which most likely could not. The fact remains that for none of these office holders has additional light been shed on their cultic responsibilities.

During the Old Babylonian Period, as new dynasties took control of Mesopotamia and the land fragmented politically, new offices emerged, and new religious positions became available to women.

Among others, one may mention the *ugbaltu*, the *qadištu*, and the *ištaritu* and the *sekrete*.³⁶ Almost nothing is known of the cultic (and non-cultic) roles of these office holders, although plenty of data exists about the *naditu*, whom some scholars argue was not a priestess in the strict sense of the term.³⁷

Information about the office of the *naditu*, a term meaning “fallow” in Akkadian, comes primarily from three cities: Babylon, Nippur, and Sippar. In each of these cities, the *naditū* (plural) were dedicated to the service of one specific god: Marduk of Babylon, Ninurta of Nippur, and Šamaš of Sippar. Their title, as well as the epigraphic evidence discussed below, indicates that the *naditū* were prohibited from having children and, in certain cases, from marrying and engaging in sexual intercourse. Still, not all *naditū* were equal, and we are not equally informed about them.

Information is limited for the Babylonian *naditū*, but what there is indicates that these women could marry. The *Code of Hammurapi* (henceforth CH) preserves several laws prescribing these women’s lives and behaviors. For example, CH 144 makes it clear that, as long as a *naditu*, who is forbidden from having children, provides her husband with an avenue for having heirs (in this case another woman), he is not allowed to divorce her to marry someone else.

CH 145 allows the husband to marry the *šugitu* (an unclear term designating a class of women) if the *naditu* has not made a concerted effort to ensure her husband has children.³⁸ Still, according to Hammurapi, “that *šugitu* should not aspire to equal status with the *naditu*.” The *naditu*’s status is also protected by CH 146:

If a man marries a *naditu*, and she gives a slave woman to her husband, and she (the slave) then bears children, after which that slave woman aspires to equal status with her mistress—because she bore children, her mistress will not sell her; she shall place upon her the slave-hairlock, and she shall reckon her with the slave women.

The extent to which the *Code of Hammurapi* was applied outside of Babylon, or even in Babylon itself, is unclear and one should not consider these laws pan-Mesopotamian. They do provide us, however, with insight into the complex legal status of these women. If data about the Babylonian *naditu* are scant, the activities of the *naditū* of Nippur and Sippar are much better documented.³⁹

The economic and social roles of *naditū* of Nippur have been extensively investigated (e.g., Stone 1982; Lahtinen 2008) and need not be reviewed here. Their religious functions, conversely, have not

been the topic of much study, because the evidence is once again not very forthcoming. We know that the *nadītu* of Nippur were devotees of the god Ninurta, a warrior deity with a very complex history and mythology.⁴⁰ They were installed to the service of the god following a three-part economic transaction (Stone 1982: 57–59) and, contrary to their Babylonian counterparts, they were not permitted to marry. They had to live in a restricted area called KILUKUR.RA, the “place of the *nadītu*” in the documents. Their religious responsibilities are unknown, since the data are economic and administrative in nature.

In this respect, Stone (1982: 65) suggests that the office of the *nadītu* in Nippur “developed as a response to the social and spiritual needs of the time.” She further indicates that the institution became a “viable alternative” for the “daughters of tribal leaders” who had difficulties finding a spouse (*ibidem*). Alternatively, it is possible that the office was created in order to prevent rich families from progressively diminishing their wealth through the marriage of their daughters. This would give the institution of the *nadītu* an economic *raison d’être*, as opposed to a social and religious one. Be that as it may, this cursory analysis demonstrates that despite the plethora of texts detailing the many economic activities the *nadītū* were involved with, their religious significance remains a mystery.

Equally well attested are the economic roles of the *nadītū* of Sippar, who lived in the *gagûm*, a cloistered area associated with the temple of Šamaš.⁴¹ Their activities are documented in several hundred cuneiform economic documents uncovered in the cloister itself (Jeyes 1983: 261).⁴² The *nadītū* of Sippar came from the city’s wealthiest families, they entered the *gagûm* at an unspecified date, and could not marry.

Information about the cultic roles these women assumed once they entered the *gagûm* is almost non-existent. A few documents indicate that besides being devoted to Šamaš and his spouse, Aja, the *nadītu* of Sippar, had to present daily offerings as well as the so-called *piqittum*, a provision the nature of which is not clear. The limited light the available documents shed on the religious role of the *nadītu* of Sippar may be connected with their intrinsic nature as economic texts, not concerned with religious matters.

Reconstructions of the religious roles of these women have been offered, but remain tentative at best. Thus, Jeyes (1983: 263) mentions an initiation ceremony carried out at the time the *nadītu* entered into the service of the god Šamaš. Similarly, she stresses the importance of the fact that the *nadītu* was the *kallatu* of Šamaš.

Typically, the term designates either a “daughter in-law” or a “bride,” depending on the context. In the case of the *nadītu* of Šamaš, such an epithet has been interpreted differently. Jeyes (1983: 264–265, followed by Westbrook 2003: 423) prefers to see the young woman as having the same position as Aja vis-à-vis the sun god. This would make the *nadītu* the god’s human bride. Conversely, Harris (1964: 113) opts for rendering *kallatu* as daughter in-law of both deities based on philological analysis. The latter option seems to be the most sound, although it does not completely clarify the woman’s cultic roles before the two gods.

A case study about the cultic roles of the *nadītu* of Sippar comes once again from the examination of the life of a royal princess, Erišti-Aja, daughter of Zimri-Lim, king of Mari during the Old Babylonian Period and a contemporary of Hammurapi of Babylon.⁴³ Several letters are preserved which she sent to her father while she served as a *nadītu*. In some of them, she seems to suggest that one of her main responsibilities was religious. Specifically, she prayed constantly for the welfare of her father (Batto 1974: 96). For example, in ARM X 40, ll. 1’-10’, Erišti-Aja complains about the following:

Now the daughters of your house . . . are receiving grain, clothing and good beer rations. As for myself, *I alone am the woman who prays for you* [emphasis added], yet I am not provisioned. I dedicated a sun and my ring for your life, but then Ermi-Addu . . . my ring and my sun [for] his servant.

In other words, Erišti-Aja situated herself in contrast with other “daughters of the house”—presumably her own sisters or half-sisters and sisters-in-law—who did not, like she did, devote their time to their father’s welfare. In other letters too, Erišti-Aja stressed the fact that she spent much of her time praying for her father’s health. The extent to which this was actually true, and not simply the complaints of a spoiled Mari princess, is impossible to determine. Further, Batto (1974: 96) indirectly cautions us about using one example to generalize about the cultic responsibilities of the entire class of priestesses. Yet, since many of the *nadītū* of Sippar were either royal princesses or members of the elite, it may be the case that it was, in fact, their primary role to pray to the gods on behalf of their families.⁴⁴ This conclusion, however, may not be reached for the *nadītū* of Babylon or Nippur.

What the above survey has illustrated is that despite the fact that the documentation about Mesopotamian women is actually quite abundant, very little can be learned about the practical involvement of these women in religious activities. This is because the surviving documents are mostly administrative, legal, and literary in nature, and

they therefore were never meant to record cultic responsibilities. As such, we are able to gain but a tiny glimpse into the spiritual lives of these women, which must have been incredibly rich, but which must remain, at least for now, a mystery.

Notes

- 1 Mesopotamia is divided into Southern Mesopotamia (south of modern-day Baghdad) and Northern Mesopotamia (north of modern-day Baghdad).
- 2 One inscription, RIME E2.1.1.1, reads: “Sargon, king of the land, to whom Enlil has given no rival, to him he gave the upper and lower sea. Indeed, from the lower sea to the upper sea the inhabitants of the land of Akkad hold governorships.”
- 3 Similarly, Ištar’s role was enhanced in the Old Akkadian period, when the goddess was associated with the dynasty of Sargon of Akkad. Aššur became a pan-Mesopotamian god with the emergence of the Assyrian empire. The examples could go on.
- 4 Asher-Greve and Westenholz 2013: 30–39.
- 5 Leick 2001: 4–9.
- 6 The central role of the temple is suggested, among other elements, by the fact that the earliest city of which we have record, Uruk, means “the sanctuary” (Asher-Greve and Westenholz 2013: 40).
- 7 For the consecration ritual of divine statues, see Walker and Dick 2001.
- 8 See Veldhuis 2011. For female scribes in the Ur III and Old Babylonian Period, see Lafont 2013 and Tanret 2002.
- 9 For Egypt see e.g., Taylor 2001; for Greece, see e.g., Garland 2001 and Sirto 2012. For Mesopotamia, see Harris 2000b.
- 10 Women as mourners are attested even before the period under investigation. For example, TSA 9 and AWL 66, two texts from Early Dynastic Lagash, list women employed as mourners during the funeral of Baranamtara, queen of Lagash (Chiodi 1994: 393–395). Harris (2000b: 100) suggested that “old women probably made up the ranks of professional mourners at funerals of nonrelatives, although there is little evidence to prove this conclusively.” Indeed, Mesopotamian documents do not typically record the age of an individual.
- 11 For Garšana, see Owen and Mayr 2007; Kleiner and Owen 2009; Owen 2011 and, especially, Gabbay 2011.
- 12 The literature on the GALA is abundant. See Cooper 2006 and Bachvarova 2008 for references.
- 13 For a survey of Mesopotamian magic, see e.g., Abusch 1987 and Abusch *et al.* 1999. Women diviners are less common and more difficult to investigate, but see Harris 2000c.
- 14 Sefati and Klein 2002.
- 15 Ibid. 572–574.
- 16 For this composition, see Berlin 1979 and Wilcke 2012.
- 17 For the role of women prophets at Mari, see Batto 1974. For women as mantics, see Harris 2000c.
- 18 One of the most controversial and poorly understood aspects of Mesopotamian

religion is the institution of sacred marriage. Due to the limited nature of this communication, I opted not to discuss it here. The bibliography is however abundant. Among others, see Cooper 1993, Steinkeller 1999, and Jones 2003.

- 19 The term EREŠ-DINGIR was previously read NIN-DINGIR, and it is thus still cited in several works. I opted for the most recent reading. Bibliography can be found in Steinkeller 1999: 120, fn. 53.
- 20 For an overview of the origins and history of this office, see Steinkeller 1993. A recent study is offered by Weiershäuser 2008: 241–269.
- 21 For Sargon of Akkad, see Heinz 2007.
- 22 Heinz 2007.
- 23 Sjöberg *et al.* 1969; Hallo and Van Dijk 1968; Sjöberg 1975; Zgoll 1997.
- 24 Black 2002.
- 25 Weiershäuser 2008: 242. See RIME 3/2.1.1.54.
- 26 The Mesopotamians started to name years after major events that had occurred during the previous year.
- 27 That we have no evidence for such years' names from the Old Akkadian period does not mean the rulers of this time did not do the same. We do not have all years' names preserved at present.
- 28 For En-nirzi-ana, see Weiershäuser 2008: 242–243.
- 29 For further discussion of the EN-priestesses of Nanna during the Third Dynasty of Ur, see Weiershäuser 2008: 241–245.
- 30 Weadock 1975.
- 31 Steinkeller 1999: 120–121.
- 32 Maekawa (1996: 171–179) suggests that during the Ur III period, if not earlier, the office of the EREŠ-DINGIR of Bau was a prerogative of the wife of the governor of Lagash.
- 33 For full discussion, see Brisch 2007: 81–87.
- 34 The LUKUR is attested as early at the Early Dynastic Period and the office continues to be in use in the ensuing periods. However, since attestations come mostly from administrative documents, no information is available about their religious duties.
- 35 See CAD N/I 63 s. v. *naditu*; see also Harris 1964 and Sharlach 2008: 178.
- 36 The most comprehensive study of Old Babylonian female religious offices is still Renger 1967.
- 37 See, for example, Renger 1967 and Harris 1964.
- 38 For attestations, see CAD Š/III 200, s.v. *šugitu*.
- 39 The bibliography is extensive, e.g., Harris 1964, 1989; Stone 1982.
- 40 Streck 1998–2000.
- 41 Harris 1963.
- 42 For the problems with the source basis, see Stone 1982: 50–51 and Jeyes 1983: 261–262.
- 43 For a discussion of the evidence suggesting that Erišti-Aja was a *naditu* in Sippar, see Batto 1974: 94–95.
- 44 E.g., Harris 1962. See also Harris 1975: 5–7.

References

- Abusch, T. (1987) *Babylonian Witchcraft Literature: Case Studies*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Abusch, T. and Van der Toorn, K. (eds) (1999) *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, Historical and Interpretative Perspectives*. Groningen, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Asher-Greve, J. M. (1997) The essential body: Mesopotamian conceptions of the gendered body. *Gender and History* 9: 432–461.
- Asher-Greve, J. M. and Goodnick Westenholz, J. (2013) *Goddesses in Context: On Divine Powers, Roles, Relationships and Gender in Mesopotamian Textual and Visual Sources*. OBO 259. Göttingen, Germany: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Bachvarova, M. R. (2008) Sumerian gala priests and Eastern Mediterranean returning gods: Tragic lamentation in cross-cultural perspective. In A. Suter (ed.) *Lament: Studies in the Ancient Mediterranean and Beyond*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 18–52.
- Bahrani, Z. (2001) *Women of Babylon. Gender and Representation in Mesopotamia*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Batto, B. F. (1974) *Studies on Women at Mari*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Berlin, A. (1979) *Enmerkar and Ensuhekeshdanna: A Sumerian Narrative Poem*. Philadelphia, PA: The University Museum.
- Black, J. (2002) En-hedu-ana not the composer of *The Temple Hymns*. *NABU* 1(4).
- Brisch, N. M. (2007) *Tradition and the Poetics of Innovation: Sumerian Court Literature of the Larsa Dynasty (c. 2003–1763 Bce)*. AOAT 339. Münster, Germany: Ugarit-Verlag.
- Chiodi, S. M. (1994) *La Concezione Dell'oltretomba Presso i Sumeri*. Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei.
- Cooper, J. S. (1993) Sacred marriage and popular cult in Early Mesopotamia. In E. Matsushima (ed.) *Official Cult and Popular Religion in the Ancient Near East*. Heidelberg, Germany: Winter, pp. 81–96.
- Cooper, J. S. (2006) Genre, gender and the Sumerian lamentation. *JCS* 58: 39–47.
- Gabbay, U. (2011) Laments in Garšana. In D. I. Owen (ed.) *Garšana Studies*. Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, pp. 67–74.
- Garland, R. (2001) *The Greek Way of Death*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Hallo, W. W. and Van Dijk, J. J. (1968) *The Exaltation of Inanna*. New

- Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press.
- Harris, R. (1962) Biographical notes on the *naditu* women of Sippar. *JCS* 16: 1–12
- Harris, R. (1963) The administration and organization of the cloister in ancient Babylonia. *JESHO* 6: 121–157.
- Harris, R. (1964) The *naditu* woman. In R. D. Briggs and J. A. Brinkman (eds) *Studies Presented to A. Leo Oppenheim, June 7th 1964*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, pp. 106–135
- Harris, R. (1975) *Ancient Sippar: Demographic Study of an Old Babylonian City (1894–1595 B.C.)*. Publications de l'Institut historique et archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul 86. Istanbul, Turkey: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut.
- Harris, R. (1989) Independent woman in Ancient Mesopotamia? In B. S. Lesko (ed.) *Women's Earliest Records from Ancient Egypt and Western Asia*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, pp. 145–156.
- Harris, R. (2000a) Gender and sexuality in the myth of Nergal and Ereshkigal. In R. Harris (ed.) *Gender and Aging in Mesopotamia. The Gilgamesh Epic and Other Ancient Literature*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, pp. 129–146.
- Harris, R. (2000b) Older women. In R. Harris (ed.) *Gender and Aging in Mesopotamia: The Gilgamesh Epic and Other Ancient Literature*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, pp. 88–118.
- Harris, R. (2000c) The sage in Mesopotamian literature. In R. Harris (ed.) *Gender and Aging in Mesopotamia: The Gilgamesh Epic and Other Ancient Literature*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, pp. 147–157.
- Heinz, M. (2007) Sargon of Akkad: Rebel and usurper in Kish. In M. Heinz (ed.) *Representations of Political Power: Case Histories from Times of Change and Dissolving Order in the Ancient Near East*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, pp. 67–87.
- Jeyes, U. (1983) The *naditu* women of Sippar. In A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt (eds) *Images of Women in Antiquity*. London: Routledge, pp. 260–272.
- Jones, P. (2003) Embracing Inana: Legitimation and mediation in the Ancient Mesopotamian sacred marriage hymn *Iddin-Dagan A*. *JAOS* 123: 91–103.
- Kleinerman, A. and Owen, D. I. (2009) *The Analytical Concordance to the Garšana Archives* (CUSAS 4). Bethesda, MD: CDL Press.
- Lafont, B. (2013) Women economic activities at home and outside home during the Ur III period. Available at <http://refema.hypotheses.org/389>.
- Leick, G. (2001) *Mesopotamia: The Invention of the City*. London:

- Penguin.
- Liverani, M. (1993) *Akkad: The First World Empire: Structure, Ideology, Traditions*. Padua, Italy: Sargon srl.
- Maekawa, K. (1996) The governor's family and the "temple households" in Ur III Girsu. In K. Veenhof (ed.) *Houses and Households in Ancient Mesopotamia*. (CRRAI XL). Leiden, The Netherlands: Netherland Institute for the Ancient Near East, pp. 171–179.
- Marsman, N. J. (2003) *Women in Ugarit and Israel: Their Social and Religious Position in the Context of the Ancient Near East*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Owen, D. I. (ed.) (2011) *Garšana Studies*. Bethesda, MD: CDL Press.
- Owen, D. I. and Mayr, R. H. (2007) *The Garšana Archives*. Bethesda, MD: CDL Press.
- Renger, J. (1967) Untersuchungen zum Priestertum in der altbabylonische Zeit. *ZA* 24: 110–188.
- RIME 3/2 = Frayne, D. (1997) *Ur III Period (2012–2004 BC)*. The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia. Early Periods, 3. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
- RIME 2 = Frayne, D. (1993) *Sargonic and Gutian Periods (2334–2113 BC)*. The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia. Early Periods, 2. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
- Sallaberger, W. (1999) Ur III-Zeit. In W. Sallaberger and A. Westenholz (eds) *Mesopotamien: Akkade-Zeit und Ur III-Zeit* (OBO 160/3). Freiburg, Switzerland: Universitätsverlag, pp. 119–390.
- Sefati Y. and J. Klein (2002) The role of women in Mesopotamian witchcraft. In S. Parpola and R. M. Whiting (eds) *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East* (CRRAI XLVII). Helsinki, Finland: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, pp. 569–587.
- Sharlach, T. M. (2008) Priestesses, concubines, and the daughters of men: Disentangling the meaning of the word *lukur* in Ur III times. In P. Michalowski (ed.) *On the Third Dynasty of Ur: Studies in Honor of Marcel Sigrist*. Boston, MA: American School of Oriental Research, pp. 177–183.
- Sirto, M. S. (2012) *Death in the Greek World*. Translated by A. M. Osborne. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Sjöberg, Å. W. (1975) *in-nin šà-gur₄-ra*: A hymn to the goddess Inanna by the en-priestess Enheduanna. *ZA* 65: 161–253.
- Sjöberg, Å. W., Bergmann, E. and Gragg, G. B. (eds) (1969) *The Collection of the Sumerian Temple Hymns*. Locust Valley, NY: J. J. Augustin.
- Steinkeller, P. (1981) More on the Ur III royal wives. *ASJ* 3: 77–92.

- Steinkeller, P. (1999) On rulers, priests and sacred marriage: Tracing the evolution of early Sumerian kingship. In K. Watanabe (ed.) *Priests and Officials in the Ancient Near East: Papers of the Second Colloquium on the Ancient Near East, The Middle Eastern Culture center in Japan*. Heidelberg, Germany: Winter, pp. 103–137.
- Stol, M. (1995) Women in Mesopotamia. *JESHO* 38: 123–144.
- Stone, E. (1982) The social role of the *naditu* women in old Babylonian Nippur. *JESHO* 27: 50–70
- Streck, M. P. (1998–2000) Ninurta/Ninĝirsu. A. I. in Mesopotamien. *RIA* 9: 512–522.
- Tanret, M. (2002) *Ad Astra Per Aspera. L'apprentissage du cuneiforme a Sippar-Amnanum pendant la periode paleobabylonienne tardive*. Paris: Recherches et Publications.
- Taylor, J. H. (2001) *Death and the Afterlife in Ancient Egypt*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Veldhuis, N. (2011) Levels of literacy. In E. Robson and K. Radner (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 68–89.
- Walker, C. B. F. and Dick, M. B. (2001) *The Induction of the Cult Image: The Mesopotamian Miš Pî Ritual*. Helsinki, Finland: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.
- Weadock, P. N. (1975) The *Giparu* at Ur. *Iraq* 37: 101–128.
- Weiershäuser, F. (2008). *Die Königlichen Frauen der III. Dynastie von Ur*. Göttinger Beiträge zum Alten Orient 1. Göttingen, Germany: Universitätsverlag Göttingen.
- Westbrook, R. (2003) Mesopotamia: Old Babylonian period. In R. Westbrook (ed.) *A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill, pp. 361–430.
- Westenholz, J. G. (1989) Enheduanna, En-Priestess, hen of Nanna, spouse of Nanna. In H. Behrens et al. (eds) *DUMU E2-DUB-BA-A. Studies in Honor of Ake Sjöberg*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Philadelphia Press, pp. 539–556.
- Wilcke, C. (2012) *The Sumerian Poem Enmerkar and En-suhkesh-ana: Epic, Play, Or?* New Haven, CT: The American Oriental Society.
- Winter, I. J. (1987) Women in public: The disc of Enheduanna, the beginning of the office of the en-priestess. In J.-M. Durand (ed.) *La femme dans le Proche-Orient Antique: Compte rendu de la 23e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale*, Paris, 7–10 July 1986. Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, pp. 189–201.
- Zgoll, A. (1997) *Der Rechtsfall der En-ĥedu-Ana im Lied nin-me-šara*. Münster, Germany: Ugarit-Verlag.

WOMEN, GENDER AND LAW AT THE DAWN OF HISTORY

The evidence of the cuneiform sources

*Josué J. Justel*¹

The sources

This contribution focuses on “real women”—those who participated in daily life—in the law codes and legal practices of the Ancient Near East. The principal sources used are the indigenous legal texts, inscribed in cuneiform. Within this larger group exist two main sub-categories: the designated “law codes” and the texts pertaining to day-to-day legal actions. Their natures and origins are different, and therefore the data they provide—in this case concerning women—are likewise distinct, and at times contradictory.

The so-called “law codes” are in principle compilations of laws, i.e., documents emanating from officially recognized authority. In the Near East, this means from the monarchy. The best known of these is no doubt the Law Code of Ḫammu-rāpi, but others exist. table 6.1 sets out the most important ones, together with their chronology (middle chronology employed), and the language in which they were written.²

A significant portion of some of these codes treated matters that directly affected women: marriage, divorce, access to dowries or possible inheritances, the possibility of being physically abused, etc. Clearly, the information they provide is extremely valuable—and as a result they have traditionally been a key source for the study of women.

Nonetheless, scholars continue to debate whether the precepts found in these so-called “codes” were actually implemented and, consequently, are relevant as a source of knowledge. As it has been

indicated:

In numerous studies of a range of legal situations, little correspondence has been found between the provisions in the law collections and contemporary practice. Furthermore, no court document or contract makes a direct reference to any of the formal law collections.³ From such an absence of linking evidence some scholars have concluded that the law collections had little or no impact on the daily operation of legal affairs.

(Roth 1995: 5)

As a result, it has generally been concluded that the codes were not “normative statutes.” However, the contrary conclusion has recently been made based on two arguments.⁴ The first is that law collections are statute law, since legislation is defined not by its form but by its origin (in the Ancient Near East, the king’s command). The second consists in regarding these compilations not as codes in the tradition of continental Europe (the *Code Napoléon* of 1804, the German *Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch* of 1896, etc.), but rather as reflecting the English system of *Common Law*, i.e., Ancient Near Eastern statute law is based on the judicial activity of the king. Thus Démare-Lafont (2011: 58) states, “Now the special feature of these law collections is their subsidiarity, which means that local law takes precedence, except when one party or both refuse it and resort to national law.” This would be the reason why both the daily practice and the laws’ codes were valid sources of information about the societies which produced them—and as concerns us here, their women—despite the occasional discrepancies existing between them.

Table 6.1 Principal law codes

<i>Sumerian</i>	<i>Akkadian</i>	<i>Hittite</i>
Laws of Ur-nammu (2100 BC) = LU		
Laws of Lipit-Ishtar (1930 BC) = LL		
Sumerian Laws Handbook of Forms (1730 BC)	Laws of Ešnunna (1770 BC) = LE Laws of Hammu-rāpi (1750 BC) = LH	Hittite Laws (two manuscripts: 1650–1500 and 1400–1200 BC) = HL
	Middle Assyrian Laws (1100 BC) = MAL Harem Edicts (compiled c. 1100 BC) Neo-Babylonian Laws (700 BC) = LNB	

In addition to the law codes, we have the juridical texts that documented the daily practice of legal matters. These concern various types of contracts (marriage, adoption, sales, loans, etc.), as well as judicial resolutions and wills. The precise nature, formulation, and evolution of this documentation are quite diverse, as many recent studies have shown.⁵ The potential of this type of documentation for shedding light on the legal situation of women in the ancient Orient is enormous. As such, various works have been dedicated to compiling the information emanating from these private juridical sources, even if no general study of this topic yet exists.⁶

What was the legal capacity of Ancient Near Eastern women?

This question is critical in the context of antiquity. As it is known, in Roman law one criterion for defining legal capacity—along with honor, religion, social status, and job—was sex: women suffered *de jure* serious limitations within the private sphere. This was also, in essence, the conclusion reached by the first analyses of cuneiform sources, which were based primarily on data provided by legal collections.

The first general and modern study on the presence of women in cuneiform law is that of Cardascia (1959). While mainly based on legal codes, he also had access to a wide range of studies on legal documents from the Ancient Near East. Cardascia could therefore draw several parallels between the two types of sources and produced sound reflections on women's actual legal capacity. According to him, Ancient Near Eastern women took part in legal deeds much less often than men and sometimes on an unequal basis. This phenomenon, however, did not involve *de jure* lesser legal capacity. Inequality between women and men in the Ancient Near East was therefore not based on legal grounds, but rather on moral principles.

This conclusion is nowadays evident, since documents from every period have been recovered, attesting women actively participating in legal agreements.⁷ Nevertheless, these aspects should not hide the fact that the sources indicate the legal capacity of women was *de facto* inferior to that of men. There are two primary arguments for this. First, women typically took active part in far fewer legal activities; second, when they did, in many cases the women concerned were of a special status, either politically (queens, and wives of magistrates), in terms of family (widows), or socially/religiously (priestesses), etc.

Women and marriage

Who arranged the marriage?

In Ancient Near Eastern marriages, as it happened in general in antiquity, women were given by a relative or a male guardian as wife to another man. In the grand majority of cases, the “fiancée’s” guardian was exclusively her father, and this is generally presumed in the law codes (e.g., LU 10–11, 15; LE 17, 25–30; LH 155–167; MAL A 25–36; LNB 8–15). In this process, technically known as *traditio puellae*, women had no capacity to act, and the common interpretation implies that the husband’s authority over his wife replaced that of her father.⁸

However, several instances of private legal practice demonstrate that women could, on a few occasions, play an active role in two different ways. On the one hand, a woman could take part in the management of the marriage of another woman in her family, usually her daughter. In these cases, no male relative of the bride is mentioned, and it has generally been construed that she had no father, i.e., male guardian, e.g., TPAK 161 (Old Assyrian from Kaniš, nineteenth century BC), Iraq 16, pp. 37f (Neo-Assyrian from Kalḫu, seventh century BC) or AfO 51, p. 198 (Achaemenid from Āl-Yahudu, 533 BC).

On the other hand, a woman could manage her own marriage, which is not envisaged in legal compilations.⁹ This situation is totally unusual though not unknown in cuneiform private documents. Basically, it applied in cases of women with a special status, such as widows and priestesses, but note, e.g., that in some Ur III documents, in which the woman married a man (at least it is terminologically so expressed), she had no special status (NG 14 from Girsu and 206 from Lagaš, twenty-first century BC).

One of these documents (*Emar VI* 124) from thirteenth-century Emar, appears to reflect both circumstances. Eza was a *qadištu* priestess, a category of women who, in this time and place, were apparently not permitted to bear offspring. Eza had at least three daughters, and was thus either married before taking on her current position, or she had adopted the children. The document indicates she decided to take a husband, named Tatu, but given that she was not permitted to bear offspring, she also married her eldest daughter to Tatu. Additionally, she specified that if this daughter should die, the husband could marry one of Eza’s other daughters. In this instance, one notes that Eza sought to redefine the familial structure and to

protect the judicial and economic prerogatives of its members, doing so by employing the legal institution of marriage.¹⁰

Eza, daughter of Ḥayya, *qadištu* priestess, ha[s made] Tatu, son of Biʿšu, her husband.

(Eza) spoke thus: “I have three daughters: Baʿla-ʾummī, Dagān-šimertī, and Dagān-ʾilah. I have delivered (as well) my older daughter, Baʿla-ʾummī, as his wife (of Tatu). And if Baʿla-ʾummī dies, then (Tatu) will take my second daughter, Dagān-šimertī, as his wife.

If in the future Eza, the daughter of Ḥayya, says to Tatu: ‘You are not my husband,’ she will hand over to Tatu 60 shekels of silver. And if Tatu says to Eza: ‘You are not my wife,’ he will hand over to Eza 60 shekels of silver and go wherever he wishes.”

(Eza has said:) “My two brothers, Šaggar-abu and Tūriya, will not claim any of my belongings. This document will prevail over whoever makes a claim.”

(Seven witnesses and a seal)

Marriage transfers

With the marriage, in general, the woman’s father gave her a dowry, and the bridegroom’s family transferred a bridewealth to the bride’s. The existence, nature, and use of this bridewealth (Sum. *nì-munus-us-sa*, Akk. *terḫatum*) is thoroughly regulated in legal compilations (e.g., LL 29; LE 17–18, 25–26; LH 138–139, 159–166; MAL A 38).

The assumption that the bride had no legal capacity in her marriage made historians draw a parallel between marriages and sales: the buyer/groom would pay a price (“brideprice,” i.e., bridewealth) to the seller/woman’s guardian in exchange for the object of the transaction (the bride). This theory of the “marriage by purchase” (German *Kaufehe*)¹¹ has already been ruled out on several occasions.¹² The bride must therefore not be seen as property for which a price was charged; the bridewealth was rather a compensation given to her family for the loss of one of its members.

The dowry (Sum. SAG-RIG₇, Akk. *nudunnûm*, *šeriktum*, *mulûgu*, etc.), received by the bride on the occasion of her marriage, consisted of personal belongings, domestic utensils, and sometimes a quantity of silver (see LL 24; LH 137–142, 149, 162–167, 171–184; MAL A 29; LNB 8–13).¹³ The dowry nominally belonged to the wife and should always pass to her offspring; such regulations are very common in legal codes (e.g., LL 24; LH 162; MAL A 29; cf. LH 172–173; HL 27; LNB 13)¹⁴ and Old Babylonian documents, most of them written in

Sippar during the seventeenth century (e.g., BE 6/1 84, 101; CT 8 2a, CT 47 83, CT 48 50, CT 48 55; PBS 8/2 252; TLB 1 229).¹⁵ However, in general, the dowry was managed by the husband, as it can be already observed in documents from the third millennium BC (e.g., NG 195, from twenty-first-century Girsu). The dowry was ultimately a legal-economic safety measure: in case of heirless divorce, the dowry would go back to the woman's household as long as she did too (see LH 137, and cf. other circumstances in which the dowry should return to the bride's father in LH 138, 142, 149, 156, 163–164, 176, etc.). Yet, in the first-millennium BC documents from southern Mesopotamia, a variation in the trend can be noticed: the dowry was no longer handed over to the bride but to the groom "together with" (Akkadian *itti*) the bride (e.g., *Nbn* 990 from Babylon in 540 BC; AOAT 222: 79f and TuM 2/3 2 from Borsippa in 520/493 BC respectively; CT 49 165 and CT 49 193 from Babylon after 281 BC, etc.).¹⁶

Residence of the couple

When a marriage took place, the bride went to reside in the household of her husband's family (patrilocality). However, sometimes this custom varied intentionally, producing the phenomenon of matrilocality, attested in several areas and periods of the Ancient Near East;¹⁷ especially relevant is the mention of such phenomenon in the legal compilations (MAL A 27):¹⁸

If a woman is residing in her own father's house and her husband visits her regularly, he himself shall take back any marriage settlement which he, her husband, gave to her; he shall have no claim to anything belonging to her father's house.

(Translation by Roth 1995: 163)

In some documentation written in northern Syria and Mesopotamia during the fourteenth to thirteenth centuries, the following method to establish a matrilocal marriage is recurrent: the bride's father or mother (usually a widow) adopted a man and gave him one of his/her daughters in marriage (e.g., HSS 5 67, HSS 19 49, HSS 19 51; RA 23: 126 from Arrapḫe; *Emar* VI 29, 69, 213; *TBR* 39, 40, 43, 46; HANEM 2 RE 25, 26, 41, etc. from Emar; WVD OG 102 40 from Ekalte).¹⁹ This phenomenon, currently known as "adoption with marriage," apparently had two main consequences: first, the married couple joined the wife's household, and second the dowry reverted to the bride's family, so that it seems there was no actual transfer.

The phenomenon of matrilocality does not imply the existence of matriarchy. In fact, in the Ancient Near East we find only two

examples of matrilineality, those of Elam²⁰ and in Ḫatti, which appear to be confined to very specific situations, e.g., royal succession, and not in all cases or periods.

*Polygyny*²¹

In many instances the legal codes compiled numerous precepts concerning the marriage of one man to more than one wife simultaneously (e.g., LL 24–30; LH 117–119, 137, 141, 144–149, 161, 170–172). Nevertheless, per the analysis of the quotidian documentation, one must conclude that polygyny was not a customary practice in the Near East and was always confined to special circumstances.²²

The case of the *nadītū* (Akk. sg. *naditum*, Sum. LUKUR, see also Gadotti, this volume), a category of Old Babylonian priestesses consecrated to different deities, should be pointed out (cf. LH 144–147, cf. LL 27).²³ Some of these women were allowed to marry but not to conceive descendants. Consequently, the husband had to take another wife in order to have children. The possible scenarios were diverse: the two women could be “sisters” (e.g., *BAP* 89, CT 45 119, etc., both from Sippar), as usually one adopted the other “as a sister”; the main wife could adopt the secondary “as daughter” (e.g., CT 48 57 from Sippar, etc.); the latter could be a slave (e.g., CT 8 22b, from Sippar during the reign of Ḫammu-rāpi); or simply they had no relationship between them (e.g., CT 48 48, the same date and provenance). It was common that the main wife managed her husband’s remarriage, which is also attested in other periods—and not only with priestesses involved.²⁴ In some of these cases it is explicitly stated that any descendants by the secondary wife would also (or exclusively) be legally acknowledged by the main wife (e.g., *BAP* 89). Sometimes the secondary wife was to provide services to the main one, and the latter could even sell off the former, in case she needed her no more (e.g., CT 8 22b, CT 48 48, cf. the Old Assyrian document ICK 1 3, from nineteenth-century Kaniš and the Neo-Assyrian one *Iraq* 16, pp. 37f). It was thus a situation of “bigny” in which women showed initiative and complete legal capacity—at least the main wife.

The circumstances of the Old Assyrian traders were also special in this regard.²⁵ They resided in Anatolia, maintaining a legal wife (Akkadian *aššatum*) in their homeland, Assyria, but they could have also a secondary wife (*amtum*, lit. “female slave”). Two main rules were followed: merchants could not have at the same time two wives of the same category (i.e., two *aššātu* or two *amātu*), e.g., AKT 1 77 or

TPAK 161; and they were not allowed to have two wives of a different category in the same place (i.e., either in Aššur or in Anatolia), e.g., Prag 490.

Finally, the single reference to polyandry—a married woman with two husbands—comes from an indirect reference in the reforms of Iri-kagina (twenty-fifth century BC). Here it is stated, “It was so that women of former times took two husbands each. Today’s women have abandoned that crime.” This reference has sparked the curiosity of scholars, who believed that here was a record of ancient matriarchal practices. However, it seems that in reality the text refers to the possibility of widows remarrying.²⁶

Divorce

In divorce, legal compilations take into consideration only the initiative of the husband (e.g., LU 9–11; LL 28, 30; LE 59; LH 137–141, 148–149; MAL A 37–38). However, a woman could actively intervene in this matter. This is an unusual phenomenon, delimited by a series of rules which varied depending on the period and region.²⁷

In fact, few divorces are actually attested, and a very small part of them might have started on the initiative of the bride’s family—or even her own initiative. Examples of these circumstances are scarce and problematic, but they seem to exist already in the third millennium BC, e.g., NG 20 and *Fs. J. C. Greenfield*, p. 614 from Lagaš, both from the Ur III period, twenty-first century.²⁸ One further example from this epoch, SNAT 372, was written in Umma in 2040 BC. Though broken and unclear, it seems that the husband was obliged to divorce his wife because he had abducted her—he even had to pay a fine:

Nur-Eštar, son of Akab-šen, abducted Nin-zagesi, daughter of Gudu, and married her (by force).

Nur-Eštar said: “I never abducted her; I know nothing (about this).” The AN.DU-bi Esagila and Lu-duga were the witnesses.

Gudu, the father of Nin-zagesi, swore that she was taken for marriage.

(1–3 lines missing)

[He said]: “I swear [by the king] that my son did not [take her].” Ur-mes the farmer and Ur-Dumuzi the . . . were the witnesses of Nur-Eštar. They came up with false words; they swore by the king.

Gudu did not confirm this

Nur-Eštar left (his) wife; he will pay her one mina of silver.

(Name of the officials and date)

(Translation by Culbertson 2009: 30)

Other examples exist, such as from nineteenth-century Kaniš (*KKS* 36, *Fs. S. Alp*, p. 484), in which the husband and wife appear to divorce by mutual agreement; from the kingdom of Arrapḫe (*IM* 73254, fourteenth century);²⁹ or from Emar (*TBR* 28, thirteenth century).³⁰

Economic agreements

Women in economic deeds

A good deal of cuneiform documentation, either administrative or legal, is of an economic nature. Among the legal examples should be mentioned the large number of sale contracts. As in other legal fields, women can be found in various circumstances in all periods.³¹ However, it should be noted that this presence is not usual; in fact, legal compilations take into consideration only the situation of men playing an active role (e.g., *LH* 36–41), with the exception of *nadītū* priestesses (*LH* 40).

In addition, women were at times accompanied by other persons when purchasing, selling, or renting certain properties, e.g., *Fs. J. Oelsner*, pp. 299f (from nineteenth-century Kaniš, with her husband), *TJDB*, p. 45 (eighteenth-century Sippar, with her brother), or *TBR* 65 (thirteenth-century Emar, with her children). On the other hand, she could conduct these operations autonomously, without a relative's intervention. This latter circumstance is already attested among the eldest known legal documents,³² but most practical examples come from the second and first millennia BC, both from southern and northern Mesopotamia: e.g., *VS* 18 29 (from sixteenth-century Kiš), *KAJ* 168 (from thirteenth-century Aššur), *ADD* 245 (Neo-Assyrian from Nineveh), *L* 1652 (Achaemenid, written in 491 BC, found in Lagaš but referring to activities in Borsippa)³³ or *RIAA*² 293 (Seleucid from Uruk, written in 205 BC).

Loans and debt

A special and socially important type of economic agreement was the loan: the borrower/debtor initially receives an amount of silver or other goods from the lender/creditor, and is obligated to repay it—

usually with interest—at a later time; sometimes the repayment was guaranteed through pledge or security. There are numerous examples of women in each of these situations. However, the law codes primarily deal with cases where women find themselves affected by the debts of others, both indirectly and, often, negatively (e.g., LE 22–24, LH 117–119, MAL A 32).

In the documents of practice, contrary to the testimony of the law codes, there are instances of women getting into debt, but most of them reflect that both husband and wife contracted a debt together; e.g., CCT 1 10b–11a, ICK 1 115 (nineteenth-century Kaniš), *IEJ* 61, pp. 68f (Achaemenid, from Babylon 515 BC), etc. This phenomenon, in which the couple was a non-divisible unity, is currently known as “responsible solidarity.”³⁴

The opposite circumstance, whereby a woman became a creditor, is also attested in documents of practice, e.g., *MSKH*, pp. 381f (probably from Nippur ca. 1305 BC), *TBR* 27 (thirteenth-century Emar) or BabA 2 27 (from Babylon, 558 BC).³⁵

Finally, it was quite common for the debtor, generally a man, to give the creditor a woman as pledge or guarantee.³⁶ This circumstance, mentioned in some articles of the legal compilations (e.g., MAL A 39, 44, 48; C 2–3), is reflected in numerous documents of practice, and represents a clear proof that women—as well as children—usually became subordinate in law to men. The relationship between this pledge-woman and the debtor varied, though in most cases it was his own wife, e.g., *ALT* 21 (seventeenth-century Alalah), *ALT* 47–48 (fifteenth-century Alalah), *KAJ* 60 (fourteenth-century Aššur), or StAT 3 41 (written in 618 BC in Aššur). On other occasions, it could be his daughter (e.g., AKT 1 44, from nineteenth-century Kaniš, or ASJ 10, p. 153 from thirteenth-century Emar) and there are even instances where it was his sister (e.g., WO 9, pp. 26f, from fourteenth-century Arraphē).

A case study

Sources occasionally record cases of women who boasted exceptional legal initiative in economic operations. For instance, a woman called Inšabtu, from the important Naggāru family, conducted her business in the town of Borsippa during the Achaemenid period, in 501–485 BC.³⁷ She does not seem to have been a businesswoman, but she did carry out various economic transactions, always autonomously. We know that, at the time of the drafting of some of these contracts,

Inṣabtu was still not married, while in others she was; and despite this fact she kept acting independently—as seems to have been the general rule in southern Mesopotamia during the first millennium BC.³⁸ It is even well known that, in some cases, her husband acted as guarantor for the repayment. It is interesting to note that in the documents where Inṣabtu's activities are recorded, two scenarios are evident: before she married, direct relatives—her father and his brother—appear in two cases as witnesses to the transaction (BM 79073 and SCT 93); once she had married, these relatives no longer appeared among the witnesses. BM 79087, written in 485 BC and discovered in Babylonia, well reflects this latter scenario. According to the text, Inṣabtu and her husband Murānu (mentioned in this order) had indebted themselves for a quantity of silver, as well as a slave woman and a slave man, both belonging to Inṣabtu, as permanent pledges. None of the witnesses appear to be family members.

In the month *ajjāru* of the first year of Xerxes, king of Babylon, king of the lands, the debt note of 2 1/3 minas of silver and another debt note of 27 shekels of silver belonging to Aqara, son of Zārūtu, descendant of Sîn-nādin-aḥi, charged against Inṣabtu, daughter of Iddin-Nabû, descendant of Naggāru, and Murānu, her husband, for which Ninlil-silim, her slave woman, and Šamaš-iddina, her slave, were taken as a pledge, (in that month) Bēl-iddina will bring these debt notes and give them to Inṣabtu. If Bēl-iddina neglects to bring and give the debt notes of Aqara to Inṣabtu during the month *ajjāru*, Bēl-iddina will have to pay 3 minas of silver in full to Inṣabtu.

(Five witnesses, scribe and date)

(Translation by Waerzeggers 1999/2000: 191)

Court cases

Introduction

A lawsuit is a legal dispute between opposing parties concerning a right or an obligation, and resolved by a court or authority. The entities relevant in such cases are: the plaintiff, the defendant, and the right, i.e., property that is concerned, as well as the authority that decides the case. Cuneiform sources frequently record women acting in each of these situations—except in the case of an authority role.

The case of women suing or being sued is the main focus here. Such actions are attested from the beginning of the historical record,³⁹ and as a general feature, in such situations, women seem to have been able to act with total autonomy.⁴⁰

Additionally, it appears that the law codes were concerned with

how various infractions affected women, and included references to their responsibility and culpability in such matters as adultery (e.g., LH 129–133; MAL A 15), seduction (of a woman) (LE 31; MAL A 56), rape (LU 8; MAL A 16, 55), incest (LH 154–157; HL 189, 191), abortion (LH 210; MAL A 50), etc. However, it appears that the quotidian legal texts did not always follow faithfully the precepts contained in the law codes.⁴¹

Cause: properties

Reasons for litigation varied. In general, property-related matters were one of the main motivations for lawsuits, for women too. In some cases, a woman had not been given her dowry or somebody had unduly taken a part of it. The woman in question was able to initiate litigation and would sue a relative, generally her brother, brother-in-law or uncle, which is especially attested in southern Mesopotamia: e.g., RA 91, pp. 135ff (Old Babylonian, probably from Larsa), *Nbn* 356 or BabA 2 11 (Neo-Babylonian, both from Babylon).

Of course, a woman could also initiate litigation, because she believed that certain properties belonged to her even though they were not part of her dowry. The most commonly attested situation still involved the woman suing a male relative. An exceptional instance is the document *Emar* VI 33, written in the thirteenth century, where a woman named Išarte claims her adoptive son misappropriated some of her properties. Other circumstances are attested as well; for instance, a woman could sue any person who might have stolen her assets (e.g., JEN 381 from fourteenth-century Nuzi).

Litigations were at times initiated over properties where one or more women were sued. On some occasions these lawsuits originated in dowry-related properties, e.g., CT 47 63 (from eighteenth-century Sippar). In other cases properties appear to have come from other sources, e.g., AKT 5, pp. 184f (from nineteenth-century Kaniš), JEN 659+ (fourteenth-century Nuzi), or PRU 3, pp. 94f (twelfth-century Ugarit). Some of these consisted of real estate and, therefore, were of considerable value.

Cause: violence

On various occasions, the motivation was linked to some form of violence. In this respect, an exemplar regulation is found in the legal

compilations (e.g., MAL A 12, 16, 22–23, 55), but this circumstance is also attested in documents of the practice. We know of cases where a woman sued various persons for having beaten her (cf. MAL A 9). One essential instance of this situation is *Afo* 50, p. 265, written in Babylon by the middle of the sixth century BC. According to the known facts, Rīšāya was a widow who lived by herself with her slaves. After demanding and receiving a series of properties due to her, that same day she was assaulted in her own home by a man who stole several objects and held her slaves captive. Rīšāya decided to file a complaint and the court passed judgment in her favor.

Rīšāya, daughter of Šamaš-šumu-ukin of the Šangû-Šamaš family, addressed Lalê-Esangila-lusbi, the governor of the country, and Nergal-šarru-ušur, the son of Bêl-šumu-iškun, as follows: “When I had gone to court because of the claim due to me and had obtained a compensation [instead of the money] I was owed and (when) Itti-Šamaš-balāṭu, the son of Lâbâši, (thereupon) had broken into my house by force, he beat me, took away my *mušiptu*-garment, carried off four slaves of mine and kept (them) in iron chains for four months to my detriment; also he received 15 shekels of silver from me. But he did not keep anything (else) from my house.”

Lalê-Esangila-lusbi, the governor of the country, Nergal-šarru-ušur, the son of Bêl-šumu-iškun, Murānu, the royal official, Nazia, the royal official, and the assembly of the Babylonians announced their verdict. Her *mušiptu*-garment and the compensatory payment for her slaves’ work and the silver which he had received from her and everything else of hers which he had taken away—(as a compensation for this) they imposed (a payment of) two minas of silver upon Itti-Šamaš-balāṭu.

(Four witnesses, scribe and date)

(Translation by Jursa et al. 2003/2004: 266)

There is another case (2 N-T 54) celebrated for the amount of information it yielded in the field of criminal law in antiquity—although it probably consists of an Old Babylonian school text rather than an actual case (twentieth century, from Nippur).⁴² It reports the murder of a man by three others. It appears that the wife of the deceased could have known this fact but remained silent and did not report it, perhaps for fear of retaliation against her and her children. The assembly in charge of judging the case took her silence as proof of her knowledge of the murderers’ intentions and she could, therefore, have been an accomplice. It was finally decided that all these persons, including the widow, were to be punished by execution.

Other situations

It has been noticed that on several occasions, in criminal lawsuits

where a man was convicted, he had the option of having another person, i.e., a woman punished in his place. For instance, in a case from Emar, a man decided that his sister should endure the punishment for theft (*Emar VI* 257, thirteenth century).⁴³ In a Neo-Assyrian case a person sentenced to death was allowed to commute his penalty as long as he delivered a specific woman named Kurra-dimrī—who does not seem to have been a slave—in exchange (*ADD* 321 from the seventh century). We know no further details of this case, not even the destiny of the woman. It is the only case in this period and area attesting the capital penalty.⁴⁴

[Beginning missing] Now they have mutually extended (their hands).

He shall hand over Kurra-dimrī, daughter of Attār-qāmu, the scribe, to Šamaš-kēnu-ušur, son of Šamāku. He shall wash the blood.

If he does not hand over the woman, they will kill him on top of Šamāku's grave.

Whoever breaks the contract with the other party, [shall pay] ten minas of silver, (and) Aššur and Šamaš [will be his prosecutors].

(Broken, at least four witnesses)

(Translation follows the interpretation presented in Mattila 2002: 105)

Finally, women could testify in lawsuits, which demonstrates the legal value of their word. We have various examples of this phenomenon, from various periods and areas, and sometimes the woman's testimony or oath proved to be fundamental to the verdict—e.g., *Méditerranées* 10/11, pp. 111f (from nineteenth-century Kaniš), PBS 5 100 from eighteenth-century Nippur,⁴⁵ *Fs. C. Wilcke*, pp. 314ff from seventeenth-century Sippar-Amnānum,⁴⁶ HSS 5 48 (fourteenth-century Nuzi), or *BR* 2, p. 16 (Neo-Babylonian, broken).⁴⁷ It is also known that the provision of false testimony by a woman carried her shaming punishment.⁴⁸

Women and slavery

Slavery involves the subjugation of a person by another from a legal and social viewpoint; instead of family law, property law was applicable to slaves. In the legal system of the Ancient Near East, female slaves (Sum. sg. SAG-GÉME or MUNUS-GÉME, Akk. *amtum*) were generally bound by the same rules as male, in particular in terms of access to such a status;⁴⁹ nonetheless, a series of clauses regarding sexuality and reproduction applied solely to women.

Creation

It has traditionally been accepted that women were made slaves as a result of debts incurred by a male relative. Indeed, it is quite common for a family who found itself in dire need to have the husband hand over his wife as a slave to another person, generally one of his creditors:⁵⁰ see e.g., *AfO* 20, pp. 123f (Middle Assyrian, from Aššur), or the numerous examples from thirteenth-century Emar, such as *Emar* VI 215, *TBR* 26, *AuOr.* 5, pp. 231f, or *Gs R. Kutscher*, pp. 167f.

Equally, girls might be enslaved because of their parents' debts (see the reference to this circumstance in *MAL* A 39, as well as *Ex.* 21: 7–11).⁵¹ This specific phenomenon is known from the third millennium BC on, as *Ur III* sources show (e.g., *NG* 37, 45–46, 53, 55, 175, 204, etc.). However, it is especially attested during the first millennium BC.⁵² As a representative circumstance, one can just pay attention to the economic and social aftermath of the siege of Nippur by the Assyrian army in the seventh century BC. A set of ten documents attests that a man named Ninurta-uballiṭ acquired different children—most of them, girls—from their parents, who went through a rough period.⁵³ The document 2 N-T 300 was written in 617 BC in Nippur, and clearly shows the aforementioned situation:

Ninurta-aḥ-iddin, son of Šumâ, sold his small (female) child Amašu-aqrât to Arad-Gula and Iddin-Nergal for 15 shekels of silver as (her) exact price.

During (the time when) the gate of Nippur was closed and (when) the equivalent (of one shekel of silver) was one *šûtu* of barley (he received) the silver voluntarily.

Ninurta-aḥ-iddin guarantees against a vindicator (or) a contestant on behalf of his small (female) child.

(Date)

(Translation by Oppenheim 1955: 89)

Yet, most of these studies on the topic have ignored women's capacity to incur debts themselves as a result of economic hardship and indeed to become slaves upon their own initiative. This latter phenomenon, although not usual, is attested in almost every period of the Ancient Near East.⁵⁴ Representative examples are, e.g., *AulaOr.* 8, pp. 197f (Old Assyrian, presumably from Kaniš, nineteenth century BC), *JEN* 449 (Nuzi, fourteenth century BC), *AfO* 16, pp. 37f (written in Babylon ca. 650 BC).

Status and termination

Once a woman became a slave she was treated as property and could therefore be sold or conveyed in other forms, such as a guarantee for loans. The most commonly attested situation is that of a slave woman being sold off, e.g., *SRU* 43, 57–58 (from Girsu and Nippur, twenty-fourth to twenty-third centuries), *RA* 8, pp. 185–187 (from twenty-first-century Nippur), *ICK* 1 123+ (nineteenth-century Kaniš), *KAJ* 170 (Middle Assyrian, from Aššur), *VS* 1 95 (seventh-century Aššur), *VS* 4 133, *VS* 5 70/71, 73 (Achaemenid, written in Babylon in 514–511 BC), etc.

Besides this, the owner could decide to free his female slave. On other occasions freeing her involved prior redemption, that is to say, other persons had to hand over a sum of money or other slaves in exchange. This kind of mechanism is attested from the third millennium on; for example, the Ur III document UET 3 51 shows a special case: a slave woman purchases herself from her owner for 20 shekels and a cow as her full price.

Sexual dimension

Most remarkably here, the female slave's owner—usually a man—had authority over her sexuality.⁵⁵ The phenomenon of concubinage or matrimony with a slave existed, as it is foreseen in legal compilations (e.g., *HL* 31–33). According to the Old Babylonian legal customs, a man could take his slave as a concubine if his legal wife had borne no offspring, but should he have descendants with this slave, she had to be given her freedom upon the owner's death (*LH* 170–171, see also *LH* 119, 144–147). As seen above, it has been attested that some priestesses were not allowed to conceive descendants, so the husband could take a slave as concubine; hence, the descendants conceived by the slave became the legal offspring of the husband and wife and not of the slave.⁵⁶ In some periods it was more common that the wife had to be manumitted before a man could marry her; this phenomenon is for instance clearly attested in the archives of Ugarit in thirteenth- and twelfth-century Syria (*Syria* 18, pp. 253f, *PRU* 3, pp. 85f, and 110).⁵⁷

The sexual exploitation of slaves is directly linked to the use of them as prostitutes.⁵⁸ As it might have been prohibited for a man to take a slave as a concubine when his lawful wife had had descendants, it was not uncommon that once the wife had conceived, the couple sent the female slave to a brothel. This phenomenon might already be attested in the early third millennium BC,⁵⁹ but it is especially known

for the Neo-Babylonian period and later epochs,⁶⁰ and could be a widespread situation in antiquity. Some documents from Babylon reveal that a well-known family, a branch of the descendants of Egibi, benefited from hiring out their slaves as prostitutes (*Nbk* 409 from Babylon in 562 BC, *Nbn* 679 and 682, both written in 543 BC in Babylon).⁶¹ In addition, it must be remembered that, aside from the debate on sacred prostitution in antiquity,⁶² the temples during the first millennium BC at least had slaves that could be made prostitutes (e.g., UCP 9/1 1 53 from Uruk, 576 BC).⁶³

Women and inheritance practices

Inheritance is the practice of passing on property, rights, and obligations upon the death of an individual. The most common situation in the Ancient Near East was that the father of a family—much less frequently the mother—established that the properties be delivered to the sons. Alternatively, under special circumstances, a daughter might be appointed to inherit. At times, the father of the family set forth that, after his death, the properties belonging to the home ought to be managed by his widow. All these situations show women in various legal capacities.

Women testators

Firstly, it was possible for a woman to act as the testator—meaning that cuneiform sources reveal that she produced a testament.⁶⁴ This is quite infrequent and generally takes place in cases of women with special status. For instance, during the Old Babylonian period, *naditū* priestesses (see above) usually gave complex testaments⁶⁵—especially because some of them were not allowed to bear children. These special circumstances have been summarized as follows:

Her dowry [a *naditum*'s] was inalienable and would be inherited by her brothers after her death, unless her father had given her free disposition of it, in which case she could bequeath it to whom she wished (LH 179). It was common, however, for a *naditum* to adopt a niece, also a *naditum*, as her universal heir. If her father failed to dower her, LH 180 awards her a full inheritance share like a son.

(Westbrook 2003b: 424)

Because of this situation, the distribution of a *naditum*'s legacy usually involved numerous litigations among their biological siblings (cf. LH 178–179).⁶⁶

Women testators appear in other periods and areas as well, and these were not always priestesses. Especially relevant is the case of the archives of Emar, in thirteenth-century Syria, where some 15 wills with these characteristics have been unearthed, e.g., *Emar VI* 30, 32, 128; *RE* 82, 87, etc.⁶⁷ In addition, the first millennium BC in southern Mesopotamia has also produced a great number of testaments; in some of them a woman acted as testatrix in different legal and family situations (e.g., VS 5 43/44, 45/46, both Achaemenid from sixth-century Babylon). Some instances reveal particularly clearly these women's legal capacity. A first example of this phenomenon is a well-known testament from Borsippa (TCL 12/13 174, Achaemenid period). A woman named Hubbušītu set forth that, after her death, half of the dowry she had received from her father was to be given to her son and the other half to her own husband. It is also stressed that this dowry belonged exclusively to herself until the moment of her death, and that a previous testament had been written down, but it would have validity no longer. We thus see that Hubbušītu was completely capable of establishing and modifying her will—even when her husband was alive. The same conclusion can be reached by means of the second example, RA 41, pp. 9f, written in Babylon in 555 BC. A woman named Kurunnam-tabni had several sons and decided that the eldest—Bēl-ušallim—should renounce his preferential portion of the inheritance. This he did, as is attested in the first portion of the text, perhaps in exchange for other benefits. Kurunnam-tabni decided to hand over Bēl-ušallim's portion to two younger sons, to which the elder son agreed. Nevertheless, later on, Bēl-ušallim attempted to reclaim this portion, even though his petition does not appear to have successful.

Should Bēl-ušallim, son of Nabû-šum-ukīn, descendant of Sîn-šadūnu, produce either a contract or a deed in a suit against Kurunnam-tabni, which Bēl-ušallim . . . contests with Kurunnam-tabni concerning the two-*kurru*, two-*pānu* grain field that is (considered) the dowry property of Kurunnam-tabni, the daughter of Bēl-ētir, descendant of Sîn-šadūnu, his mother—that (document rightfully) belongs to Kurunnam-tabni.

The “scribe of documents” of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had awarded under seal (the above mentioned properties) to Kurunnam-tabni in lieu of a dowry, and wrote in (the deed) as follows: “Any of her sons who does not treat her properly (as specified) herein shall not receive (his) inheritance as (outlined) herein.” (Therefore, in accordance with that provision) in a tablet concerned with Kurunnam-tabni's two-*kurru*, two-*pānu* grain field, she awarded under seal a one-*kurru*, one-*pānu* area of the grain field—the (expected) inheritance share of Bēl-ušallim, her oldest son—to Šāpik-zēri and Bēl-uballit, her younger sons.

Later, Bēl-ušallim . . . brought a claim before the city elders against the deed of Kurunnam-tabni (in which she awarded the property to her two younger

sons), but Bēl-ušallim, her oldest son, withdrew his suit. (To attest to all this) he (Bēl-ušallim) is here present to witness the (validity of that) tablet, the document concerning the one-*kurru*, one-*pānu* grain field, the (anticipated) inheritance share of [Bēl-ušallim], which Kurunnam-tabni awarded under seal to Šāpik-zēri and Bēl-uballiṭ, her (younger) sons.

(Five witnesses, scribe and date).

(Translation by Roth 1991/1993: 14–15)

Women as beneficiaries: the wife

The case of women benefitting from the legacy of a relative is unquestionably much more common. This relative was usually a man: her father, husband, brother, etc. In particular, the case of wives and daughters, which represent most of the instances, are discussed here.

In general, the widow did not inherit properties as a result of her husband's testamentary dispositions. The will made by her husband affected her differently: she was economically and legally protected against any possible actions by relatives or other persons. For instance, in a great number of testaments, clauses were included which (explicitly or implicitly) forbade her descendants from abandoning their mother, i.e., the testator's wife, e.g., BE 6/2 48 (from eighteenth-century Nippur), HSS 5 71 (fourteenth-century Nuzi), YOS 20 20 (Uruk, written in 270 BC), etc.⁶⁸ In fact, MAL A 46 establishes that the sons of a widow are to provide for her.

Once her husband died, the widow was entitled to keep and partially manage the dowry she had handed over on the occasion of her marriage (LH 171, cf. LH 172 and 177). Besides, the testator could add other gifts to contribute to his widow's welfare. These gifts have different technical designations, depending on archives and periods. Quite often these had the form of *donationes inter vivos*, though they only had full effect after the testator's death; on other occasions it is made clear that the wife could have immediate access to these properties:⁶⁹ e.g., MCS 2 75 (from twenty-first-century Umma), CT 6 38a (seventeenth-century Sippar), CM 13 14 (thirteenth-century Emar), StAT 2 164 (from Aššur, 675 BC), etc. LNB 12 states that widows could retain all these properties—dowry and gifts—and documents of practice indicate that such disposition was followed.⁷⁰

In the cuneiform sources from northern Syria and Mesopotamia during the Late Bronze Age, two other interesting types of terms included in testaments have implications for widows. One of them records the testator's concern that his wife should not marry outside

his family or clan after his death so as not to split the family wealth, e.g., JEN 444 (fourteenth-century Nuzi), WVDOG 102 19 (fourteenth-century Ekalte), *Emar* VI 177 (thirteenth century), *KAJ* 9 (Middle Assyrian, from Aššur), etc.⁷¹ Note that documents of the practice attest that this clause included in wills could become real, as an Ur III court case indicates (*Fs. S. N. Kramer*, pp. 440ff. from twenty-first-century Girsu).⁷² The other disposition is the granting of male legal status to the wife, a mechanism presented in the next section.

Women as beneficiaries: the daughter

The daughter's role in her father's inheritance has been the subject of a recent monograph which focuses on the documentation from Nuzi and Emar—some of the most relevant archives in that field, fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BC—as well as the Old Testament.⁷³

Daughters did receive their father's inheritance, usually in the form of a dowry. While sons received their inheritance upon their father's death, daughters received their dowry when they married—and it usually represented a lesser amount than that received by their brothers.⁷⁴ In some particular cases, however, the daughter was the heir, e.g., *ALT* 7 (from seventeenth-century Alalah), *BR* 4, p. 20 (Achaemenid, 491 BC),⁷⁵ etc. This mainly happened in families with no male descendants; in fact, law compilations state that if the father died leaving no son, his unmarried daughter should become his heiress (LL b, cf. *NG* 204). However, in some cases, daughters did inherit properties despite the existence of sons (e.g., text translated in the next section). A special case is that recorded in the Old Assyrian documents from Kaniš (nineteenth century), as both sons and daughters seem to have usually shared in the deceased's state (e.g., *AKT* 1 1; *SHCANE* 14, pp. 141f, etc.);⁷⁶ some Middle Assyrian documents also attest to this situation (e.g., *OBT* 105, cf. *OBT* 2037). An exception was envisaged for *nadītū* priestesses too: if not dowered, LH 181–182 awards a *naditum* a one-third share of a male inheritance—but we find a variety of circumstances in documents of practice.⁷⁷

During the Late Bronze Age in Mesopotamia and Syria, the solution in cases where male heirs were lacking consisted of having the daughter marry a man previously adopted by her guardian and making both of them heirs (“adoption with marriage,” see above). Another solution was possible: granting the daughter(s) a male legal status.

Legal gender shift

Definition and corpus

The mechanism of granting a woman male legal status, unknown in other periods and areas of antiquity, deserves a special place in any discussion on the legal role of women. The relevance of this mechanism has been in general undervalued, and especially their importance concerning the topic of gender in the Ancient Near East.

The use of such legal practices must be set in the context of a patriarchal society, where women were excluded *de facto* (but not *de jure*) from most of the legal deeds, as it has been shown in previous sections.⁷⁸ If the family had no male descendants, different possibilities could be used, in order to avoid the estate and cult going outside the family or clan.⁷⁹ For instance, one solution was to use the “adoption with marriage” (see above). However, the most original alternative was the granting of male legal status to a female.

First, the definition: it is a legal fiction, usually included in a testament, by which the testator (in few cases the testatrix) granted a special legal status to a female relative—his wife, daughter, mother, or sister. Second, the available sources: this mechanism is so far attested in an Old Assyrian document from nineteenth-century Kaniš (*ArchAn.* 4, pp. 1ff),⁸⁰ 3 from Nuzi, i.e., Arrapḫe (*Sumer* 32, pp. 116ff; *SCCNH* 1, pp. 386f; and *HSS* 19 60+) ⁸¹ and in some 40 cases from the Late Bronze Age Syrian archives (Emar and Ekalte).⁸² At least one unpublished document from Azû, in Syria, seems to reflect the granting of a male legal status to a woman.⁸³ Additionally, one text from El-Qiṭār, in Syria too, might contain the same procedure; however, the formulation is too ambiguous to be completely sure.⁸⁴

Since the great majority of instances are found in testaments, one might wonder if the phenomenon of the granting of the male status to women is limited to the inheritance field. On the one hand, some authors deny a relationship between these practices and the inheritance as laid out by the testator.⁸⁵ Other scholars believe that these practices were directly linked to the inheritance.⁸⁶ Finally, others seem to defend an intermediate position:⁸⁷ the aim of this practice would differ depending on the status of that woman, an idea that is currently accepted in general (see below). Only one document, from Emar, is not a testament but a verdict (*CM* 13 3). The case concerns a man, Laḥteya, who sued his stepson for having misappropriated his four sisters’ silver; later on we learn that Laḥteya subsequently established his stepdaughters as female and male (see

below).

An example from thirteenth-century Emar

For the sake of clarity, I present here a translation of a representative Emarite testament (RA 77: pp. 17–19) containing some of the phenomena described below—as well as other legal mechanisms referred to in previous sections:

From this day, Muzzazu, son of Šamanu, in good health, has decreed the disposition of his estate. He has said as follows:

“Now then my wife Ḫepate is father and mother of my estate. Now then I have established my daughter Al-aḫātī as female and male. She may call upon my gods and my ancestors. Now then, I have given my estates, my possessions (and) property, everything of mine to my daughter Al-aḫātī.

If my wife Ḫepate goes after a false man, she shall put her clothes on a stool and go wherever she will.

If my daughter Al-aḫātī dies and has no descendants, her husband Aḫū-yaqaru shall take another woman. The children she bears—before and after—are my children. And if Al-aḫātī and Aḫū-yaqaru die and they have no descendants, then (my daughters) Al-ummī and Pātīl shall inherit (my possessions).”

(Seven witnesses and scribe).

(Translation by Huehnergard 1983: 19)

Wives as “father and mother”

Expressions used tended to vary and mostly depended on the relationship between the testator and the woman. With regard to the wife and the mother (circumstances attested in the Old Assyrian text and some Syrian documents), the testator would state: “I have established PNF [Personal Name-female] in the capacity of fatherhood and motherhood status (Akk. *ana abbūti u ummūti*) over my household.”

By this legal act, the wife seems to have been granted full legal capacity to manage the inheritance and the family after the death of her husband as well as special legal protection against possible claims from relatives. But the most relevant point is that the testator in this way caused his descendants not to receive their inheritance until the widow passed away.⁸⁸ According to some scholars, the testator thus avoided any possibility of his wife marrying someone else,⁸⁹ a concern

especially recurrent in documents from Mesopotamia and Syria during the Late Bronze Age. It should be noted that in one document from Emar (*RE* 23) the testator stated: “If my son Ipqi-Dagān should die without progeny—I have now installed my wife Aḥātu as female and male.” This formula is exactly the same as may be found in the case of a daughter being granted male status—revealing that she had no male brothers (see below).

Daughters as “female and male”

With regard to a daughter (instances attested in Syria and all three cases from Nuzi, i.e., Arraphē), or sister (one case from Ekalte), the testator usually declared: “I have established my daughter PNF as female and male (Akk. *ana sinništūti u zikarūti*)”; sometimes it is said that the daughter was “father and mother” (as in the case of the wife, see above), or that she was simply the son—highlighting the male gender by the use of the Akk. term *māru* “son” instead of *mārtu* “daughter.”

The purpose of this phenomenon seems to have been different from that of the cases of wives being granted such legal status. In essence, in the case of daughters, the aim was to provide them with the same legal rights as the sons in matters of inheritance. These rights consisted of inheriting property and being able to manage the family cult. In fact, in most cases where a daughter specifically received assets from her father’s will, she had been previously given a male legal status. At the same time, in various documents, a woman with male legal status was allowed to manage the cult of the family, a prerogative usually held by the first-born son.⁹⁰

The explanation commonly accepted is that such a mechanism was implemented because there were no sons in the family. This is explicitly stated in various instances. The Emarite text translated above indicates that the testator granted the first-born daughter—who was already married—male status; if she died, the other two daughters could inherit; no sons are mentioned. In addition, in a document from Ekalte (*Semitica* 46, p. 12) we find that the testator states: “If my son Abu-Dagān should die without progeny—I have now established my daughters as female and male.” But probably the clearest example is a document from Emar in which the testator declares: “I have no son, so I have made my daughter Al-našuwa as male and female” (*AulaOr.* 5, pp. 233f).

Women's position and historical implications

It seems that, in general, women granted male legal status held a special position. Maybe they would have been more protected against complaints than other women. Such would be the case for a daughter: it has been pointed that the instances from Nuzi, i.e., Arraphē, reflect that the testator had brothers, so the use of this mechanism would have served to protect the daughter's inheritance rights from them.⁹¹

Given the distribution of documents attesting to this legal mechanism, one might wonder when and how it was conceived. Scholars have not dealt with this topic in depth. According to the current state of research, two main scenarios are likely. The first one is that Hurrians transmitted the use of the mechanism, starting in the early Middle Bronze Age, from northern Mesopotamia and westwards. The second possibility is that Assyrians, who used the mechanism at least in the nineteenth century (see the example of Kaniš), spread its use in areas through which they maintained commercial routes between Aššur and Anatolia.

However, it should be noted that similar phenomena are attested elsewhere. Anthropologists have identified different mechanisms in which women could act as men from the legal viewpoint.⁹² For instance, a high-status Yoruba woman (Nigeria) can marry another woman, the former becoming the legal father of the latter's children. Likewise, among the Nuer (Sudan), a barren woman—referred to as “paternal uncle”—is able to marry a young girl and choose her a male partner, but the children they might bear would be the first woman's. Moreover the legal gender shift is attested in modern Europe too, as in the case of some Albanian women,⁹³ as well as in the north of Russia.⁹⁴

Apparently, in the Ancient Near East, women granted male legal status did not need to adopt any special way of life—if they were already married, there was no obligation to divorce; or if the woman was a priestess, she could keep her position. The conclusion is that these women did not renounce being women. We thus acquire a renewed perspective thanks to this kind of mechanism. It is clear that, at least for the societies in which the granting of male legal status is attested, there was a difference between the biological sex and the gender; both realities existed on different levels.⁹⁵

Notes

- 1 Abbreviations of specialized journals, texts, and series follow M. P. Streck (ed.) *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und vorderasiatischen Archäologie* (Berlin and Leipzig, see www.rla.badw.de), except for references to legal compilations, for which see Table 6.1 in this section (Roth 1995). I thank S. Budin for her kind advice and numerous suggestions, and her assistance in composing the chapter in acceptable English.
- 2 There are numerous editions of some of these codes; the reader should consult Roth 1995 which provides transcriptions and translations for all of them.
- 3 The author mentions in the next lines different references to laws inscribed in stelai; we currently have other examples, see, for example, Veenhof 1995.
- 4 Démare-Lafont 2011.
- 5 See especially Démare-Lafont and Lemaire 2010 for several examples.
- 6 Not since the pioneering work of Marx 1902 on the Babylonian sources of the first millennium bc; see most recently, e.g., Wunsch 2003 (Neo-Babylonian and Achaemenid), Justel 2014 (just for the second and first millennia BC), and Michel, forthcoming (Old Assyrian). For a recent, general study, not exclusively on women and law, see Stol 2012 (cf. also Stol 1995).
- 7 Westbrook 2003c: 39.
- 8 Westbrook 2003c: 46.
- 9 Some comments on this circumstance, concerning different periods, are to be found in Falkenstein 1956: 81–82; Wilcke 1985: 303–313, 2007: 52, 62; Marsman 2003: 292–293; Jursa 2005: 12; Justel 2008: 40–43, 2014: 34–35.
- 10 On this document see the translation and commentaries in Tropper and Vita 2004: 148–149, and Justel 2014: 34–35.
- 11 Initially formulated in Koschaker 1917: 137 and 1950.
- 12 See, most recently, Pfeifer 2009: 383–393, with previous bibliography.
- 13 A brief sketch on the dowry is to be found in Westbrook 1993/1997.
- 14 Fleishman 2004.
- 15 Barberon 2003: 6–8.
- 16 See some comments on this change in Roth 1989: 249.
- 17 See the contribution of Bryce in this volume.
- 18 Gordon 1981; Hengstl 1992; Haase 2001; Marsman 2003: 84–86.
- 19 Bellotto 2004.
- 20 Van Soldt 1987/1990.
- 21 See, in general, Westbrook 2003/2005.
- 22 Friedl 2000.
- 23 Barberon 2012 and Stol 2012: 361–372, with previous bibliography.
- 24 Justel 2012.
- 25 See, especially, Michel 2006; Kienast 2008.
- 26 Wilcke 2007: 59–60.
- 27 Lipiński 1981; Westbrook 2003c: 48–50.
- 28 See, e.g., Lafont and Westbrook 2003: 204; Wilcke 2007: 66; Culbertson 2009: 200–201.
- 29 Published by Al-Rawi 1977: 352–358.
- 30 Justel 2014: 56–60.
- 31 Some works deal specifically with the presence of women in economic deeds,

e.g., Steinkeller 1982; Wilcke 2000: 362–364 (third millennium BC); Kienast 1984: 23 (Old Assyrian); Justel 2008: 188–201 (Late Bronze Age Syria); or Radner 1997: 318–337 (Neo-Assyrian).

- 32 Bauer *et al.* 1998: 474.
- 33 Joannès 1989: 95, 246.
- 34 Michel 2003: 19–21.
- 35 See some comments on this phenomenon in Michel 2013: 46 (Old Assyrian); Slanski 2003: 510 (Middle Babylonian); Démare-Lafont 2003: 533 (Middle Assyrian); Justel 2008: 215–217 (Late Bronze Age Syria); Wunsch 2003: 89–92 (Neo-Babylonian).
- 36 Michel 2003: 23–30; see numerous examples in Westbrook and Jasnow 2001.
- 37 See, especially, Waerzeggers 1999/2000.
- 38 Wunsch 1993: 68–69.
- 39 Wilcke 2007: 42.
- 40 Démare-Lafont 2000; Slanski 2003: 491, 498; Veenhof 2003b: 441; Westbrook 2003b: 369.
- 41 Démare-Lafont 1999.
- 42 Démare-Lafont 1999: 399–407, with previous bibliography.
- 43 See also the comments of Michel 2003: 29; Westbrook 2003a: 665; Justel 2008: 182, 237.
- 44 See, clearly, Villard 2000: 193.
- 45 On this important document, see also Roth 2001, with previous bibliography.
- 46 On this important document, see also Veenhof 2003a; Charpin 2005; Démare-Lafont 2011: 345–347.
- 47 See the comments by Holtz 2009: 248–249.
- 48 Stol 1991.
- 49 Westbrook 1998; Marsman 2003: 438–445; Steele 2007: 307–311.
- 50 Michel 2003: 24–30.
- 51 Marsman 2003: 442–443; Fleishman 2011: 229–239.
- 52 Dandamaev 1984: 174.
- 53 Documents published by Oppenheim 1955.
- 54 Exception seems to be the Middle Assyrian sources, see Cardellini 1981: 169.
- 55 See, in general, Westbrook 1998.
- 56 See, recently, Barberon 2012: 224–234, with previous bibliography.
- 57 Justel 2008: 244.
- 58 See, e.g., Mendelsohn 1949: 54–55; Marsman 2003: 418.
- 59 Wilcke 2007: 53.
- 60 Dandamaev 1984: 132–135; Kuhrt 1989: 232–233.
- 61 See several examples in Dandamaev 1984: 133–134.
- 62 See, most recently, Budin 2008.
- 63 Dandamaev 1984: 134–136.
- 64 Cases of intestate succession are also attested; see, e.g., LH 162 and the Neo-Babylonian example translated below (RA 41, pp. 9f). In addition, if the father's first wife died and he remarried, the sons of both marriages were equally entitled (LL 24; LH 167; cf. LNB 15); some systems even allowed an illegitimate

son—the deceased's natural son by a concubine—to inherit in the absence of legitimate sons (cf. Justel 2013).

- 65 Some examples are provided in Stol 1998: 101–102.
- 66 Barberon 2012: 209–224, with previous bibliography.
- 67 A list of them may be found in Justel 2008: 125.
- 68 See many other examples in Stol and Vleeming 1998.
- 69 Westbrook 2003c: 62.
- 70 Roth 1991/1993; Van Driel 1998: 170–172.
- 71 Wilcke 1985: 303–313; Justel 2011; see an example in the next section, and cf. the Roman practice of the *legatum per damnationem*.
- 72 See also the comments by Wilcke 1998: 48.
- 73 Ben-Barak 2006.
- 74 Westbrook 1991: 157–164.
- 75 See other first millennium examples in Van Driel 1998: 184–187.
- 76 Veenhof 1998: 138–141, 2003b: 458–459.
- 77 Stol 1998: 84–109 for multiple examples.
- 78 Lion 2009: 17–18.
- 79 See, e.g., Limet 2001: 7–12; Ben-Barak 2006: 132–141.
- 80 Michel 2000, with previous bibliography.
- 81 Lion 2009, with previous bibliography.
- 82 Justel 2008: 156–167. The specific documents are: *Emar VI* 15, 31, 70, 91, 112, 185, 195; *TBR* 28, 41, 45, 47, 50, 71, 72; *RE* 15, 23, 28, 37, 57, 85; *ASJ* 13, pp. 285f and pp. 292f; *AulaOr.* 5, pp. 233f; *SMEA* 30, pp. 204f and pp. 207f; *RA* 77, pp. 13f, pp. 17ff and pp. 19f; *Iraq* 54, p. 103; *Prima dell'alfabeto*, pp. 203f (from Emar); *WVDOG* 102 19, 38, 65, 75, 92; *ASJ* 16, pp. 231f; *Semitica* 46, p. 12 (from Ekalte).
- 83 See a reference in Dornermann 1979: 146.
- 84 See different interpretations in Snell 1983/1984: 164 and Ben-Barak 1988: 95.
- 85 E.g., Arnaud 1981: 6–7; Kämmerer 1994: 170, 178, 201; Beckman 1996: 72.
- 86 E.g., Grosz 1987: 85–86; Paradise 1987: 207–209; Ben-Barak 1988; Westbrook 2001: 39, 2003a: 680.
- 87 Michel 2000: 6–7; Limet 2001: 13.
- 88 See this important idea in Limet 2001: 13; Westbrook 2001: 40, 2003a: 681; Zaccagnini 2003: 602; Démare-Lafont 2010: 55.
- 89 Michel 2000: 6.
- 90 Van der Toorn 1994: 42–44.
- 91 See Grosz 1987: 83–86; Paradise 1987: 206–207.
- 92 E.g., Rivière 1999: 61.
- 93 Young 2000.
- 94 Habeck *et al.* 2010.
- 95 Lion 2007: 63–64, 2009: 20–21.

References

- Al-Rawi, F. (1977) *Studies in the Commercial Life of an Administrative Area of Eastern Assyria in the Fifteenth century B.C., Based on Published and Unpublished Cuneiform Texts*. PhD dissertation. Cardiff, UK: University of Wales.
- Arnaud, D. (1981) Humbles et superbes à Emar (Syrie) à la fin de l'âge du Bronze récent. In A. Caquot and M. Delcor (eds) *Mélanges Bibliques et Orientaux en L'honneur de M. Henri Cazelles*. Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany: Butzon & Bercker, pp. 1–14.
- Barberon, L. (2003) Le mari, sa femme et leur biens: Une approche sur la dot dans les rapports patrimoniaux du couple en Mésopotamie d'après la documentation paléo-babylonienne. *Revue Historique du Droit Français et Étranger* 81: 1–14.
- Barberon, L. (2012) *Les religieuses et le culte de Marduk dans le royaume de Babylone*. Paris: Société pour l'étude du Proche-Orient ancien.
- Bauer, J., Englund, R. K. and Krebernik, M. (1998) *Mesopotamien. Späturuk-Zeit und Frühdynastische Zeit*. Göttingen, Germany: Academic Press and Fribourg, Switzerland: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Beckman, G. (1996) Family values on the middle Euphrates in the thirteenth century B.C.E. In M. W. Chavalas (ed.) *Emar: The History, Religion, and Culture of a Syrian Town in the Late Bronze Age*. Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, pp. 57–79.
- Bellotto, N. (2004) L'adozione con matrimonio a Nuzi e a Emar. *KASKAL. Rivista di storia, ambienti e cultura del Vicino Oriente Antico* 1: 129–137.
- Ben-Barak, Z. (1988) The legal status of the daughter as heir in Nuzi and Emar. In M. Heltzer and E. Lipiński (eds) *Society and Economy in the Eastern Mediterranean (c. 1500–1000 BC)*. Leuven, The Netherlands: Peeters, pp. 87–97.
- Ben-Barak, Z. (2006) *Inheritance by Daughters in Israel and the Ancient Near East: A Social, Legal and Ideological Revolution*. Jaffa, Israel: Archaeological center Publications.
- Budin, S. L. (2008) *The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Cardascia, G. (1959) Le statut de la femme dans les droits cunéiformes. *Recueils de la Société Jean Bodin* 11: 79–94.
- Cardellini, I. (1981) *Die Biblischen "Sklaven"-Gesetze im Lichte des keilschriftlichen Sklavenrechts. Ein Beitrag zur Tradition, Überlieferung und Redaktion der alttestamentlichen Rechtstexte*. Königstein, Germany: Peter Hanstein.
- Charpin, D. (2005) Surârum est-il le fils de son père? À propos d'un procès à Sippta-Amnânûm. *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et*

- Culbertson, L. (2009) *Dispute Resolution in the Provincial Courts of the Third Dynasty of Ur*. PhD dissertation. University of Michigan.
- Dandamaev, M.A. (1984) *Slavery in Babylonia from Nabopolassar to Alexander the Great (626–331 BC)*. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press.
- Démare-Lafont, S. (1999) *Femmes, droit et justice dans l'Antiquité orientale: Contribution à l'étude du droit penal au Proche-Orient ancien*. Göttingen, Germany: Academic Press and Fribourg, Switzerland: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Démare-Lafont, S. (2000) Considérations sur la pratique judiciaire en Mésopotamie. In F. Joannès (ed.) *Rendre la justice en Mésopotamie: Archives judiciaires du Proche-Orient ancien (IIIe–Ier millénaires avant J.-C.)*. Saint-Denis, France: Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, pp. 15–34.
- Démare-Lafont, S. (2003) Middle Assyrian period. In R. Westbrook (ed.) *A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill, pp. 521–563.
- Démare-Lafont, S. (2010) Éléments pour une diplomatie juridique des textes d'Émar. In S. Démare-Lafont and A. Lemaire (eds) *Trois Millénaires de Formulaires Juridiques*. Geneva: Droz, pp. 43–84.
- Démare-Lafont, S. (2011) From the banks of the Seine to the bay of Chesapeake: Crossglances on ancient Near Eastern law. *MAARAV* 18: 55–61.
- Démare-Lafont, S. and Lemaire, A. (eds) (2010) *Trois Millénaires de Formulaires Juridiques*. Geneva: Droz.
- Dornermann, R. H. (1979) Tell Hadidi: A millennium of Bronze Age city occupation. *Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 44: 113–151.
- Falkenstein, A. (1956) *Die Neusumerischen Gerichtsurkunden*. Munich, Germany: Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Fleishman, J. (2004) Inheritance of the dowry in Ancient Near Eastern law codes. *Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte* 10: 232–248.
- Fleishman, J. (2011) *Father–Daughter Relations in Biblical Law*. Bethesda, MD: University Press of Maryland.
- Friedl, C. (2000) *Polygynie in Mesopotamien und Israel. Sozialgeschichtliche Analyse Polygamer Beziehungen Anhand Rechtlicher Texte aus dem 2. und 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr.* Münster, Germany: Ugarit-Verlag.
- Gordon, C.H. (1981) *erēbu* marriage. *Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians* 1: 155–160.

- Grosz, K. (1987) Daughters adopted as sons at Nuzi and Emar. In J. M. Durand (ed.) *La femme dans le Proche-Orient Antique*. Paris: Recherches sur les civilisations, pp. 81–86.
- Haase, R. (2001) Der § 36 der hethitischen Rechtssatzung. *Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte* 7: 392–397.
- Habeck, J. O., Povoroznyuk, O. and Vaté, V. (eds) (2010) Gender shift in the North of Russia. *The Anthropology of East Europe Review* 28(2): 1–270.
- Hengstl, J. (1992) Die neusumerische Eintrittsehe. *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Romanistische Abteilung* 109: 31–50.
- Holtz, S.E. (2009) *Neo-Babylonian Court Procedure*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill.
- Huehnergard, J. (1983) Five tablets from the vicinity of Emar. *Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie Orientale* 77: 11–43.
- Joannès, F. (1989) *Archives de Borsippa. La famille Ea-ilûta-bâni. Étude d'un lot d'archives familiales en Babylonie du VIII^e au V^e siècle av. J.-C.* Geneva: Droz.
- Jursa, M. (2005) *Neo-Babylonian Legal and Administrative Documents. Typology, Contents and Archives*. Münster, Germany: Ugarit-Verlag.
- Jursa, M., Paszkowiak, J. and Waerzeggers, C. (2003/2004) Three court records. *Archiv für Orientforschung* 50: 255–268.
- Justel, J. J. (2008) *La posición jurídica de la mujer en Siria durante el Bronce Final. Estudio de las estrategias familiares y de la mujer como sujeto y objeto de derecho*. Zaragoza, Spain: Instituto de Estudios Islámicos y del Oriente Próximo.
- Justel, J. J. (2011) “Se irá desnuda de mi casa . . .” Las relaciones de la viuda con otros hombres y su expulsión del hogar (Norte de Mesopotamia y Siria durante el Bronce Final). In J. A. Belmonte and J. Oliva (eds) *Esta Toledo, aquella Babilonia. Convivencia e interacción en las sociedades del Oriente y del Mediterráneo antiguos*. Cuenca, Spain: Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, pp. 217–240.
- Justel, J. J. (2012) The involvement of a woman in her husband's second marriage and the historicity of the patriarchal narratives. *Zeitschrift für Altorientalische und Biblische Rechtsgeschichte* 18: 191–207.
- Justel, J. J. (2013) The rights of a concubine's descendants in the Ancient Near East. *Revue Internationale des Droits de l'Antiquité* 60: 13–36.
- Justel, J. J. (2014) *Mujeres y derecho en el Próximo Oriente Antiguo. La presencia de mujeres en los textos jurídicos cuneiformes del segundo y primer milenios a.C.* Zaragoza, Spain: Pórtico.

- Kämmerer, T. (1994) Zur sozialen Stellung der Frau in *Emār und Ekalte* als Witwe und Waise. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 26: 169–208.
- Kienast, B. (1984) *Das altassyrische Kaufvertragsrecht*. Wiesbaden, Germany: F. Steiner.
- Kienast, B. (2008) Altassyrisch *amtum* = “Zweifrau”. *Altorientalische Forschungen* 35: 35–52.
- Koschaker, P. (1917) *Rechtsvergleichende Studien zur Gesetzgebung Hammurapis, Königs von Babylon*. Leipzig, Germany: Veit & Comp.
- Koschaker, P. (1950) Eheschließung und Kauf nach alten Rechten, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der älteren Keilschriftrechte. *Archiv Orientalní* 18(3): 210–296.
- Kuhrt, A. (1989) Non-royal women in the Late Babylonian period: A survey. In B. S. Lesko (ed.) *Women's Earliest Records from Ancient Egypt and Western Asia. Proceedings of the Conference on Women in the Ancient Near East. Brown University, Providence. Rhode Island November 5–7, 1987*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, pp. 215–239.
- Lafont, B. and Westbrook, R. (2003) Neo-Sumerian period (Ur III). In R. Westbrook (ed.) *A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill, pp. 183–226.
- Limet, H. (2001) Les femmes et le patrimoine dans le droit du II^e millénaire. In C. Cannuyer et al. (eds) *La femme dans les civilisations orientales et Miscellanea Aegyptologica. Christiane Desroches Noblecourt in honorem*. Brussels, Louvain la Neuve and Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 1–16.
- Lion, B. (2007) La notion de genre en Assyriologie. In V. Sebillotte Cuchet and N. Ernoult (eds) *Problèmes du genre en Grèce ancienne*. Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, pp. 51–64.
- Lion, B. (2009) Sexe et genre (1): Des filles devenant fils dans les contrats de Nuzi et d'Emar. *Topoi Supplement* 10: 9–25.
- Lipiński, E. (1981) The wife's right to divorce in the light of an Ancient Near Eastern tradition. *Jewish Law Annual* 4: 9–27.
- Marsman, H. J. (2003) *Women in Ugarit and Israel: Their Social and Religious Position in the Context of the Ancient Near East*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill.
- Marx, V. (1902) *Die Stellung der Frauen in Babylonien gemäss den Kontrakten aus der Zeit von Nebukadnezar bis Darius (604–485)*. Leipzig, Germany: A. Pries.
- Mendelsohn, I. (1949) *Slavery in the Ancient Near East: A Comparative Study of Slavery in Babylonia, Assyria, Syria, and Palestine from the Middle of the Third Millenium to the End of the First Millenium*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Michel, C. (2000) À propos d'un testament paléo-assyrien: Une femme

- de marchand “père et mère” des capitaux. *Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie orientale* 94: 1–10.
- Michel, C. (2003) Les femmes et les dettes: Problèmes de responsabilité dans la Mésopotamie du II^e millénaire avant Jésus-Christ. *Méditerranées* 34/35: 13–36.
- Michel, C. (2006) Bigamie chez les Assyriens au début du II^e millénaire avant J.-C. *Revue Historique de Droit Français et Étranger* 84: 155–176.
- Michel, C. (2013) Economic and social aspects of the old Assyrian contracts. In F. D'Agostino (ed.) *L'economia Dell'antica Mesopotamia (III–I millennio a.C.). Per un Dialogo Interdisciplinare*. Rome: Nuova Cultura, pp. 41–55.
- Michel, C. (forthcoming) *Women from Aššur and Kaniš Accordign to the Private Archives of the Assyrian Merchants at the Beginning of the IInd Millennium BC*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.
- Oppenheim, A. L. (1955) “Siege-documents” from Nippur. *Iraq* 17: 69–89.
- Paradise, J. (1987) Daughters as sons at Nuzi. *Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians* 2: 203–213.
- Pfeifer, N. (2009) Das Eherecht in Nuzi: Einflüsse aus altbabylonischer Zeit. *Studies on the Civilization and Culture of Nuzi and the Hurrians* 18: 355–420.
- Radner, K. (1997) *Die Neuassyrischen Privatrechtsurkunden als Quelle für Mensch und Umwelt*. Helsinki, Finland: Helsinki University Press.
- Rivière, C. (1999) *Introduction à l'Anthropologie*. Paris: Hachette.
- Roth, M. T. (1989) Marriage and matrimonial prestations in first millenium B.C. Babylonia. In B. S. Lesko (ed.) *Women's Earliest Records from Ancient Egypt and Western Asia. Proceedings of the Conference on Women in the Ancient Near East. Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, November 5–7, 1987*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, pp. 245–255.
- Roth, M. T. (1991/1993) The Neo-Babylonian widow. *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 43/45: 1–26.
- Roth, M. T. (1995) *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.
- Roth, M. T. (2001) Reading Mesopotamian law cases. PBS 5 100: A question of filiation. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 44: 243–292.
- Slanski, K. (2003) Middle Babylonian period. In R. Westbrook (ed.) *A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill, pp. 485–520.
- Snell, D. C. (1983/1984) The cuneiform tablet from el-Qiṭār. *Abr-*

- Steele, L. D. (2007) Women and gender in Babylonia. In G. Leick (ed.) *The Babylonian World*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 299–316.
- Steinkeller, P. (1982) Two Sargonic sale documents concerning women. *Orientalia Nova Series* 51: 355–368.
- Stol, M. (1991) Ein Prozessurkunde über Falsches Zeugnis. In D. Charpin (ed.) *Marchands, Diplomates et Empereurs. Études sur la Vivilisation Mesopotamienne Offertes a Paul Garelli*. Paris: Recherche sur les civilisations, pp. 333–339.
- Stol, M. (1995) Women in Mesopotamia. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 38: 123–144.
- Stol, M. (1998) Care of the elderly in Mesopotamia in the Old Babylonian period. In M. Stol and S.P. Vleeming (eds) *The Care of the Elderly in the Ancient Near East*. Leiden, The Netherlands, Boston, MA and Cologne, Germany: Brill, pp. 59–117.
- Stol, M. (2012) *Vrouwen van Babylon: Prinsessen, Priesteressen, Prostituees in de Bakermat van de Cultuur*. Utrecht, The Netherlands: Kok.
- Stol, M. and Vleeming, S. P. (eds. =) (1998) *The Care of the Elderly in the Ancient Near East*. Leiden, The Netherlands, Boston, MA and Cologne, Germany: Brill.
- Tropper, J. and Vita, J. P. (2004) Texte aus Emar. *Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments, Neue Folge* 1: 146–162.
- Van der Toorn, K. (1994) Gods and ancestors in Emar and Nuzi. *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie* 84: 38–59.
- Van Driel, G. (1998) Care of the elderly: The Neo-Babylonian period. In M. Stol and S. P. Vleeming (eds) *The Care of the Elderly in the Ancient Near East*. Leiden, The Netherlands, Boston, MA and Cologne, Germany: Brill, pp. 161–197.
- Van Soldt, W. H. (1987/1990) Matrilinearität. A. In Elam. *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 7: 586–588.
- Veenhof, K. R. (1995) “In accordance with the words of the stele”: Evidence for old Assyrian legislation. *Chicago-Kent Law Review* 70: 1717–1744.
- Veenhof, K. R. (1998) Old Assyrian and Anatolian evidence for the care of the elderly. In M. Stol and S. P. Vleeming (eds) *The Care of the Elderly in the Ancient Near East*. Leiden, The Netherlands, Boston, MA and Cologne, Germany: Brill, pp. 119–160.
- Veenhof, K. R. (2003a) Fatherhood is a matter of opinion. An old Babylonian trial on filiation and service duties. In W. Sallaberger, K. Volk and A. Zgoll (eds) *Literatur, Politik und Recht in Mesopotamien*.

- Festschrift für Claus Wilcke*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrasowitz, pp. 313–332.
- Veenhof, K. R. (2003b) Old Assyrian period. In R. Westbrook (ed.) *A History of the Ancient Near Eastern Law*. Leiden, The Netherlands, Boston, MA and Cologne, Germany: Brill, pp. 431–483.
- Villard, P. (2000) Les textes judiciaires néo-assyriens. In F. Joannès (ed.) *Rendre la justice en Mésopotamie. Archives judiciaires du Proche-Orient ancien (IIIe–Ier millénaires avant J.-C.)*. Saint-Denis, France: Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, pp. 171–200.
- Waerzeggers, C. (1999/2000) The records of Inšabtu from the Naggāru family. *Archiv für Orientforschung* 46/47: 183–200.
- Westbrook, R. (1991) *Property and the Family in Biblical Law*. Sheffield, UK: A&C Black.
- Westbrook, R. (1993/1997) Mitgift. *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 8: 273–283.
- Westbrook, R. (1998) The female slave. In V. H. Matthews *et al.* (eds) *Gender and Law in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*. Sheffield, UK: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, pp. 214–238.
- Westbrook, R. (2001) Social justice and creative jurisprudence in Late Bronze Age Syria. *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 44: 22–43.
- Westbrook, R. (2003a) Emar and vicinity. In R. Westbrook (ed.) *A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill, pp. 657–691.
- Westbrook, R. (2003b) Old Babylonian period. In R. Westbrook (ed.) *A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill, pp. 361–430.
- Westbrook, R. (2003c) The character of ancient Near Eastern law. In R. Westbrook (ed.) *A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill, pp. 1–90.
- Westbrook, R. (2003/2005) Polygamie. *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 10: 600–602.
- Westbrook, R. and Jasnow, R. (eds) (2001) *Security for Debt in Ancient Near Eastern Law*. Leiden, The Netherlands, Boston, MA and Cologne, Germany: Brill.
- Wilcke, C. (1985) Familiengründung im alten Babylonien. In E. W. Müller (ed.) *Geschlechtsreife und Legitimation zur Zeugung*. Munich, Germany: Alber: 213–317.
- Wilcke, C. (1998) Care of the elderly in Mesopotamia in the third millennium B.C. In M. Stol and S. P. Vleeming (ed.) *The Care of the Elderly in the Ancient Near East*. Leiden, The Netherlands, Boston, MA and Cologne, Germany: Brill, pp. 23–57.

- Wilcke, C. (2000) Vom Verhältnis der Geschlechter im Alten Mesopotamien: *“Eine Frau mit eigenem Vermögen richtet das Haus zugrunde”*. In *Frauenforscherin Stellen Sich Vor. Leipziger Studien zur Frauen- und Geschlechterforschung, Reihe A, B und 5*. Leipzig, Germany: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, pp. 351–381.
- Wilcke, C. (2007) *Early Ancient Near Eastern Law: A History of Its Beginnings. The Early Dinastic and Sargonic Periods*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Wunsch, C. (1993) *Die Urkunden des Babylonischen Geschäftsmannes Iddin-Marduk. Zum Handel mit Naturalien im 6. Jahrhundert v. Chr.* Groningen, The Netherlands: STYX.
- Wunsch, C. (2003) *Urkunden zum Ehe-, Vermögens- und Erbrecht aus Verschiedenen Neubabylonischen Archiven*. Dresden, Germany: ISLET.
- Young, W. (2000) *Women Who Become Men: Albanian Sworn Virgins*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Zaccagnini, C. (2003) Nuzi. In R. Westbrook (ed.) *A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law*. Leiden, The Netherlands, Boston, MA and Cologne, Germany: Brill, pp. 565–617.

BUSINESSWOMEN AND THEIR SEALS IN EARLY MESOPOTAMIA

Andrew McCarthy

Introduction

The business world, both public and private, is made up of individuals, and in order to understand the ancient economy we should allow for discussions of how aspects of an individual's identity are factored into that economy. Sex and gender are two of these aspects, but these personal qualities are often sterilized from our historical descriptions in favour of more universal characteristics. The way ancient business operated, however, does not allow for the separation of an individual's identity from her ability to contribute to the business world. For this reason, isolating how a woman would have operated in business can make a contribution to understanding the whole system. One way to access the role of women in business is through seals and their uses.

Seals in the Ancient Near East represent a rich and wide ranging area of study. From one perspective, seals represent a basic function of guarantee, like a signature, that verifies approval or transmits some information through time and space. As such, seals as bureaucratic devices were vital to the functioning of urbanized and organized society. This was especially true in large population centres, where people could be anonymous and verification was important, but also in smaller scale communities to control commodities, trade, and agreements. Any adult responsible for her own actions or who owned property would likely have encountered seals or even possessed one (or more) herself. They were not the exclusive domain of royalty and state-level bureaucrats, although these top echelon seals also existed.

Seals were a way to control commodities. In addition to their amuletic qualities, they were bureaucratic controlling devices,

allowing the user to seal storage and transport containers, storerooms, tablets, bills of lading, and the commodities themselves like textiles or bread. The most survivable material that remains (apart from seals themselves which were usually stone, bone, wood, clay, etc.) is clay sealings, but we can assume that there were other perishable materials like wax that were also regularly sealed. The seal impressions would transmit information about what kind of commodity was being sealed, as a letterhead reflecting the business, a particular office or rank, or controlling information for when, to where, and to whom a certain commodity would go in a transaction.

There are many circumstances where verification and exchange of information via seals would have been part of everyday life for a woman. In fact, there is ample direct evidence that women had their own seals and in some cases were an integral part of the economic system. Female names appear as inscriptions on seals themselves, and there are sexed skeletons, notably from the Royal cemetery at Ur, where seals have been found worn by their female owners.

Another perspective on seals and their use is that they were often the highest form of art, imbued with complex symbolic meanings that were both defined by, and went to define the identities of, their owners and users. As such, the images that the seals carried transmitted both the real and desired qualities of their possessors, and can be viewed as sensitive indicators of status, identity, religion, gender, ethnicity, and many other forms of expression. Furthermore, seal designs almost certainly had meanings and messages that would have been understood to those doing the sealing and those seeing the seal impression at a later time. This would have required a vernacular which implied some sort of education on the meaning and use of seals in various activities. Seals were known to have been worn as personal adornments, often tied in a sash around the waist, used as pins or worn around the neck.

Unfortunately, the meaning of the design of seals and their association with identities such as gender are not well understood. It is unlikely that this will be clarified any time soon. At the same time, we do get glimpses of women involved in the activities with which seals are associated, so if we assume that women were involved in the use of seals in these activities, we can begin to understand the way in which women played a vital part in the control of commodities, resources and the economy of the ancient world.

In order to do this, we must understand that society was hierarchical, and sex and gender were part of these divisions, but at

times subordinate to rank, class, and other factors. Property was a driving force in how society organized itself, especially as it related to legal matters. This meant that under certain circumstances, women could engage in economic activities with many rights and privileges, but only when the conditions were just so. Women in the business world were at times free to move ‘up’ in terms of rank, and ‘out’ in terms of independence. An important factor was family wealth, and if women had a strong position, they could exert power over property and even build up private enterprise (see Justel, this volume). In the earliest (third millennium BC) periods of state formation in the Near East, women enjoyed some degree of autonomy, perhaps because the society placed greater emphasis on household economy, but this continued to diminish over time (Stol 1995: 124; Troy 2004: 3–8). As the system became more formalized, especially in the Middle Assyrian period at the end of the second millennium BC onwards, women become more oppressed, with their business activities largely limited to proxy-positions in the absence of a man.

Seals at once had meaning in terms of legal status and as a vehicle for conveying information as a marker of personal identity. Each of these relate to women in different ways, and it is helpful to separate these complex relationships to clarify how women used seals in their economic and social lives. First, it is important to understand the extent to which it was acceptable for women to engage in business. Because seals were used to convey information in the economic process, women who were engaged in business and manufacturing would have understood the meaning that seals held. The role that women had in the household system (*oikos*), private business and international trade, and royal economies can be seen in the glyptic evidence that shows how women were engaged in these activities. Seals were also personal amulets that represented identity, status and socio-economic role, and the use of seals contributed not only to the economy but also to women’s standing in the social order.

Seals as identifiers

Seals, rather than signatures, functioned as a guarantee. Seals were thought to represent the person or the office to which they were attached. In this sense, seals were part of the person, if not a symbol of their very being. As such, the characteristics of the seal are important to understand both self-identification and the way that other people saw an individual. The form and meaning of seals were defined by a person’s place in society, but at the same time seals could go some way to creating an identity for a person, increasing rank and

status simply by their association with an individual.

In the late third-millennium BC Ur III period, there is evidence for several seals with women's names inscribed on them. One of these seals was impressed on a tablet that has been interpreted as coming from a merchant's family (Owen 1981: 181). A cylinder seal dated slightly later to the early second millennium Old Babylonian period, bore the inscription 'Nuttuptum, girl (GEME) of (the god) Amurru' (Merrillees 1986: 147 – see [Figure 7.1](#)). Silver has argued (1995: 59) that 'girl' in this case is nuanced shorthand for 'agent'. Interestingly, this seal was found in a Late Bronze Age tomb of two women in Cyprus, and the seal had been recut to the taste of the local Cypriot style. This shows that circulation of heirlooms continued for hundreds of years after the time of creation, and that seals continued to have an association with gender through time and space. From Tell al-Rimah in northern Iraq, a woman named Iltani sealed accounts of what she referred to as 'her house' (Silver 1995: 59). That she used this wording suggests ownership or at least some responsibility over the household affairs. In any case, a seal with a woman's name was being used to manage household accounts in the second millennium BC. Gordon (1936) lists eight women's names in seal impressions on tablets from Nuzi. One of these tablets, with the seal impression of a woman named Puhumenni, was for a large delivery of furniture. This demonstrates that women were engaged in trade as well as household management. Further, a slightly later Middle Assyrian division of inheritance tablet bears a priestess's seal impression, showing that women of importance were considered suitable for guaranteeing transactions as a third party (*ibid.*).



Figure 7.1 Imported and recut Old Babylonian cylinder seal found in Cyprus with the inscription ‘Nuttuptum, girl (GEMé) of (the god) Amurru’. Merrillees 1986: 122.

Beyond these explicit examples of women’s names appearing on seals or seal impressions, we can assume that a great many women had seals that were not inscribed with their names. It is impossible to say with certainty from designs alone what seals were more feminine or masculine, and even if this were possible, we cannot know how hard and fast the gender rules would have been applied. What is clear, however, is that the majority of seals that bear female names are of the type called ‘presentation scenes’. These are typically thought to represent an offering made (possibly by the seal owner) to a deity. This would denote a number of things, including piety and affinity to a particular deity, which could hold other meanings like place of birth or state loyalty, profession, social status, or even gender. Other inscribed female seal impressions, especially in the third millennium, are of banqueting scenes. At least in some cases, this was a preferred design for women (Pollock 1991) as demonstrated by the Royal cemetery at Ur.

Women in business

There were strict cultural norms that defined the role of every person in society, from slave to king and everything in between. A person’s

place was determined through a complex interplay between a number of factors, including kinship, gender, age, physical qualities and intangible personal qualities. Although there were guidelines for what status a person had, there was scope to change the trajectory of one's life based on talent and opportunity. Women are no exception to this, and while the typical role of a woman was to be a mother, wife and live a life in the household, there were opportunities for women to move 'up' in rank and 'out' of the domestic space. Most girls learned their roles during their upbringing, acquiring skills that would be important for being a mother and wife: weaving textiles, grinding grain, cooking meals, brewing beer, etc. It is for this reason that many of the opportunities for women outside of the home arose through exceptional skill in one of these traditional female household tasks. Some women became professional midwives, others brewers and tavern-keepers (see Langlois, this volume), others managers of industrial scale weaving enterprises. In all cases, success in and out of the home was enhanced by an individual woman's ability to organize and control her affairs, just as any good business person would do.

Rural and household economy

The first seals were used in a household context, in order to control the flow of goods and track commodities. It has been suggested that in some cases, it was the interaction between rural and village economies that saw the increased use of these economic controlling devices (Akkermans and Duistermaat 1997; McCarthy forthcoming). The ability for sedentary village inhabitants to exchange and create agreements with pastoral groups was essential to the functioning of both communities. Feeding sheep required grazing land and manuring fields required sheep, a mutually beneficial arrangement; but the timing of these activities needed careful coordination. Likewise, pastoral groups had access to primary and secondary animal products, but perhaps not easy access to stores of grain or manufactured goods. Trade within and between communities was therefore a vital aspect of the growth of sedentism and eventually urbanization. Because the basic social unit in a small-scale community was the household, it can be assumed that women were an important part of the organization and control of its structure, resources and interactions.

Within a household, the use of seals probably centred on domestic production, such as cooking, weaving, storage, and processing of agricultural products. In all of these activities, it is likely that some degree of control was exerted to increase efficiency, prevent loss, and avoid mistakes. For instance, it is possible that certain foods were not

meant to be combined (e.g. dairy and meat), and sealing containers would have helped to prevent this from happening. Sealing storage containers or storerooms would have rationed goods, prevented freeloaders from depleting resources and alerted the person in charge to occasions of theft. Production and trade would have benefitted from the use of seals by providing a message system whereby raw materials could be tracked and manufactured items could be sent to the right people. These measures would create a record which would test the efficacy of the accounting and tracking systems put in place.

So much is verified in a letter from a businessman in the Old Assyrian (nineteenth–eighteenth centuries) trading colony of Karum Kaniš to his sister in the city of Aššur. Here he dictates:

Thus (speaks) Puzur-Ištar: say to Ištar-lamassi:

Where you are, attentively watch over the whole house. There are 8 talents, 50 minas of tin under seal in the store-room in the front strong-room, 230 common textiles, 120 high-quality textiles, (and) 13 black donkeys, all of which I left to you in the house under seal.¹

This site of Karum Kaniš (modern Kültepe in eastern Turkey) provides some of our best documentation on the extent to which women's 'domestic' production of textiles could form the basis of a family's interregional trade. Letters such as the one to Ištar-lamassī above indicate both how women, be they wives, daughters, sister, or widows, ran the households in the city of Aššur while the male members of the family were in Anatolia, and how the women's production of surplus fabrics served as the basis for the family business. In many instances, the women's seals served to guarantee both correspondence and trading goods.

Say to Aššur-šulūli (m.) and Amur-ilī (m.), thus (speaks) Ištar-bāšti (f.):

(Concerning) the thick textiles that I had sent to you on consignment, if you are my lord, sell it at a profit and give the silver for it, the price of the thick textiles, to Amur-ilī, who (will) bring it to me.²

A somewhat less successful business woman wrote a bitter complaint to her brother and 'lord':

Say to Buzāzu, thus (speaks) Waqqurtum:

I sent four textiles under my own seal to Asānum, and I had a man carry them.

You (are) my brother and my lord. You should not wish to ruin me. Your kindnesses matter very little; you know well that he left me in an empty house! You (are) my brother; sell the textiles for money, then seal the money and send

it to me. Act so as to please the god so that I am not ruined.³

In addition to (extra-)domestic producers, women also functioned as managers in the long-distance trade between Aššur and Kaniš, using their seals to document and verify family and business archives. One clear example is documented in a letter to the family matriarch Nuhšātum, who herself lived in Karum Kaniš while her son Šalim-ahum traveled to Aššur:

Say to Ašr-malik, Nuhšātum, and Dān-Aššur, to Nuhšātum, thus (speaks) Šalim-ahum:

You (are) my mother. When I left for the city (Aššur), the archival files contained the major tablets of the caravan, which I left with you before my departure as witnessed by Amur-ilī, under my own seal. You yourself now seal them and give them to Abu-waqar, my servant, so that he might bring them to me at Šamuha. Abu-waqar brings you a *pannarum* under my seal.⁴

Business women need not have extended so far beyond the household to generate considerable profits, as is evident in the Ur-Šara family archive from late third-millennium Umma. Ur-Šara himself was an affluent businessman dealing primarily in livestock. His wife Ama-e, apparently independently of her husband, had copious dealings in grain, wool, metal, foodstuffs, and agricultural implements, all carefully recorded in loan contracts from the family archive (Foster 1982: 78). A rather extensive contract (MAD 4 41) records numerous commodities:

11 Ì.ERIN UD.UD ŠÌLA	11 silas of white cedar oil
3 LÀ IGI 4.GÁL Ì.ŠIM.TUR.TUR ŠÌLA	2.75 silas of ‘small’ aromatics
10 ERIN UD.UD MA.NA	10 minas of white cedar
10 ŠE GUR.SAG.GÁL	10 gur.sag.gÁL of barley
1 SUM GUR.SAG.GÁL	1 gur.sag.gÁL of onions
10 BAPPIR	10 (units) of ‘beer-bread’
7 BAR.SI GADA	7 linen caps
5 KUŠUD.GA	5 leather . . .
1 GIŠŠU.KÁR.ŠUDU ₇ .A GUD.APIN	1 set of equipment for a plough ox
AMA.É.E	Ama-e
ŠÀ.DA DUB.SAR.DA	To Ša(g) the scribe
Ì.DA.TUKU	loaned ⁵

As the *oikos* (‘household’) system is essentially large-scale domestic production, women certainly would have been leaders in this industry.

Especially in the manufacturing of items like textiles that were considered female activities, women would have been involved in the design, production, marketing and sale of these items. Depending on the individual skills of a woman, their role might have been best suited to a number of activities within this organization. The *oikos* system would have allowed women to move up in rank within the extended family unit, advancing to organizer, trainer or liaison with the outside world, which in turn could have given a woman a degree of independence. Although the profits from these activities would have been shared amongst the family, as the family status and wealth grew, so too would the individual's status and rank increase.

Factory production

Some kinds of goods and services likely came exclusively out of rural and village groups, and women were certainly the most important contributors to some of these products and activities. For instance, grinding grain, weaving textiles, crafting leather products, producing dairy products, preparing meat and fish, and gathering foodstuffs would all have been activities that would have been considered women's work. In an urban environment, many people would not have had direct access to the resources from the countryside and relied on rural and small-scale communities for these resources. From the time of the first cities in the fourth millennium BC, there are seals with the so-called 'pig-tailed' women (Frankfort 1939: 36–39; Asher-Greve 1985, Plates VI–VII; Collon 2005: 17). While it is not certain that these are in fact women (although it is likely), they are usually arranged in a file or rows, showing repeated actions thought to indicate controlled production. Some clearly show looms for weaving (Figure 7.2), others show women kneeling over some apparatus, perhaps making pots or grinding grain. It is interesting that these seals showing organized labour, probably including women engaged in production, were an important and widespread part of the glyptic imagery when cities and statehood began to form. It seems clear that women, and the products with which they were associated, were an important part of this process (Van de Mieroop 1989).

These women's roles as both producers and supervisors appear abundantly in the administrative records of pre-Sargonic Sumer. The important urban centre of Lagash was notable for its woollen textile production, staffed primarily by female workers called *ki.síg* or *GÌM.KI.SÍG.KA* (Maekawa 1980: 81), no doubt the 'pony-tailed' women of the seals. As the food ration lists for the period indicate, these women were grouped in 'work gangs' of approximately 20 women,

and they often worked side-by-side with their (own) children. At the head of these gangs were both male and female supervisors. In the fifth regnal year of Uru-inimgina of Lagash, the ration reports document the creation of three new gangs of 20 women workers – designated ‘newly purchased’ (SAG.šám.(ME)) – under the direction of three female supervisors: šEŠ.E.A.NA.AK, NIN.é.UNU^{ki}.GA.NIR.GÁL, and Zum. Another five gangs were led by female supervisors, while only one was headed by a man, ^dNANŠE.DA.NU.ME.A (Maekawa 1980: 87).

Specialized occupations



Figure 7.2 Cylinder seal from Tello. Paris, Louvre AO 14 172. Uruk Period. (By kind permission of Paul C. Butler.)

Especially in the third and earlier second millennia in Mesopotamia, there are numerous accounts of female SAL.DUB.SAR/*tupšarratu*, or scribes. From early second-millennium archives, female scribes signed their names to documents. There were fewer women’s names than men’s names, but we know of 9 female scribes from Mari and 14 from Sippar that have been identified in texts, and we also know that there were female scribal instructors (Maier 1991: 542). It can be certain that female scribes used seals in an official capacity just as any other scribe would.

No fewer than eight such female scribes were *naditū* – ‘nuns’ – in the service of the sun-god Šamaš in the city of Sippar. These were Inanna-amamu, Šāt-Aya, Nin-azu, Amat-Šamaš, Mana, Ayatum, Amat-mamu, and Aya-kuzub-mātim (Harris 1963: 138). The earliest of these, Inanna-amamu, was herself the daughter of a scribe named Abba-ṭābum, and it is possible that she received her initial scribal training from him. The latest of the *naditū* scribes, Amat-mamu, appears in three texts spanning the reigns of three different kings, documenting her period of service at over 40 years (Harris 1962: 2). Amat-Šamaš’s

sealing has been preserved on three texts (CT 6, 46, CT 48, 29 and CT 45, 11) which record her name and title: AMAT-^dUTU GEMÉ ^dUTU DUB.SAR, ‘Amat-Šamaš, servant of Šamaš, scribe’ (Tanret 2010: 98).

Even non-scribal *naditū* were wealthy and involved in numerous economic transactions (see Gadotti, this volume). From Sippar, we know that nuns owned property, fields and other assets that were rented to tenants, and these properties were typically managed by the nuns themselves. A *naditū* named Eli-eressa of Šamaš sold a house and sealed the document with her own personal seal (Meier Tetlow 2004: 81). Aya-šitti, the daughter of Būr-FNunu who was himself a SANGA priest, appears as a witness in seven documents recording transactions of the *gagûm*, or cloister. Her seal identifies her as:

^dA.A.ŠI.TI

DUMU.MUNUS BUR.NU.NU

GEMÉ ^dUTU

Û^dA.A6

Aya-šitti

Daughter of Būr-nunu

Servant of Šamaš

And Aya

By far the wealthiest of the *naditū* was Princess Iltanī, daughter of Samsu-iluna or possibly Abi-ešuh. Her documents record that she was an important landowner, hiring workers to harvest her fields, and even engaging the services of *iššakkū* farmers to manage her properties (Harris 1962: 7). In text JCS 2, 99, #29 we read:

1 mina of silver for hiring harvest-workers for harvesting the field of Iltanī, the *naditum* of Šamaš, the princess. Received by Ibnī-Šamaš, the *šabrūm*. Through Šin-eribam and Marduk-muballit, the stewards. [Seal: Ibnī-Šamaš, son of Šilli- . . . , servant of Aya and Nabium].⁷

Likewise in JCS 2, 94, #22:

Allotment: 27 *kor*, 4 PI, 3 *sat* . . . grain, the *massiktu* of 64 *qa* according to the thick standard . . . of the grain produced by the *iššakkū* to Iltanī, the *naditum* of Šamaš, the princess.⁸

Palace control

Iltani was only one of the many royal and elite women who took significant part in the economic life of early Mesopotamia. Women were present in palaces and royal courts, and they can be seen to have administered many aspects of palace life and enjoyed considerable prestige. Royal women especially had wealth, which gave them the opportunity to engage in considerable economic pursuits in their own

right. For instance, princess Iltani from Larsa owned over 1,000 sheep (Silver 1995: 59). In ancient Nuzi, for political reasons, King Sauššatar gave jurisdiction of an entire district around the city of Pahharasse to a woman named Amminae, and when he reclaimed his authority over the district, he compensated Amminae with authority over the village of Atilu (Gordon 1936: 147).

From mid-third millennium Urkesh came a royal seal impression of Queen Uqnitum that was used in the administration in her palace precinct, probably from a seal with ‘multiple entitlement’ for a number of palace workers (Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 1996: 28). Zamena, the Queen’s nurse, also had her own seal, and she had sublayers of administrators beneath her. The female cook of the queenly precinct administered the kitchen work tasks and activities relating to the royal storerooms. Interestingly, the designs are remarkably explicit in showing women engaged in their own tasks and giving workers under them (male and female) their own tasks. In the queenly precinct, men are present in the depictions, but they are under the management of supervising females. (For images of these sealings, see Kelly-Buccellati, this volume.)

The seals of elite women were of high quality and reflected a carefully chosen image that represented themselves, the royal household and their status. They were often of special materials, such as the seal of Puabi from the Royal cemetery at Ur which was made from lapis lazuli imported from Afghanistan. Other elite or royal women had inscribed seals, such as Ninmelam and Ninhilia, wives of *ensi*’s of Umma, (Silver 1995: 59), Addu-dūri from Mari, and Matrunna, daughter of a ruler of Carchemish (ibid.). That both Mari and Carchemish were major trading centres is important to remember, as it is possible that women were engaged in diplomacy and interregional trade. In evidence of this, the Akkadian King Naram Sin arranged for his daughter, Tar’am-Agade, to marry the king of Urkesh, possibly as a way to ease political relations between Akkad and the Hurrian peoples in the period of Akkadian expansion (Buccellati and Kelly-Buccellati 2002; McCarthy 2011).

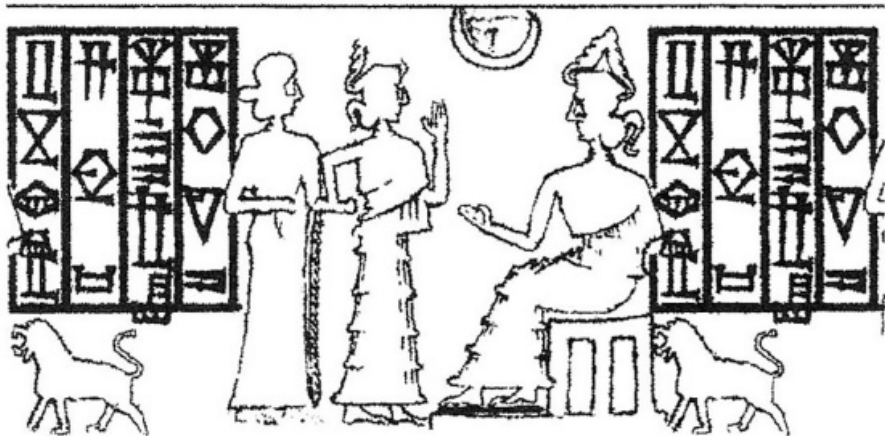


Figure 7.3 Reconstructed seal of Ninhilia. (Asher-Greve 2006, fig. 17.)

The seal of the aforementioned Ninhilia of Umma offers a good case study of the iconography and economic uses of seals in the lives of elite, non-royal women in the Sumerian hierarchies. This governor's wife had 2 known extant seals, 1 of which was used to mark 11 of her 12 known requisition tablets. Unlike her husband's official seal, which showed a presentation scene with a god and a royal-name inscription, Ninhilia's seal depicted a women (Ninhilia?) being brought before a goddess (**Figure 7.3**). The iconography was wholly feminized (Winter 1991: 69). The inscription on the main seal reads: NIN₉.ḫI.LÍ.A DAM A.A.KAL.LA EN_X.SI UMM^{ki}.KA: 'Ninhilia wife of Ayakal *ensi* of the land of Umma' (Parr 1974: 90).

The commodities requisitioned by Ninhilia ranged from personal items, such as shoes (BM 106801), through textiles and leather goods for the gubernatorial household (BM 107758, BM106801), to exotic woods and sacrificial animals for the local cult (BM 106533, BM 107318) (Parr 1974). Most were 'signed' by her personal seal, which was verbally noted in the tablets in addition to the presence of the sealing itself.

BM 107758 (Parr 1974: 93, #1)

2 MA.NA SIKI
KI UR.ᐁDUMU.ZI.DA.TA
KIŠĪB NIN₉.ḫI.LÍ.A

2 minas wool
From Ur-Dumuzida
Ninhilia's seal

1 UDU.NITÁ
KI A.LU₅.LU₅.TA
KIŠĪB NIN₉.Ī.LÍ.A
DNIN.INANNA.UNUKI
INIM.MA.NI.ZI

ram
From Alulu
Ninhilia's seal
(For) Lady Inanna of Uruk
Inimmanizi (received)

Conclusion

Women in early Mesopotamia were intelligent and capable and many had special qualities suited to certain aspects of business. Some might have been skilled craftspeople, others masters of accounting, some might have been socially connected marketers, others could have been hard-nosed deal-makers. Surely the variety of capabilities of women would have been understood and exploited in the past, notwithstanding the social norms casting women in certain roles. Wealth and success trumped decorum in many cases. Business dealt with property and property was the domain of family; thus women's role in business was usually intrinsically linked to family.

There is another practical reason that women were employed in the business world. No matter how successful a woman could become, men were ultimately in charge. This created a limit to how far 'up' and 'out' a women could go in the business world. It was far preferable to staff a business with capable women who were within the family unit than with outsiders who required wages and who could be seen as working towards their own goals rather than for the good of the family business. When the business was the family and vice versa, employing a female relative was a far cheaper, easier, and more reliable way to control the workforce. While women were allowed some leeway to manage business affairs and to accumulate their own wealth to some extent, the simple fact is that a woman's place was in a family and the family was patriarchal.

It would be false to conclude that because women had a social place usually considered beneath the status of men, they were not active contributors to the economic system. Men were no more free to choose their rank or profession than women, and it is important to remember that each person had a role to fill in the society. Women at times were household consumers and organizers of family matters; at other times they were innovators and developers, acting outside of the

house and driving growth. In all cases, seals and the organizational element that they represent, were tools used by women to increase efficiency, exert control and contribute to the development of society.

Notes

- 1 Michel 2001: 481, n. 362.
- 2 Michel 2001: 471, n. 349.
- 3 Michel 2001: 443: n. 316.
- 4 Michel 2001: 508, n. 398.
- 5 Foster 1982: 72.
- 6 Tanret 2010: 86.
- 7 Goetz 1948: 99–100.
- 8 Goetz 1948: 94, with additional text.

References

- Asher-Greve, J. M. (1985) *Frauen in Altsumerischer Zeit*. Malibu, CA: Undena Publications.
- Asher-Greve, J. M. (2006) ‘Golden age’ of women? Status and gender in third millennium Sumerian and Akkadian art. In S. Schroer (ed.) *Images and Gender: Contributions to the Hermeneutics of Reading Ancient Art*. Fribourg, Switzerland: Academic Press Fribourg, pp. 41–81.
- Akkermans, P. M. M. G. and Duistermaat, K. (1997) Of storage and nomads: The sealings from Late Neolithic Sabi Abyad, Syria. *Paléorient* 22(2): 17–44.
- Buccellati, G. and Kelly-Buccellati, M. (1996) The royal storehouse of Urkesh: The glyptic evidence from the southwestern wing. *Archiv für Orientforschung* 42/43: 1–32.
- Buccellati, G. and Kelly-Buccellati, M. (2002) Tar’am-Agade, Daughter of Naram-Sin, at Urkesh. *Of Pots and Plans: Papers on the Archaeology and History of Mesopotamia and Syria Presented to David Oates in Honour of his 75th Birthday*. L. al-Gailani-Werr, J. Curtis, H. Martin, A. McMahon, J. Oates and J. Reade (eds). London: NABU, pp. 11–31.
- Collon, D. (2005) *First Impressions: Cylinder Seals in the Ancient Near East*. London: British Museum Press.
- Foster, B. R. (1982) *Umma in the Sargonic Period*. Hamden, CT: Archon Books.
- Frankfort, H. (1939) *Cylinder Seals*. London: Macmillan and Co.

- Goetz, A. (1948) Thirty tablets from the reigns of Abi-ešuh and Ammīditānā. *JCS* 2: 73–112.
- Gordon, C. H. (1936) The status of woman in the Nuzi tablets. *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und vorderasiatische Archäologie* 43: 146–169.
- Harris, R. (1962) Biographical notes on the nadītu women of Sippar. *JCS* 16(1): 1–12.
- Harris, R. (1963) The organization and administration of the cloister in ancient Babylonia. *JESHO* 6(2): 121–157.
- McCarthy, A. (2011) The end of empire: Akkadian and post-Akkadian glyptic in the Jezirah, the evidence from Tell Leilan in context. In H. Weiss (ed.) *Seven Generations since the Fall of Akkad*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, pp. 205–212.
- McCarthy, A. (forthcoming) The first female bureaucrats: Gender and glyptic in 4th–3rd millennia northern Mesopotamia. In S. Kiehl Costello, G. Jamieson, M. Ameri and S. Scott (eds) *Small Windows: New Approaches to the Study of Seals and Sealing as Tools of Identity, Political Organization and Administration in the Ancient World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Maekawa, K. (1980) Female weavers and their children in Lagash – Pre-Sargonic and Ur III. *Acta Sumerologica* 2: 81–125.
- Maier, S. (1991) Women and communication in the ancient Near East. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 111(3): 540–547.
- Meier Tetlow, E. (2004) *Women, Crime, and Punishment in Ancient Law and Society. Vol. 1. The Ancient Near East*. London: Continuum.
- Merrillees, R. (1986) A 16th century B.C. tomb group from central Cyprus with links both east and west. *Acts of the International Archaeological Symposium 'Cyprus between the Orient and Occident' Nicosia, 8–14 September 1985*. Nicosia, Cyprus: pp. 114–148.
- Michel, C. (2001) *Correspondance des marchands de Kaniš au debut de IIe millénaire avant J.-C.* Paris: Les Éditions du cerf.
- Owen, D. (1981) Widow's rights in Ur III Sumer. *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und vorderasiatische Archäologie* 70: 170–184.
- Parr, P. A. (1974) Ninḫilia: Wife of Ayakala, governor of Umma. *JCS* 26(2): 90–111.
- Pollock, S. (1991) Women in a men's world: Images of Sumerian women. In J. M. Gero and M. W. Conkey (eds) *Engendering Archaeology: Women and Prehistory*. Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell Ltd, pp. 366–387.
- Silver, M. (1995) *Economic Structures of Antiquity*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Stol, M. (1995) Women in Mesopotamia. *Journal of the Economic and*

- Social History of the Orient* 38(2): 123–144.
- Tanret, M. (2010) *The Seal of the Sanga: On the Old Babylonian Sangas of Šamaš of Sippar*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Troy, B. (2004) Legally bound: A study of women's legal status in the ancient Near East. MA thesis. Miami University.
- Van De Mieroop, M. (1989) Women in the economy of Sumer. In B. S. Lesko (ed.) *Women's Earliest Records: From Ancient Egypt and Western Asia: Proceedings of the Conference on Women in the Ancient Near East, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, November 5–7*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, pp. 53–66.
- Winter, I. J. (1991) Legitimation of authority through image and legend: Seals belonging to officials in the administrative bureaucracy of the Ur III state. In M. Gibson and R. D. Biggs (eds) *The Organization of Power: Aspects of Bureaucracy in the Ancient Near East*. Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization, no. 46. Chicago, IL: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, pp. 59–99.

THE FEMALE TAVERN-KEEPER IN MESOPOTAMIA

Some aspects of daily life

*Anne-Isabelle Langlois**

If some well-known characters testify to the existence of the female tavern-keeper/tapstress¹ in Mesopotamia—such as Šiduri, the tapstress in the *Epic of Gilgameš* who counseled the hero to enjoy life, or Ku-Baba, the only woman to have achieved royalty according to the *Sumerian King List*²—what do we know about their daily lives in light of the cuneiform documents? The literary texts certainly allow an initial approach to these women and their activities, but what more specific information can the documents provide on these tapstresses who seem to have sold their beer on the outskirts of the cities?

Conforming to the subtitle of this work, *Real Women Across the Ancient World*, we focus here on those cuneiform sources that document those aspects of existence that might reveal the lives of these tavern-keepers. These documents, far from literary compositions, are composed of legal texts, economic documents, and personal letters exchanged in Mesopotamia.

Attestations and sources

The first task is to consider the terminology employed in Sumerian and Akkadian to designate the tapstress and her activities. In Sumerian, the word for “tapstress” derives from the term for fine beer. So, if KAš, equivalent to Akkadian *šikarum*, means “beer,” the ideogram KAš.TIN, also read KURUN, or its variant TIN, also read KURUN₂, designated specifically fine beer, *kurunnum* in Akkadian. The tapstress, MUNUS.KURUN.NA or its graphic variant MUNUS.KURUN₂.NA, thus refers to “woman of the fine beer.” The title of the male tavern-keeper, the

tapster, has an identical formation: LÚ.KURUN.NA or its variant LÚ.KURUN₂.NA, likewise means “man of the fine beer.”

In Akkadian the tapster is called *sābûm* and the tapstress *sābitum*, the feminine equivalent. These terms derive from *sābum*, a synonym for “beer” known from the lexical lists, and related to the verb *sabûm*, used for the preparation of beer.³ For its own part, the tavern is simply called “house of the tapster,” *bīt sābûm*, if it is run by a man, or “house of the tapstress,” *bīt sābitum*, if run by a woman. Another Akkadian term—*aštammum*—corresponds to the ideogram *éš.DAM*, designating a place where one consumes beer; although it may be translated as “tavern,” it more likely refers to an inn.⁴

If the earliest known references to the tavern date to the second millennium BCE, it is likely that the establishment and its activities existed beforehand.⁵ Ancient attestations of the tapstress are known, both in the Ebla corpus⁶ as well as that of the Ur III period;⁷ but it is mainly in the Old Babylonian period that we get the richest documentation of the tapstress: these references appear in numerous laws and royal edicts.

Mesopotamian legislation is characterized by its “If/Then” structure, alternating protasis with apodosis, scenario with repercussion. The “codes” of law are named by modern Assyriologists according to the kings who issued them, such as the “Code of Hammurabi,” or occasionally their region of origin, such as the “Laws of Ešnunna.” The tapstress appears in several of these: the Code of Ur-Namma, founder of the Third Dynasty of Ur, redacted in Sumerian,⁸ then in two compendia of laws redacted in Akkadian: the Laws of Ešnunna, which date to c.1770 BCE, possibly issued by King Daduša of Ešnunna;⁹ and the Code of Hammurabi, compiled at the end of the reign of the great king of Babylon.¹⁰ (On Mesopotamian law codes, see Justel, this volume.)

The Mesopotamian kings occasionally enacted a *mīšarum*, a remission of debts, in order to stabilize the economy.¹¹ Such measures, which have come down to us through royal edicts in the cuneiform corpus,¹² occasionally mention tapstresses. Such documents include the Edict of Ammi-ditana¹³ and the Edict of Ammi-šaduqa, both kings of Babylon.

Finally, the documentation of the first millennium provides texts concerning the daily practice of tavern-maintenance, as well as a certain number of rituals that specially mention the tavern. In all cases, both administrative texts and personal letters throughout the

millennia are more likely to mention the male tapsters than their female equivalents.

Beer brewing

The tavern¹⁴ is a public, sociable space marked out for the consumption of alcoholic beverages, primarily beer,¹⁵ but also wine¹⁶ imported from western regions. In Mesopotamia, beer is one of the symbols of civilization, as is evidenced, for example, in the transformation of Enkidu into a civilized being in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* (II.iii 85–109):

They put bread before him, he watched intently, gazing and staring. Enkidu did not know how to eat bread, how to drink ale; he had never been shown. The *harintu* opened her mouth, saying to Enkidu: “Eat the bread, Enkidu, the thing proper to life; drink the ale, the lot of the land.” Enkidu ate the bread until he was sated, he drank the ale, seven jugs (full). His mood became free, he was singing, his heart became merry and his face shone bright. The barber treated his body so hairy, he anointed himself with oil and became a man.¹⁷

Barley is the base ingredient used in beer brewing, although in the Neo-Babylonian period beer was also made from dates. Few cuneiform documents discuss the fabrication or sale of beer, but we might cite the discovery of relevant texts from Chagar Bazar in north-western Syria.¹⁸ Otherwise, the reinterpretation of the *Hymn to Ninkasi*, goddess of beer, by W. Sallaberger provides numerous technical details.¹⁹ The processes of malting, drying, and fermentation of the barley required specific materials and apparatus. Different qualities of beer were obtained based on the different proportions of chosen ingredients and/or the time taken in fermentation.

Commerce in beer and its related products

The sale of brewing sediment (the lees)

The tapstresses who brewed beer had to dispose of the sediments remaining from the brewing process. The lees (the remains of the dead yeasts used to convert the liquid grain mixture into alcohol)—DUH in Sumerian, *tuhhum* in Akkadian—could be dried and then served as fodder for herd animals. The tapstresses thus furnished dried beer sediments (DUH.UD.DU) to cattle farmers. Among the herd animals, pigs, omnivores, held a prominent place, and they were often kept next to establishments that produced beer.²⁰

This reuse of refuse was not free, as we see in a letter (missing the

first lines) inscribed on a round tablet (AbB 7 183: 13–22):

Speak to the tavern-keepers (m.) you know and get dried lees for 10 shekels of silver. Make it available to me! I'll send the money along after this letter. Do not neglect to keep the dried lees. Send me quickly the news from the tavern-keepers.²¹

The sale of beer

The primary function of the tapstresses was, of course, the sale of beer. They greeted customers in their establishments, arranged the furniture, and maintained the dishware appropriate to the consumption of their beverage.²² Some articles of law known from Mesopotamia regulated certain aspects of this commerce, notably the sources of the beer or the conditions of payment, and thus furnish us with data on the economic transaction of the tavern.

Contrary to what one might think, the tapstress did not only sell the beer made in her own establishment, but she might also sell beer from different sources. §41 of the Laws of Ešnunna indicates this well: “If a foreigner, a visitor (*napt̃arum*), or an acquaintance (*mudû*) wishes to sell his beer, the tapstress shall sell the beer for him at the current rate.”²³

This article pertains to beer understood as rations or as payment by an individual who would not consume it him/herself.²⁴ Surplus, then, might be sold in the tavern. But this article aims above all to protect a foreigner or visitor from a potentially dishonest businesswoman who could exploit his ignorance concerning the price of goods to her own benefit (see below: “A shady reputation?”).

Several articles of various law codes pertain to payments made to tapstresses. §108 of the Code of Hammurabi stipulates that the tapstress may not refuse payment in grain:

If a tapstress refused to accept grain for the price of beer, accepted silver measured by the large weight, or reduced the value of beer in relation to the value of grain, they shall charge and convict that tapstress and they shall cast her into the water.²⁵

This article not only concerns the obligation of the tapstress to accept payment made in barley if the client so desires, but also includes an interdiction on defrauding the client in altering the standard of measures (see below). § D9 of the Code of Ur-Namma, as well as §111 of the Code of Hammurabi, both regulate the sum of one vat of beer sold on credit:

If a tapstress gave one of her vats of beer, at harvest time, [she shall receive] 50 *sila* of grain.²⁶

If a tapstress gave one vat of beer (*pīhum*) as a loan, she shall take 50 *sila* of grain at the harvest.²⁷

The payment of the price of the vat—clearly incorporating the added value brought on by the brewing process and controlled by these legal regulations—is effected at harvest, when grain is abundant, and rendered in kind, thus allowing the tapstress to make use of the barley in preparing the beer.²⁸

Credit

These last two legal articles—§D9 of the Code of Ur-Namma and §111 of the Code of Hammurabi—which pertain to the price of a vat of beer sold on credit, provide a glimpse of the larger realm of lending engaged in by the tapstress, beyond just the sale of beer. §G of the *Edict of Ammi-ditana*, and §17 of the *Edict of Ammi-šaduqa*, similar to the first, both document this aspect of creditor that the tapstress might assume: “A tapstress who lent beer or grain, all that she lent, she will not claim its return.”²⁹

These articles of *mišarum* edicts aim at annulling the debts of those who had borrowed beer or barley from the tapstress. She herself thus also lent barley to those in need of it. In this aspect, the tapstress is similar to the merchant, which is most likely why they appear together in certain legal articles.

This activity is also illustrated in a letter, AbB 7 53, addressed to one Mattaki, possibly a *naditum*-priestess of Šamaš (see Gadotti and Michel, this volume) based on the benedictions following the address in the missive:

Regarding the grain, rent of your field, about which you wrote me, your farmer measured out grain from your harvest to his merchant and the other grain, which his mother told him to bring to you, he measured out to his tapstress. Now, he will find you some low and bad grain from the merchant.³⁰

Thus we see that the farmer in charge of Mattaki’s lands has not paid her his rent but has given part of the harvest to a merchant and another part to a tapstress in order to pay his debts. The tapstress, having a considerable supply of barley for brewing, could easily lend to those in difficulty, especially in periods of food shortage.

The status of the tapstress and her establishment

The cuneiform corpus mentions the tapsters more often than the tapstresses. Nevertheless, the documents reveal that the profession was subject to palatial taxation. Thus the tapsters paid a tax called the *igisûm*,³¹ as is seen in a text from Sippar, OLA 21 100, which mentions a half-shekel “of silver of the *igisûm*-tax of the tapsters from year 14 of King Ammi-šaduqa.”³²

They also paid the *nēmettum*-tax.³³ Indeed, a text dated to the 36th year of the reign of Ammi-šaduqa of Babylon (Smith College 240, published by A. Goetze), reproduces the oath taken by the elders of Kâr-Šamaš.³⁴ The local authorities were obliged to take a census of the tapsters and bakers and hold them accountable in cases of fraud or abuses regarding the annual payment of the *nēmettum*-tax due to the palace. We also know that the payment of this tax could take place in kind, notably in lees, as mentioned above. So much is illustrated in HG 148:

Damp lees, *nēmettum*-tax of the tapsters and tapstresses of Sippar-Yahrurum, which (goes) from the first of the first month to the 30th of the last—(thus) one year—which was to be collected by Ibni-Marduk, which was given by order of the king for the nourishment of the cattle and the sheep of the *nakkamtum* of the temple of Sippar-Yahrurum.³⁵

These taxes paid annually to the palace resulted in the palace giving grain to the tapsters in order to make beer, which would eventually provide the palace with money. This system of circulating the palace's surplus grain would thus be similar to that employed for wool, entrusting it to a merchant so that he might sell it and make a return on payment,³⁶ with the difference that the transformation of grain into beer requires human intervention before the product could be sold.

Furthermore, it seems that the tapsters, in addition to their annual taxes to the palace, also had a kind of installation tax, as appears in text AUCT 4 99, published by M. Sigrist³⁷ and reinterpreted by D. Charpin.³⁸

The individuals belonging to the tapster guild paid taxes to the palace and thus, like all those subject to royal authority, could become indebted to it. Indeed, both §F of the *Edict of Ammi-ditana*³⁹ and §16 of the *Edict of Ammi-šaduqa*⁴⁰ apply the *mīšarum* to tapstresses:

A tapstress from the pasture zone⁴¹ who must pay to the palace tavern-keeper barley money—because the king has inaugurated a *mīšarum* for the land, the

A shady reputation

Fraud and dishonesty

If the different articles of the various laws cited above provide us with some data on the activities of the tapstresses, they document most especially the fraud of which these women were capable. As we have seen, §41 of the Laws of Ešnunna demanded honesty of the tapstresses who could profit from the ignorance of some individuals concerning the price of beer and thus swindle them.⁴² §108 of the Code of Hammurabi, condemns fraud pertaining to the manipulation of weights and measures on the part of the tapstress.⁴³ It was not the reception of payment in money that was illegal so much as the use of falsified or inadequate metrics,⁴⁴ using an unreasonable rate of exchange for the barley, or even decreasing the volume of beer vis-à-vis the quantity of given grain. If it sometimes seemed difficult to prove fraud,⁴⁵ the punishment of a dishonest tapstress was without appeal: she died by drowning. The severity of this punishment against such an attack on the economic order might be explained by its dissuasive potential.⁴⁶

It is perhaps because of such shenanigans that §15 of the Laws of Ešnunna refers to the tapstress: “Neither a merchant nor a tapstress will accept silver, grain, wool, oil, or anything else from a male or female slave.”⁴⁷

Indeed, the tapstress, just like the merchant, could buy and sell with cash or credit. The interdiction here probably pertains to the fact that the provenance of the goods enumerated was not assured and may have been derived from theft. But an unscrupulous tapstress, just like a merchant, might choose to look the other way in order to make some additional profit.

Marginal in all aspects

The tavern—the place where beer was produced, sold, and consumed—was probably located outside the city, either in the nearby countryside or the fields, most likely at crossroads or along the canals.⁴⁸ This geographic scenario is well illustrated in the *Epic of Gilgameš*, where Šiduri, the tapstress-philosopher, maintained her establishment at the edges of the known world. She remains veiled,

ready to help the traveler, and councils him on which path he must follow.

This marginal nature of the tavern is furthermore related to the marginal nature of the clients who frequented it, including potential criminals. §109 of the Code of Hammurabi thus refers to certain events that might transpire in a tavern: “If a tapstress in whose house criminals congregated did not seize those criminals and lead them off to the palace, that tapstress shall be killed.”⁴⁹

If the tavern might be a nexus of sociability, it might also be a place of conflict, of intrigue, or other maleficent meditations. Furthermore, the penalty incurred by the tapstress who did not denounce the authors of such acts—complicit by her silence to the crime perpetrated against the king—was definitive.⁵⁰

Apart from such malefactors, it seems that the tavern was also frequented by the debauched. Letter ARM 1 28 mentions a case where fugitives found refuge with King Yasmah-Addu of Mari in order “to debauch themselves, for the tavern (*bīt sābītim*) and the music hall!”⁵¹ These marginal types probably sought out the company of prostitutes; for a long time historians have understood the tavern as a place of prostitution.⁵² §110 of the Code of Hammurabi has often been interpreted as an interdiction forbidding *nadītum* and *ugbabtum* priestesses from opening taverns or entering them to drink, for fear that they would be taken for prostitutes, or that they themselves might take up prostitution: “If a *nadītum* or an *ugbabtum* who does not reside within the cloister should open a tavern or enter a tavern for some beer, they shall burn that woman.”⁵³

This statute has been considered in light of §14 of the Middle Assyrian laws which, while incomplete, pertains to adulterous relations in an inn (*bīt aštammim*) that, when combined with the lead plaques depicting erotic scenes (see Budin, “Sexuality,” this volume), altogether create the image of a locale inappropriate for cult functionaries. Also proffered in this argument is the inventory of an establishment, dating from the Persian period, attesting to the presence of beds.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, one must note the opinion of Martha Roth who has contested this traditional interpretation of §110.⁵⁵ Considering that the laws of the Code of Hammurabi did not regulate religious behavior—sexual or moral—but far more so commercial relationships, she argues that the article in question forbids the unfair competition that the opening of a tavern by a priestess would inflict on the existing market. One might then be stunned by the severity of the penalty incurred by a priestess desiring to enter into the tavern

business.

It seems likely that there was prostitution in the taverns, although there is no direct proof of this “oldest profession” in these establishments.⁵⁶ In truth, the practice of prostitution would not require mention in written sources or reckonings, and thus may have left no trace in the cuneiform documentation that interests us here. (See Budin, “Sexuality,” this volume, on prostitution in Mesopotamia.)

Supernatural forces

The tavern, which contained magical forces because the beer that fermented in the tanks was transformed there, is a propitious locale for the performance of rites of exorcism, as noted by S. Maul.⁵⁷ Thus certain rituals required that the person performing the exorcism touch the supporting structures of the beer tanks, or the tanks themselves, while reciting a prayer, or that said person pour a libation of beer for the deities who presided at the exorcism and touch the door and the bolt. In addition, at the completion of a number of rituals, the person who was healed/exorcized must, before returning home, pass by the tavern and speak with the other clients.

These magical aspects tied to the tavern would provide, according to Maul, yet another interpretation of §110 of the Code of Hammurabi: The interdiction was aimed at separating the priestesses from the impurities located in the establishment, located especially on the tanks implicated in the exorcisms. The priestesses, needing to maintain their ritual purity, would incur too great a risk in frequenting a tavern.

Some nuances

The bad reputation of the tavern and its keeper should perhaps be nuanced a bit. We know already the example of Ku-Baba who, in spite of her role as tapstress, seems to have been fit to rule and founded a new royal line at Kiš. We note equally that the bad reputation of the tavern did not hamper some people, including men of a certain status, from going there to inscribe a tablet, as is indicated on FM 5 3:

The sons of Šu-Dagan having laid claim during the reign of Zimri-Lim to a field of 10 acres belonging to Išar-Lim the . . . ; they have taken before Itur-Mer the oath of the god and they have so sworn. They have res[erv]ed (this field). A second time before Itur-Mer they have sworn. In the temple, before Itur-Mer and Annunitum, (list of witnesses). These men [remained] in [the t]avern [for

The final lines are certainly damaged, but restored thanks to an unedited text from Mari, A.2154+. Thus we see that the group of individuals, including a *sugâgum* (a political leader in the Mari hierarchy) and a lieutenant, were gathered at the tavern in order to redact the tablet. This recalls other symbolic acts of sharing food and beer and the anointing with oil enacted after the establishment of a bill of sale.⁵⁹

In addition, a tapstress could herself serve as witness to a sale, as can be seen in one of the oldest textual sources referring to a woman tavern-keeper. This text, dating to the fourth regnal year of Šu-Sîn, final king of the Third Dynasty of Ur, comes from the archive of Iri-Sagrig. Here, the tapstress Magurre functioned as a witness to a sales contract.⁶⁰

Relative independence

The social status of the tapstress is difficult to establish. In truth, the currently available documentation barely provides us with any information on the subject. Was the tapstress the wife of a tapster, offering some rough, initial suggestion as to the meaning of the term MUNUS.LÚ.KURUN.NA? But the articles of law pertain to the tapstress and not her husband. Could she even get married? As emphasized by S. Démare-Lafont, the bad reputation tied to her activities does not appear to present the tapstress as a desirable spouse.⁶¹ But we note that Šiduri wore a veil, which might indicate her married status,⁶² and other elements induce one to nuance this traditional view of the bad reputation of the tapstress and her establishment.

In light of the current documentation, the tapstress appears rather to be an unmarried woman, who maintained her business near a city gate, economically independent, selling on credit or lending grain to those who needed it.

But this idealizing vision of a strong and independent woman, seemingly in all aspects, has its limits, as is apparent in the texts from the first millennium. Indeed, contracts dating from the Persian period document the creation of a commercial establishment dedicated to the consumption of alcoholic beverages—Camb 330, Camb 331, and the similar but undated OECT 10 239.⁶³ Other than providing us with a list of materials necessary for opening such an establishment—such as the (in)famous beds mentioned above—these texts specify above all

that the proprietor of the locale, belonging to the wealthy Egibi family of Babylon, handed over the management of the profitable business to a female slave. The independence of the tapstress seems to end here. In truth, the goods listed, then converted into cash equivalents, are placed at the disposal of Išunnatu, the female servant who maintained the “house.” This woman would pay the interest on the loans within one and a half months, then the owner would be reimbursed through a direct acquisition of profits. The furniture was borrowed from him for two and a half months, after which the servant would return them and would have earned enough profits to buy her own.

Is this a unique case? Does it represent a chronological evolution in the status of the tapstress? Or does the apparent independence of the tapstress in the second millennium need to be reconsidered? In spite of the absence of texts documenting her servile status, was she not ultimately under the authority of a male tavern owner?⁶⁴ Such a hypothesis would explain how not a single Old Babylonian contract that has come down to us pertains to a tapstress. Is it also for this reason that the articles in the Code of Hammurabi reprise the word *sābitum* in the apodoses pertaining to the tapstress, and not the term *awiltum*, “free woman,” used in those articles pertaining to the priestesses?⁶⁵ Nevertheless, the absence of Old Babylonian contracts dealing with tapstresses could equally be explained by the short duration of the loans engaged in by these women, or the impracticality of relying on written documents in some situations,⁶⁶ or, quite simply, the randomness of the archaeological finds. Likewise, the fact that tapstresses paying taxes to the palace are attested in the Old Babylonian period might serve as evidence of the independence of these women. The lack of supplementary documentation currently impedes our ability to address this question fully.

Conclusion

The tapstress thus maintains some of her aura of mystery, due to the limited nature, in both number and genre, of the texts at our disposal. An important player in the economic life of Mesopotamia, she was at the head of a lucrative enterprise. Her activities were rigorously controlled by the palace, as is seen in the imposition of various taxes, the over-sight enacted by the local authorities, as well as the numerous articles of law concerning her and her financial transactions.

Although the various laws all aimed at assuring the irreproachable

character of her managing a business as controversial as a tavern, the bad reputation that clung to the tapstress made her an undesirable partner for a man. Her matrimonial status remains unknown to us. Nevertheless, certain important figures as well as certain documents seem to counter-balance this bad reputation. We must thus maintain a certain balance in light of this portrait painted with only partial information. Likewise, the apparent independence which the tapstresses seem to have enjoyed should be considered carefully in light of later documentation.

Notes

- * I thank D. Charpin and S. Démare-Lafont who were kind enough to read this chapter and provided numerous most helpful comments on both form and content. Likewise to S. Budin for translating this into English. I remain solely responsible for any errors remaining in this chapter.
- 1 For the use of this word, rather than the more traditional “woman innkeeper,” see Roth 1999: 446 and n. 6 which contrasts “female brewer” (medieval “brewster”) with “female aleseller” (medieval “tapster”). (Translator’s note: in translation I also differentiated between the male “tapster” and the female “tapstress” to highlight differences in both biological and grammatical gender in this chapter.)
- 2 See Marchesi 2010: 231–248.
- 3 See *sabû*, *sābu* B, and *sābû* in CAD S, likewise *sābitu* (m), *sabû*(m), and *sābû*(m) in AHw 2. It should be noted that numerous women in Mesopotamia were named *Sābitum*, which means “gazelle.” Attestations of this personal name are excluded from this study.
- 4 See *aštammu* in CAD A/2 and AHw 1, likewise Cooper 2006–2008: 12b–21b, and in particular §11.
- 5 For a recent study on this establishment and its owner, see Lion 2013: 393–400.
- 6 See Krebern timer 1982: 178–236, especially 206, and more recently Sjöberg 2003: 527–568, especially 554.
- 7 In a text from Nippur (NRVN 1 8 (Š 44): 15, *sà-bī-tum*), see Çiğ and Kizilyay 1965; and also in a text from the archives of Iri-Sagrig/Āl-Šarrāki (Nisaba 15 279: 15, *sà-bī-tum*), see Owen 2013 and below.
- 8 See Civil 2011: 221–286 which presents the only known example dating from the Ur III period. That these laws, originally anonymous because the name of the reigning monarch was not preserved, are actually the end of the Code of Ur-Namma has now been confirmed. See previously, Michalowski and Walker 1989: 383–396 and Roth 1997: 36–39.
- 9 Roth 1997: 57–70.
- 10 Roth 1997: 71–142; Charpin 2004: 310–316.
- 11 See Charpin 2004: 308–310. This amnesty, enacted by kings upon taking the throne and renewed during the reign as required, served to assist those crushed by debt.
- 12 See Kraus 1984; Charpin 1987: 36–44.
- 13 The identification of the author of this edict as Ammi-ditana has been

confirmed by Charpin (2010b: 17–46 and especially 38–39).

- 14 For archaeological evidence on the existence of taverns, see the example from Susa (Iran) in Trümpelmann 1981: 35–44. On the more recent discoveries of houses 38 and 6 of Tell Bazi, see Otto 2006.
- 15 On Mesopotamian beer, see notably Röllig 1970; Stol 1971: 167–171, 1987–1990: 322–329, 1994: 155–183. More recently, Zarnkow *et al.* 2006: 3–25; Zarnkow *et al.* 2011: 47–54. See also Otto and Einwag, forthcoming.
- 16 Chambon 2009. For the appellation of the tapstress as “lady of wine” in the Code of Ur-Namma, see note 26 below.
- 17 Trans. George 2003: 176–177. On the term, “*harimtu*,” see Budin, this volume.
- 18 Lacambre 2008: 179–207.
- 19 Sallaberger 2012: 291–328, especially from 308.
- 20 Lion and Michel 2006: 89–101.
- 21 (13) ù *a-na* LÚ.KURUN₂.NA.MEŠ *ša ti-du-ú* (14) *qí-bi-ma* (15) *ša* 10 GÍN KÙ.BABBAR DUH.UD.DU (16) *šu-uš-ší-ir-ma ri-ši li-ki-il-li* (17) *ar-ki ṭup-pí-ia an-ni-i* (18) KÙ.BABBAR *ú-ša-ab-ba-la-ak-kum* (19) *a-na* DUH.UD.DU *šu-uš-šú-ri-im* (20) *ni-di a-hi-im la ta-ra-aš-ši* (21) *ṭe₄-em* LÚ.KURUN₂.NA.MEŠ (22) *ar-hi-iš šu-up-ra-am*. Published and translated (into German) by Kraus 1977.
- 22 For an example of paraphernalia required for the opening of a drinking establishment (non-qualified) dating to the first millennium, such as beds, chairs, tables, and various ceramics, see Joannès 1992/64 and 1992/89.
- 23 *Šumma ubarum nap̄tarum u mudû šikaršu inaddin sābitim mahirat illaku šikaram inaddinšum*. Composite transcription by Roth 1997: 65.
- 24 Westbrook 1994: 41–46.
- 25 *Šumma sābitum ana šim šikarim še’am la imtahir ina abnim rabītim kaspam imtahir u mahīr šikarim ana mahīr še’im umtaṭṭi sābitam šuāti ukannušima ana mē inaddūši*. Transcription by Roth 1997: 101. See also Haase 2007: 31–35.
- 26 TUK[UM.B]I MUNUS.LÚ.GEŠTIN.NA.ÀM 1 ‘PIHU’.KA.NI LÚ.RA IN.NA.AN.SUM [U₄].‘BURU₁₄.KE₄’ 0,0.5. ŠE [ŠU BA.AB.TE.G]Á, Michalowski and Walker 1989: 383–396. This corresponds to the §1 of the previous Laws of X, now pertaining to Ur-Namma’s code. There is a variant: TUKUM.BI [MUNUS.(LÚ)].KURUN.KE₄ U₄ BUR[U₁₄N.KA] 1 PIHU₄ LÚ.[RA] ŠU.LÁ.A.ŠÈ IN.[NA.SUM] NÍG.DIRI.BI [. . .] EN.TE.‘NA’. [KA . . .] in document “X,” MS 2064, “If a tapster gave [in] summer a vat of beer to someone on credit, its NÍG.DIRI-tax shall be [. . .], in win[ter . . .].” See Civil 2011: 244, 251, and 280–281.

We argue that the tapster and tapstress could also be defined as “he/she of wine” (GEŠTIN) in the Ur III period, and not only “he/she of beer” (KURUN or KURUN²). One might note the juxtaposition of the male and female ideograms, MUNUS.LÚ.GEŠTIN/KURUN.NA. This juxtaposition also appears in the Edicts of Ammi-ditana and Ammi-šaduqa. See Stol 2004: 769 on this phenomenon, where “a tapster or a tapstress” might be so designated. But the Sumerian King List names Ku-Baba in the same manner, as noted by Lion 2013. A receipt dated to regnal year 14 of Ammi-šaduqa (BM 81483: 5–6) mentions *i-na É munusbe-’lī-tum* MUNUS.LÚ.KURUN₂.NA (see Richardson 2002, vol 2: 94). This text indicates that one must translate MUNUS.LÚ.KURUN.NA as feminine.

- 27 *Šumma sābitum ištēn pīham ana qīptim iddin ina ebūrim 5 sūt še’am ileqqe*. Transcription by Roth 1997: 102.
- 28 On the quantity of barley necessary in the preparation of beer vis-à-vis the desired quality, see Lacambre 2008: 179–207 and especially 174–175.

- 29 MUNUS.LÚ.KURUN₂.NA ša KAŠ ù še-am i-qí-pu mi-im-ma ša i-qí-pu ú-ul ú-ša-ad-da-an. Transliteration available in Kraus 1984: 161 for the Edict of Ammi-ditana and 178 for the Edict of Ammi-šaduqa.
- 30 (5) aš-šum ʔe₄-em še-em ša GÚ.UN A.ŠÀ-ki (6) ʔša'ta-aš-pu-ri-im (7) a-wi-lum e-ri-iš-ki (8) še-a-am ša e-bu-ri-ki (9) a-na DAM.GÀR-ri-šu (10) ʔim'-ta-da-ad (11) ù še-a-am ša-ni-a-am (12) ša um-ma-šu a-na ka-ši-im (13) ba-ba-lam iq-bu-šum (14) a-na sà-bi-ti-šu im-ta-da-ad (15) i-na-an-na še-a-am (16) it-ti DAM.GÀR-ri-im (17) ba-at-qá-am ù ma-ás-ka-am (18) isa-hu-ra-ki-im. See Kraus 1977: 38–41.
- 31 On this tax, see Stol 2004: 643–975, especially 771–775.
- 32 ½ GÍN KÙ.BABBAR (2) ŠÀ KÙ.BABBAR IGI.SÁ LÚ.KURUN₂.MEŠ (3) ša MU am-mi-ša-du-qá LUGAL.E (4) uruduDU₈ MAH GAL.GAL.LA (5) MU.DU (6) lut-la-tum (7) nam-har-ʔti (8) ^dAMAR.UTU-mu-ba-lí-ʔit (9) GÌR dna-bi-um-mu-ša'lim (10) ù i-lu-ni (11) TTT GU₄.SI.SÁ U₄ 17.KAM (12) MU am-mi-ša-du-qá LUGAL.E (13) uruduDU₈ MAH GAL. 'GAL.LA'. Van Landsberge 1986.
- 33 On this tax, see Stol 2004: 766–771.
- 34 Goetze 1965.
- 35 (1) 81,3.0 DUH.DURU₅ ne-me-ti (2) LÚ.MUNUS.KURUN₂.NA UD.KIB.NA-ia-ah-ru-rum (3) ša iš-tu ITI BARA₂.ZAG.GAR U₄ 1.KAM (4) a-di ITI ŠE.KIN.KU₅ U₄ 30.KAM MU 1.KAM (5) ša a-na ib-ni-^dAMAR.UTU a-na šu-ud-du-nim (6) in-na-ad-nu (7) ša i-na qá-be-e šar-ri-im (8) a-na ŠÀ.GAL GU₄.HI.A UDU.NITA₂.HI.A (9) ša na-kam-ti É ^dUTU UD.KIB.NA-ia-ah-ru-rum (10) in-na-ad-nu. Charpin 1988: 13–32, notably 21–22 and n. 40.
- 36 Charpin 1982: 25–65; De Graef 2014: 202–231.
- 37 Sigrist 1990: 136.
- 38 Charpin 2005/2.
- 39 MUNUS.LÚ.KURUN₂.NA na-me-e ša še-am ù KÙ.BABBAR LÚ.KURUN₂.NA a-na É.GAL i-ša-aq-qá-lu aš-šum šar-rum mi-ša-ra-am a-na ma-tim iš-ku-nu a-na LAL.U-šu-nu LÚ mu-ša-ad-di-nu ú-ul i-ša!-ás-si. Kraus 1984: 161.
- 40 MUNUS.LÚ.KURUN₂.NA na-we-e ša KÙ.BABBAR še-e LÚ.KURUN₂.NA a-ʔna É.GAL i-ša-aq-qá-lu aš-šum ʔsar-ʔ-rum mi-ša-ra-am a-na ma-tim iš-ku-nu a-ʔna LÁL.HI.A-šu-nu LÚ mu-ša-ad-di-nu ú-ul i-ša!-ás-si. Kraus 1984: 178–179.
- 41 Bottéro here understood the term *nawûm* “pasture, steppe” as the designation of a hamlet inhabited by peasants or shepherds. Bottéro 1961: 134, n. 2.
- 42 Démare-Lafont 1999: 420.
- 43 Démare-Lafont 1999: 418–422.
- 44 Veenhof 1972: 60–61.
- 45 Démare-Lafont 1999: 419–420 and n. 36 which underline the paucity of documents attesting to fraud in relation to weights and measures, in spite of the apparent ease of cheating in the absence of a scale, and thus the difficulty in proving fraud.
- 46 Démare-Lafont 1999: 422, with bibliography, on this interpretation in light of previous hypotheses. On the dissuasive nature of fines and punishments, see Charpin 2012: 1–22. It should be noted that §18 of the *Edict of Ammi-šaduqa*, badly damaged, calls for the death penalty for the merchant or tapstress who unfortunately still resists identification—possibly the usage or fabrication of false documents. See Kraus 1984: 180–181.
- 47 *Ina qāti wardim u amtīm tamkārum u sābitum kaspam še'am šipātīm šamnam adi mādim ul imahhar*. Roth 1997: 61.

- 48 Cassin 1961: 164–167.
- 49 *Šumma sābitum sarrūtum ina bitiša ittarkasum sarrūtum šunūti la iššabtamma ana ekallim la irdiam sābitum šī iddāk*. Roth 1999: 101.
- 50 Démare-Lafont 1999: 423–424.
- 51 ARM 1 28: 16–18, *a-na bi*-ta-al-lu-[li-im]*, *a-na É sà-bi-tim*, *a-na mé-lu-li-im*. Transliteration and translation by J.-M. Durand, available at www.archibab.fr.
- 52 On prostitution in Mesopotamia, see Assante 1998; Cooper 2006–2008: 12b–21b; Worthington 2009: 132b–134b.
- 53 *Šumma naditum ugbabtum ša ina gagīm la wašbat bit sibim iptete ulu ana šikarim ana bit sibim iterub awiltam šuāti iqallūši*. Roth 1997: 101.
- 54 See note 22 above.
- 55 Roth 1999: 457–464.
- 56 It must be emphasized that Assante 1998 presents serious reservations on this subject. She argues that the sexual activity within the taverns or inns had nothing to do with prostitution, or that prostitution can even be evinced in Mesopotamia. See especially §7 “The Tavern *harimtu* and the Tavern” (65–72).
- 57 Maul 1992: 389–396; Ibid. 1994.
- 58 LÚ DUMU.MEŠ *Išu-dda-ga[n] i-na pa-le-e zi-im-ri-li-[im] ib-^rqú^r-ru-ma ma-ha-ar di-túr-me-/er ni-iš i-li-im iz-ku-ru-ma i-n[a a]-^rwa-a^r-[tim u]k-ti-nu ša-[ab-tu]-ú a-na [ši-ni-šu] ma-ha-[ar d]i-túr-me-/er [u]k-[ti]-^rnu^r [i-n]a É DINGIR [ma-ha]-ar di-túr-me-er [ù] an-nu-ni-tim (. . .) LÚ.MEŠ *an-nu-tu i-na^r [bi-it] sa-bi-ti[m a-na ša-ṭà-ar] ṭup-pí-i[m iz-zi-zu]*. Transliteration and translation by Charpin, available at www.archibab.fr.*
- 59 Charpin 2010a: 13–42, especially 32–37.
- 60 See note 7 above: the text of Iri-Sagrig/Āl-Šarrāki.
- 61 Démare-Lafont 2008: 25–36. However, the compilation *ana ittišu* mentions a *harimtu* who married a man but who nevertheless maintained ownership of her tavern. See Assante 1998: 36–37. This text, even if it deals with a *harimtu*, does open the possibility that the tapstress might marry, regardless of her reputation.
- 62 Démare-Lafont 2008: 235–253.
- 63 Joannés 1992/64 and 1992/89. See also the interpretation of these documents by Démare-Lafont (2008) and Tolini 2013, who adds to this dossier another text —OECT 10 239— discovered at Kiš and possibly pertaining to the same Išḫunnatu, available at <http://refema.hypotheses.org/766>.
- 64 See Démare-Lafont forthcoming.
- 65 For the use of this term in the apodosis of §110, see Roth 1999: 459 and n. 36.
- 66 Démare-Lafont, forthcoming.

References

- AHW: W. von Soden, Akkadisches Handwörterbuch. CAD: Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.
- Assante, J. (1998) The kar-kid/ḫarimtu, prostitute or single woman? A reconsideration of the evidence. *UF* 30: 5–96.
- Bottéro, J. (1961) Désordre économique et annulation des dettes en Mésopotamie à l’époque paléo-babylonienne. *JESHO* 4: 113–164.

- Cassin, E. (1961) Note sur le “commerce de Carrefour” en Mésopotamie ancienne. *JESHO* 4: 164–167.
- Chambon, G. (2009) Les archives du vin à Mari. *Florilegium Marianum* 11. Paris: CNRS Editions.
- Charpin, D. (1982) Marchands du palais et marchands du temple à la fin de la Ière dynastie de Babylone. *JA* 270: 25–65.
- Charpin, D. (1987) Les décrets royaux à l'époque paléo-babylonienne, à propos d'un ouvrage récent. *AfO* 34: 36–44.
- Charpin, D. (1988) Sippar: Deux villes jumelles. *RA* 82: 13–32.
- Charpin, D. (2004) Histoire politique du Proche-Orient amorrite (2002–1595). In D. Charpin, D. O. Edzard and M. Stol (eds) *Mesopotamien, die Altbabylonische Zeit*. OBO 160(4): 25–480.
- Charpin, D. (2005) Le statut des cabaretiers à l'époque paléo-babylonienne. *NABU* 2(2).
- Charpin, D. (2010a) Les formulaires des contrats de Mari à l'époque amorrite: Entre tradition babylonienne et innovation. In S. Démare-Lafont and A. Lemaire (eds) *Trois Millénaires de Formulaires Juridiques*. HEO 48: 13–42.
- Charpin, D. (2010b) Un édit du roi Ammi-ditana de Babylone. In D. Shehata, F. Weiershäuser and K. V. Zand (eds) *Von Göttern und Menschen. Beiträge zu Literatur und Geschichte des Alten Orients. Festschrift für Brigitte Groneberg*. CM 41, 1746.
- Charpin, D. (2012) Amendes et châtements prévus dans les contrats paléo-babyloniens. In J.-M. Durand, T. Römer and J.-P. Mahé (eds) *La Faute et sa Punition dans les Sociétés Orientales*. PIPOAC 1: 1–22.
- Çiğ, M. and Kizilyay, H. (1965) *Yeni sumer çağına ait Nippur hukukî ve idarî belgeleri = Neusumerische rechts- und verwaltungsurkunden aus Nippur* – I. TTKY VI 7.
- Civil, M. (2011) The law collection of Ur-Namma. In A. R. George (ed.) *Cuneiform Royal Inscriptions and Related Texts in the Schøyen Collection*. CUSAS 17: 221–286.
- Cooper, J. (2006–2008) Prostitution. *RIA* 11: 12b–21b.
- De Graef, K. (2014) All wool and a yard wide: Wool production and trade in old Babylonian Sippar. In C. Breniquet and C. Michel (eds) *Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean: From the Beginnings of Sheep Husbandry to Institutional Textile Industry*. ATS 17: 202–231.
- Démare-Lafont, S. (1999) *Femmes, Droit et Justice dans l'Antiquité Orientale*. OBO 165.
- Démare-Lafont, S. (2008) A cause des anges, le voile dans la culture juridique du Proche-Orient ancien. In O. Vernier, M. Bottin and M. Ortolani (eds) *Études d'Histoire du Droit Privé en Souvenir de Maryse*

- Carlin. Paris: *Memoire du Droit*, pp. 235–253.
- Démare-Lafont, (forthcoming) *Women at work in Mesopotamia: An attempt at a legal perspective*.
- Goetze, A. (1965) Tavern keepers and the like in ancient Babylonia. In H. C. Güterbock and T. Jacobsen (eds) *Studies in Honor of Benno Landsberger on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday, April 21, 1965*. AS 16: 211–215.
- George, A. R. (2003) *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Haase, R. (2007) Schankwirtinnen in Babylon, zu §108 des Codex Hammurapi. WO 37: 31–35.
- Joannès, F. (1992/64) Inventaire d'un cabaret. NABU 1992/64.
- Joannès, F. (1992/89) Inventaire d'un cabaret (suite). NABU 1992/89.
- Kraus, F. R. (1977) *Briefe aus dem British Museum*. AbB 7.
- Kraus, F. R. (1984) *Königliche Verfügungen in Altbabylonischer Zeit*. SDIOA 11.
- Krebernik, M. (1982) Zu Syllabar und Orthographie der lexikalischen Texte aus Ebla. Teil 1. ZA 72: 178–236.
- Lacambre, D. (2008) Le bureau de la bière. In O. Tunca and A. Baghdo (eds) *Chagar Bazar III, les trouvailles épigraphiques et sigillographiques du chantier I (2000–2002)*. Louvain, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 179–207.
- Lion, B. (2013) Les cabarets à l'époque paléo-babylonienne. *Cahiers des Thèmes Transversaux ArScan IX. Habitudes alimentaires: De l'acquisition à la consommation*. Nanterre, France, pp. 393–400.
- Lion, B. and C. Michel (2006) L'élevage des porcs en haute Mésopotamie, Syrie et Transjordanie. In B. Lion and C. Michel (eds) *De la domestication au tabou: Le cas des suidés au Proche-Orient Ancien*. TMGR 1: 89–101.
- Marchesi, G. (2010) The Sumerian king list and the early history of Mesopotamia. In M. G. Biga and M. Liverani (eds) *Ana turri gimilli, studi dedicati al Padre Werner R. Mayer, S. J. da mici e allievi*. VO 5: 231–248.
- Maul, S. (1992) Der Kneipenbesuch als Heilverfahren. In D. Charpin and F. Joannès (eds) *La Circulation des Biens, des Personnes et des Idées dans le Proche-Orient Ancien*. Actes de la XXXVIIIe Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale (Paris, 8–10 July 1991). CRRAI 38: 389–396.
- Maul, S. (1994) *Zukunftsbewältigung. Eine Untersuchung Altorientalischen Denkens Anhand der Babylonische-Assyrischen Löserituale (Namburbi)*. BaF 18.
- Michalowski, P. and C. B. F. Walker (1989) A new Sumerian law code. In H. Behrens, D. Loding and M. Roth (eds) *Dumu-e2-dub-ba: Studies*

- in Honor of Åke W. Sjöberg. Philadelphia, PA: The University Museum, pp. 383–396.
- Otto, A. (2006) *Alltag und Gesellschaft zur Bronzezeit*. Subartu 19.
- Otto, A. and B. Einwag (forthcoming) Bier im Alten Orient: Wissensstand und Perspektiven aus Sicht der Archäologie.
- Owen, D. I. (2013) *Cuneiform Texts Primarily from Iri-Sagrig / Āl-Šarrāki and the History of the Ur III Period*. Nisaba 15.
- Richardson, S. (2002) *The Collapse of a Complex State: A Reappraisal of the End of the First Dynasty of Babylon, 1683–1597 B.C.* PhD dissertation. Columbia University.
- Röllig, W. (1970) *Das Bier im Alten Mesopotamien*. Berlin: Gesellschaft für die Geschichte und Bibliographie des Brauwesens E. V., Institut für Gärungsgewerbe und Biotechnologie.
- Roth, M. (1997) *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*. SBL WAW 6, 2nd edition.
- Roth, M. (1999) The priestess and the tavern: LH §110. In B. Böck, E. Cancik-Kirschbaum and T. Richter (eds) *Minuscula Mesopotamica. Festschrift für Johannes Renger*. AOAT 267: 445–464.
- Sallaberger, W. (2012) Bierbrauen in Versen: Eine neue Edition und Interpretation der Ninkasi-Hymne. In C. Mittermayer and S. Ecklin (eds) *Altorientalische Studien zu Ehren von Pascal Attinger*. OBO 256: 291–328.
- Sigrist, M. (1990) *Old Babylonian Account Texts in the Horn Archaeological Museum*. AUCT 4.
- Sjöberg, Å. (2003) Notes on selected entries from the Ebla vocabulary eš₂-bar-kin₅ (I). In G. Selz (ed.) *Festschrift für Burkhard Kienast zu seinem 70. Geburtstag dargebracht von Freunden, Schülern und Kollegen*. AOAT 274: 527–568.
- Stol, M. (1971) Zur altmesopotamischen Bierbereitung. *BiOr* 28: 167–171.
- Stol, M. (1987–1990) Malz. *RLA* 7: 322–329.
- Stol, M. (1994) Beer in Neo-Babylonian times. In L. Milano (ed.) *Drinking in Ancient Societies. History and Culture of Drinks in the Ancient Near East*. Padua, Italy: Sargon, HANE/S 6: 155–183.
- Stol, M. (2004) Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft in Altbabylonischer Zeit. In D. Charpin, D. O. Edzard and M. Stol (eds) *Mesopotamien: Die altbabylonische Zeit*. OBO 16(4): 643–975.
- Tolini, G. (2013) The economic activities of Išḫunnatu, a slave woman of the Egibi Family. Available at <http://refema.hypotheses.org/766>.
- Trümpelmann, L. (1981) Eine Kneipe in Susa. *Iranica Antiqua* 16: 35–44.

- Veenhof, K. R. (1972) *Aspects of Old Assyrian Trade and its Terminology*. SDIOA 10.
- Westbrook, R. (1994) The old Babylonian term nap̄tarum. *JCS* 46: 41–46.
- Worthington, M. (2009) Schankwirt(in). *RLA* 12: 132b–134b.
- Zarnkow, M., Otto, A. and Einwag, B. (2011) Interdisciplinary investigations into the brewing technology of the ancient Near East and the potential of the cold mashing process. In W. Schiefenhövel and H. Macbeth (eds) *Liquid Bread, Beer and Brewing in Cross-Cultural Perspective*. New York, Oxford, UK: Berghahn Books, pp. 47–54.
- Zarnkow, M., Spieleder, E., Back, W., Sacher, B., Otto, A. and Einwag, B. (2006) Interdisziplinäre Untersuchungen zum altorientalischen Bierbrauen in der Siedlung von Tall Bazi/Nordsyrien vor rund 3200 Jahren. *Technikgeschichte* 73: 3–25.

NEO-ASSYRIAN ELITE WOMEN

Saana Svärd

Neo-Assyrian women in the textual sources¹

The reign of the first king considered to be Neo-Assyrian (Aššur-dan II) began in 934 BCE, but Assyrian cultural continuity is usually posited all the way from the Old Assyrian era (c.2000–1750 BCE) to the Neo-Assyrian era. During the years 744–612 BCE, Assyria expanded until the Neo-Assyrian Empire became one of the largest in the ancient Near East.² It has left behind a remarkable amount of cuneiform texts on clay tablets, many of them published in the *State Archives of Assyria* series (abbreviated SAA). These texts include such genres as letters, treaties, loyalty oaths, oracular queries, legal transactions, administrative records, astrological reports, and literary texts.

Generally speaking, Neo-Assyrian women acted in many of the same roles that men did. They wrote and received letters; owned property; loaned and borrowed; bought and sold; guaranteed debts; acted as witnesses; were involved in trading ventures; and used seals.³ Nonetheless, autonomy in the modern sense should not be assumed, as individuals acted as members of a kin group, which was usually headed by a male.

Furthermore, compared to the great number of texts in which men appear, women indeed form a very small minority in the Neo-Assyrian texts. Fewer than 5 percent (c.700) of Neo-Assyrian individuals known by name are female, and most of these women appear by name only because they were objects of sale.⁴ This notwithstanding, the Neo-Assyrian text corpus does offer us information on women in many kinds of text genres and in many different roles. When their involvement in financial activities is shown, women usually appear as lenders, buyers, and owners. They appear as witnesses and guarantors as well, although extremely rarely. There are only three occurrences of them acting as witnesses in Neo-Assyrian texts (Edubba 10 16, StAT

2 32, CTN 2 19), and only one case is known to me when a woman acts as a guarantor (StAT 2 278–279). There are nine instances of women using seals.⁵ However, it seems that women did not need explicit permission from a male guardian to engage in financial transactions.

As usual, we are completely at the mercy of our material when it comes to knowledge about women in the ancient world. Much of the archaeological material and most of the texts deal exclusively with the concerns of the rich and the powerful. For the Neo-Assyrian period, most of the texts come from palace contexts. Thus, the knowledge we have on Neo-Assyrian elite women is knowledge of women who were affiliated with the palace system.⁶

Palace women can be divided into different categories. Most of the textual evidence is related to Neo-Assyrian queens. Furthermore, women could have official duties in the administration of the empire or the temples, although men formed the overwhelming majority. Female administrative personnel included the remarkable female palace administrator (*šakintu*) as well as other women (for example, female scribes). Other roles connected with palace life included: daughters and relatives of the kings, court women (*sekretū*), musicians, and other professionals of the palace.⁷

Neo-Assyrian queens

The Neo-Assyrian Empire was led by the king, the vice-regent of the national god, Aššur. Although he is presented ideologically as the sole power source of the empire, in practical terms the highest officials of the country, the magnates, played a key role in managing the administration of Assyrian provinces and the army.⁸ Separately from the magnates, the queen (literally “the woman of the palace,” MÍ.É.GAL, *sēgallu*) and the crown prince (literally “the son of the king,” *mār šarri*) had households that represented important parts of the administration of the realm. In particular, the queen was much more than just the wife of the king. Her actions and representations were similar to those of the king, qualitatively speaking. Among Assyrian elite women, she was in a class of her own.

She had considerable financial resources that are in evidence not only in texts, but also in the treasures found from queens’ graves in Kalḫu (modern Nimrud). Under the floors of the northwest palace, in the area that probably housed high-ranking women of the court, several queens’ graves were located. The oldest was the grave of

Mullissu-mukannišat-Ninua, queen of the king Assurnasirpal II (884–859) who built the palace. In her tomb was also found a golden seal of Hamâ, queen of Shalmaneser IV (784–773). It is possible that she was among the people buried there. In the sarcophagus under room 49 were buried two women. It seems probable that the first burial was that of the queens known as Iabâ and Banitu, the queen of Tiglath-pileser III (744–727) and Shalmaneser V (726–722).⁹ Later, Atalia, queen of Sargon II (721–705), was buried there. The occupants of the other graves found under the palace floors have not been identified with any certainty.¹⁰

In any case, the queens' burials as well as other evidence suggest that the palace had been the residence of the queen since it was built at least until the reign of Tiglath-pileser III. During and after the reign of Tiglath-pileser III the kings most probably did not live in the northwest palace. There are two possible reasons for burying the queens there still in his reign and after. Either the queen kept on living in the northwest palace regardless of the king, or the northwest palace remained the traditional burying place of the queens. I would lean toward the latter possibility, especially since the remains of Sargon's queen, Atalia, were heated to 150–250 degrees celsius after death. This might have been done to preserve the body and transport her remains for a proper burial in the northwest palace. Since the kings were buried at Assur, regardless of the new palaces and capitals they built, the same could be true for the queens' burials.¹¹

Queens in texts

In terms of textual evidence, the queen or the queen mother is mentioned in 177 texts. As a general rule, it seems that there was only one queen in the Neo-Assyrian realm at any given moment. The evidence indicates that the position of the queen as the head of this household was for life or until she was removed from the position by the king. Circumstantial evidence suggests that the queen may have continued as the head of the queen's household even after her spouse was replaced by a new king.¹²

Becoming queen was not the result of producing an heir to the throne. There is little information on how successors were chosen. The crown prince was a son of the king, but not necessarily the oldest one and not necessarily the son of the queen (Mí.é.GAL). Nevertheless, it is plausible that the high rank of the mother gave her sons an advantage when the successor was decided.¹³

The queen dedicated jewelry to the gods and supported the temple institutions, received divine oracles, and was involved in rituals and in the making of political decisions. She had palaces, households, and servants all over the empire. Based on the letters sent to her, she clearly commanded respect from a number of high-ranking officials. The queen's household had extensive holdings of land and offices throughout the land, employing hundreds of people. This household was not the personal property of the woman herself; rather, the title of queen carried with it a large governmental office. In many respects, the queen's actions were comparable with those of the king. Especially noteworthy is that during and after the rule of King Sargon II (721–705 BCE), the queen also came to possess her own military units. Furthermore, there is circumstantial evidence regarding Queen Sammu-ramat and Naqi'a (see below) that the queen could be involved in military actions.¹⁴

Queen Sammu-ramat and Queen Naqi'a

There is still some debate about whether Sammu-ramat, the mother of King Adad-nerari III (810–783), was a co-regent with her son. In any case, she did go on a military campaign with him, and together they erected a monument to commemorate their victory (Grayson 1996: 204–205). She is known almost exclusively from texts from her son's reign, but it seems clear that she was the queen of the father of Adad-nerari III, King Šamši-Adad V (823–811).¹⁵ In addition to her own stela in the Assur stela yard (see below), she is also mentioned in two inscriptions from the Nabû temple in Kalḫu. The governor of Kalḫu dedicated two statues there “for the life of Adad-nerari, king of Assyria, his lord, and (for) the life of Sammu-ramat, the queen, his lady.”¹⁶ Finally, it should be remembered that she was most likely the queen who gave her name to the later Greek legend of Semiramis (Herodotos 1.184). Clearly her achievements were remembered much later in Assyrian history.¹⁷

Queen Naqi'a (in Aramaic), also known by her Akkadian name, Zakûtu, was the head of the queen's household during the reigns of three consecutive kings: Sennacherib (704–681), Esarhaddon (680–669), and Ashurbanipal (668–c.630). During the reign of Naqi'a's son Esarhaddon, Ešarra-ḫammat (the spouse of Esarhaddon) assumed the title until her death in 672. After that, Naqi'a again carried out the duties of queen at least until the early part of her grandson, Ashurbanipal's, reign. Texts involving her make up roughly a third of all queen-related texts.¹⁸

Queen Naqī'a is perhaps best known from the text known as the "Treaty of Zakûtu." It states that Zakûtu bound Ashurbanipal's brothers, the whole court, and even the whole nation in unswerving loyalty to the new king, Ashurbanipal, who in the text (SAA 2 8) is called her "favorite grandson." This is the only Assyrian treaty that was enforced by someone other than the king, and although it is not the only evidence we have regarding Naqī'a's important role in governmental decision-making, it is certainly the clearest. I have translated the beginning and the end of the text.

(This is) the loyalty oath of Zakûtu, the queen of Sennacherib, king of Assyria, mother of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria (which is established) with Šamaš-šumu-ukin, his (= Assurbanipal's) equal brother, with Šamaš-metu-uballit and rest of his brothers, with the descendants of the royal line, with the magnates, the governors, the bearded courtiers, the courtiers, the royal entourage, with those exempt from taxes and those who enter the Palace, with the sons of the land of Assur, the big and the small.

(SAA 2 8, lines 1–9)

Should you hear and know about troops ready to strike or about conspirators in your midst—be they bearded courtiers or courtiers, or his brothers, or descendants of the royal line or your brothers or your friends or anyone among the people of the land—if you hear about it and know about it, you shall seize and kill them and you shall bring them to Zakûtu his mother and to Assurbanipal, king of Assyria, your lord.

(SAA 2 8, reverse, lines 18–27)

There are other exceptional activities that Naqī'a was engaged in. She is attested in two inscriptions as building a palace for her son, Esarhaddon (RINAP 4 2003 and 2004). The style and content of the inscriptions focus on the queen building the palace and commemorating the work with the support of her son, the king. At least one of the aims of this inscription must have been to show Naqī'a as an authoritative figure, who was strongly supporting her son's rule.¹⁹ The two texts are quite fragmentary, but there is a well-preserved passage describing the work as follows:

He (King Esarhaddon) gave to me as the share of my lordship people from conquered lands, enemies plundered by his bow. I made them carry hoe(s) and mud basket(s) and they made mud-bricks.

(RINAP 4 2003, lines ii 5'–14')

Her correspondence includes many letters in which she is involved in arranging rituals or contributing to the economy of the temples. She received very polite and flattering letters from high officials. She may have had special authority in matters relating to Babylonia, although

no formal appointment beyond her position as queen and the mother of the king is known. In a remarkable letter from one Na'id-Marduk (SAA 18 85) to the queen mother, she is requested to send reinforcements to the southern part of the empire. The writer explains that he refused to receive the messenger of the king of Elam and emphasizes that his loyalty belongs "to my lord's house."²⁰

Furthermore, Naqi'a is the recipient of a number of prophecies regarding the civil war that Esarhaddon had to wage with his brother before assuming his father's throne. On many occasions, her activities mirror those of her son.²¹ Two letters even praise her as having attributes that are usually only attested for the king. A passage in the letter SAA 10 17 to her states that: "[The verdict of the mother of the king, my lord], is as final as that of the gods. What you bless, is blessed; what you curse, is cursed." Furthermore, the mother of the king is said to be "as able as (the antediluvian sage) Adapa" (SAA 10 244).²²

Sarah Melville has argued that Naqi'a's extraordinary authority in the Neo-Assyrian court may have been the result of a plan by Esarhaddon to bolster his mother's status so that she could better pave the way for the kingship of Ashurbanipal.²³ That is definitely a factor to bear in mind, but power relationships between individuals are rarely simple. A letter from Esarhaddon to his mother serves to demonstrate their complex relationship:

The order of the king to the mother of the king: I am well. Good health to the mother of the king! Regarding the servant of Amos, about whom you wrote to me—I have commanded in the same way as the king's mother. It is very fine, as you said. Why does Hamunayu go?

(SAA 16 2)

The "order of the king" that begins the letter clearly indicates that the king is higher in the hierarchy than his mother. Yet the next sentence, in which the king wishes his mother good health, is exceedingly rare in letters sent by the king.²⁴ Although the king is doing exactly as his mother wanted, her authority can simultaneously be perceived as limited, as she had to ask her son to deal with this matter. Power relationships between individuals cannot be explained by simple hierarchical chains of command. In my own previous work, I have argued that there was a mutually beneficial relationship of respect, and perhaps even affection, between the mother and the son.²⁵

Finally, the matter can be seen from the perspective of the Assyrians, according to whom it was perhaps not even relevant to ask

if Naqi'a was acting out of self-interest. In many ways, the interests of the family *were* the interests of the individual. One would expect that for Naqi'a, assisting in her son's political agenda would have been self-evident, as that would have benefited the status of the entire kin group.

Although queens like Naqi'a and Sammu-ramat are easily highlighted as exceptions, the textual and iconographical evidence suggests that the queen did have an official and prominent role throughout the Neo-Assyrian era. Naqi'a and Sammu-ramat were not essentially different from other Neo-Assyrian queens, although it is possible that exceptional conditions may have contributed to their visibility.²⁶

The queen's image

There are only three depictions of Neo-Assyrian queens in large-scale art, those of Queen Libbali-šarrat and Queen Naqi'a. In these three images, the queens wear the mural crown, which represented political dominion.²⁷ Queen Libbali-šarrat is twice depicted as enthroned, which indicates reverence in Mesopotamian imagery in general. In these three images, Queen Naqi'a is presented once, following a king in a ritual procession. Queen Libbali-šarrat, the wife and queen of King Assurbanipal, is presented on her own stele, as well as on a relief from the main palace of the realm in Nineveh.²⁸

The dates of the 140 stelae found at Assur range from c.1400 to c.600 BCE. The stelae name kings and high officials of the realm, as well as three royal women.²⁹ The queens Sammu-ramat, Libbali-šarrat and an unidentified woman had their stelae erected there. The stela of Libbali-šarrat states: "Image of Libbali-šarrat, queen of Assurbanipal, king of the universe, king of Assyria."³⁰ Of the 140 stelae, only the stela of Libbali-šarrat had an image on it, making it difficult to evaluate its meaning. It has been suggested that the original purpose of these stelae was to act as representations of their august patrons and to pray on their behalf.³¹ Whatever the purpose of these stelae, however, the inclusion of queens in this select group indicates their high position.

A bronze relief fragment (AO 20.185) portrays Queen Naqi'a following a king (presumably her son Esarhaddon) in a religious ceremony. The depicted queen is undeniably Naqi'a, as her name is inscribed on the gown of the figure (RINAP 4 2010). The text inscribed on the relief describes the ritual that enabled a cult image to

be inhabited by the deity. It seems probable that the relief was originally a part of an altar base or possibly a divine throne dais. There is some evidence to suggest that the relief originates from a temple in the Assyrian heartland, perhaps even from the city of Assur.³²

The so-called banquet relief (BM 124920) was displayed in the north palace in Nineveh. Its composition, as well as the topic of the relief, is absolutely unique. Not only is the queen a rare subject, but even more unusual is the portrayal of the king reclining on a couch. In contrast, the queen sits on a high, throne-like chair. Both the king and queen hold flowers in one hand and drinking bowls in the other. The identity of this queen has been discussed by many scholars,³³ but Libbali-šarrat seems the most likely candidate. The severed head of the enemy king, Te'umman, is portrayed nearby, while an inscription on the relief confirms that the couple is celebrating victory over the Elamites.³⁴ One of the aims of this scene seems to be to emphasize the high rank and importance of the queen and to show the viewer the good life that followed a successful military campaign.³⁵

Elite women in administration

More than 70 Neo-Assyrian texts relate to female administrative staff in the palaces. However, women in administrative offices are heavily outnumbered by men. None of the “magnates,” the most important officials of the realm, were female.³⁶

The right hand of the queen, her female administrator, is best attested (54 texts). Her title in Akkadian was *šakintū*, translated here as “administrator.” These women were present in many royal palaces, and they had considerable resources and extensive staff. There is a record of administrators being employed in a total of 23 separate households throughout Neo-Assyrian history. There were administrators present in the capital cities of Assur, Kalḫu, and Nineveh. In Kalḫu and Nineveh, the office of *šakintu* is attested in several different palaces. Furthermore, many provincial cities (for example, Tušḫan, Til-Barsip, Kilizi Arbail, Adian, Ḫaurina, and Kasappa) had a household headed by a *šakintu*. It is clear, therefore, that *šakintū* were not only active in close proximity to the queen, but probably ran these households fairly autonomously. It seems that the administrators were present in those cities where the queen had some financial interest.³⁷

The main body of the textual evidence records administrators as

participating in financial transactions. Mostly she bought slaves (male, female, and children) and/or land, as in this following excerpt from a sales document, excavated from Nineveh (692 BCE):

(The man) Nabû-na'id (and the woman) Akbarâ, two persons altogether, they are the slaves of these men (= the sellers). The *šakintu* of the central City has made the contract and bought (them) from these men for one mina of silver by the king's (standard) mina. The silver is paid completely. These people are purchased and bought. There is no (possibility of) revocation, court case or legal action.

(SAA 6 85, lines 4–13)

She also lent and borrowed commodities. She had a staff of her own, including female and male administrative staff and menial workers. One of the main enterprises in these households may have been textile production for the use of the royal palaces, but possibly also for trade. The *šakintu* and her staff were the executive arm of the queen's finances.³⁸

In addition to the *šakintu*, there were other women who worked in the palaces, either in administrative capacities or in other professions. An administrative professional that at least on one occasion worked for the *šakintu* was titled *laḥḥennutu* (Parker 1954: 39; see ND 2309). As there is little evidence regarding her actual duties, it is difficult to arrive at an exact translation, but perhaps “female financial officer” would be appropriate. Additionally, there are some attestations of female scribes. The existence of female scribes is by no means unusual in Mesopotamia and there are several documents attesting to them from the Neo-Assyrian period. First, in an administrative list of personnel from Nineveh (SAA 7 24), there seems to be an entry for six Aramean female scribes.³⁹ Second, the *šakintu* in Kalḫu had a “female scribe of the queen” at her disposal whose name was Attar-palṭi. The two documents that mention her are both from 615 BCE and in both documents men borrow silver from her (CTN 3 39, 40). Finally, Saraia writes to the palace scribe (SAA 16 49), calling him “her lord,” which suggests that she was working for him in some capacity.⁴⁰

Who were the *seketū*?

The word commonly transcribed as *seketu* (pl. *seketū*) appears most often in the royal inscriptions of Neo-Assyrian kings, referring to women taken as loot from conquered regions.⁴¹ The verbal root behind the word *seketu* (*sekēru*) means “to confine.”⁴² This has occasionally been taken as proof that the *seketū* lived in captivity.

However, in and of itself the etymology is not sufficient evidence to prove this, and it certainly does not explain exactly what such “confinement” would have meant. The texts support the idea that these women lived in the main palace of the capital city, but confinement is not indicated.⁴³ Neither does the archaeological evidence offer any firm conclusions regarding the living arrangements in Neo-Assyrian palaces.⁴⁴

It seems probable that the *sekretū* included many types of women: women from the households of defeated kings, women related to the king, companions of foreign princesses, concubines, and valuable female hostages. Thus, *sekretu* meant a high-ranking woman living in the palace, who was not the queen.⁴⁵ In my own work, I use the term “court woman” as a translation for *sekretu*. It is flexible enough to encompass the wide variety of women who were called *sekretu*, but preserves the connotation of high rank.⁴⁶

The *sekretū* were clearly seen as valuable captives, important enough to be mentioned when the kings glorified their deeds in inscriptions. They also appear frequently in the so-called Nimrud Wine Lists which were made in order to allocate wine for the palace population. The archive spans approximately two decades, the 780s and 770s, although a few texts can be dated to the reign of Tiglath-pileser III (744–727). The appearance of the *sekretū* in these lists indicates their high rank, as wine in Assyria was a luxury commodity.⁴⁷

The *sekretū* are portrayed as active participants in financial transactions in three texts found from Nineveh, the capital city at the time when these documents were written. In 687 BCE, the *sekretu* Aḥi-ṭalli buys a girl from her mother (SAA 6 88). Later, in the year 681 BCE a *sekretu* concludes a significant financial deal by buying 27 people with their property for the staggering sum of 20 minas of silver (SAA 6 91), which corresponds to about 20 kilos.⁴⁸ Third, during the reign of Sennacherib (704–681), it might be that “a *sekretu* of the king” purchases real estate (SAA 6 99).⁴⁹ Purchase document SAA 6 96 and loan document SAA 6 97 probably refer to the *sekretū* as well, although their title is not mentioned explicitly.⁵⁰ A fourth document originates from the Kalḫu northwest palace. It was excavated in Room ZT 16, which probably contained the archive of a *šakintu*. In the text (dating to 638 BCE), the *sekretu* named Mullissu-šarru-ušri bought a female slave (Parker 1954: 40, see ND 2314).⁵¹

Interestingly, a year after being titled *sekretu* in SAA 6 88 (see above), the same woman, Aḥi-ṭalli, buys slaves for four minas of silver

(SAA 6 89). In this latter text, however, she is called the *šakintu* of the central city. Her advancement to the position of *šakintu* provides another angle on the position of *seketu*, namely that it was a status that could change.

Finally, the tomb inscriptions of the queens Iabâ and Mullissu-mukannišat-Ninua (Al-Rawi 2008, nos. 1–3) mention the *seketū*. Queen Mullissu-mukannišat-Ninua forbids any future court woman or queen from being placed inside her sarcophagus. Queen Iabâ's inscription is even more specific: no one is to disturb her eternal rest, be it "the queen who sits on the throne or a court woman, beloved of the king."

Any translation that refers to the *seketū* as "harem women" is inaccurate to the extreme. The term "harem" is deeply loaded with cultural meanings that are not transferable to the ancient Near East (see Picton, this volume). In general, ethnocentric concepts with little explanatory power have too often been used in the study of the women of ancient Mesopotamia. Therefore, criticism has been justifiably presented regarding the use of the term "harem" and related a priori assumptions regarding the Orient and women.⁵² Elna Solvang has suggested that the term "harem" could be used, but only when it is carefully defined and when the writer takes into account the evidence regarding the Ottoman harem.⁵³ However, even when the term is defined accurately, I consider it unwise to use it and prefer simply to choose other translations, like "court women." Since there is no way of knowing exactly what kind of lives the *seketū* lived, cultural baggage attached to the term "harem" will too easily enter into our discussions to "fill in the blanks."

Conclusions

Due to the nature of sources from the Neo-Assyrian Empire, the elite women that we know about are women who were connected with the palace institution. Hundreds of texts attest to the social reality that they lived in. Queens were the most prominent actors, and they seem to have been in a category of their own, even among the elite women. In many respects, their actions were similar to those of the king and different from the other elite women. The women involved in royal administration—first and foremost, *šakintū*—are well attested. They clearly had a position of great authority in the palaces, as did some of the staff that worked under them. The female administrative officials engaged in similar activities to their male counterparts. In many ways, the actions and social reality of the elite women mirrored that of the

elite men. All in all, it seems to me that being a member of the elite was more relevant, at least on the level of social reality, than gender.

Although active in financial, administrative, cultic, and political spheres, these women nonetheless formed a clear minority. It would be too simplistic, however, to take this as proof of “oppression” of women. Instead of making value judgments about Assyrian gender roles (for example, along the axis of powerful versus oppressed), I find it more fruitful to try to understand the processes of constructing gender in the empire.

This chapter has strictly concentrated on the non-literary genres that paint a vivid picture of the social reality of the Neo-Assyrian elite women. I have avoided discussing the thorny question of how the texts that do not directly describe social reality attest to the role of palace women. The first problem with using “literature” as a guide to social reality relates to the continuity of the Mesopotamian literature tradition. Using sources that were copied and edited for hundreds of years as guides regarding women’s positions in a specific Mesopotamian era are fraught with complications. Even in the rare cases where we know when a piece of literature was composed, these can hardly be taken as a description of social reality. At the same time, literature definitely did not exist outside the culture that gave birth to it. While at this point there are more questions than answers, it seems clear to me that a simple descriptive approach concentrating on social reality is not enough if we want answers to more complicated questions, such as how gender was constructed in the Neo-Assyrian Empire. A focus on social reality would need to be supplemented by studies on the representations of masculinity and femininity and the processes of constructing male and female gender in Neo-Assyrian society.

List of abbreviations

AO = Département des Antiquités Orientales, Musée du Louvre.

BM = British Museum.

CTN 2 = Postgate 1973.

CTN 3 = Dalley and Postgate 1984.

Edubba 10 = Ahmad and Postgate 2007.

RINAP 4 = Leichty 2011.

SAA 2 = Parpola and Watanabe 1988.

SAA 6 = Kwasman and Parpola 1991.

SAA 7 = Fales and Postgate 1992.

SAA 10 = Parpola 1993.

SAA 14 = Mattila 2002.

SAA 16 = Luukko and Van Buylaere 2002.

SAA 18 = Reynolds 2003.

StAT 2 = Donbaz and Parpola 2001.

StAT 3 = Faist 2007.

Notes

- 1 The translations offered in this chapter are my own, but based on the work of others (acknowledged in each case). Possible reconstructed words are usually not indicated in the translations. The readers are directed to the cited publications for further information on the texts. My additions and clarifications are in parenthesis within translations.
- 2 Van de Mieroop 2007: 201–246 and Kuhrt 1995: 82, 348–349, 478–501.
- 3 Svärd 2008: 88–98.
- 4 Teppo 2007: 385–386 and *The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire*, Vols 1–3.
- 5 Suzanne Herbordt reports four in Herbordt 1992: 159, being: Ninive 42 (SAA 6 257), Ninive 111 (SAA 6 142), Ninive 134 (SAA 14 144), and Nimrud 27 (Postgate 1976, 103–107). Further attestations from Assur are found in StAT 2 44, StAT 2 46, StAT 2 267 and StAT 3 77. See also Fales and Jakob-Rost 1991, text no. 39.
- 6 For studies regarding Neo-Assyrian women, the most recent and the most comprehensive works are Melville 1999, Macgregor 2012, and Svärd 2015. This chapter is based on my recent monograph (Svärd 2015) and the reader is directed there for further information.
- 7 Svärd 2015: 39–143.
- 8 For magnates, see Mattila 2000.
- 9 Banitu could be the Akkadian translation of the West Semitic name, Iabâ (Dalley 2008: 171 and Svärd 2015: 40–41).
- 10 See Oates and Oates 2001: 78–90 and Curtis *et al.* 2008 for the queens' graves of Kalḫu. For the inscriptions found in the queens' tombs, see Al-Rawi 2008.
- 11 Svärd 2015: 117–118.
- 12 Svärd 2015: 40–48, 177–223, 240–242.
- 13 Svärd 2015: 39–85, 177–223.

- 14 Svärd 2015: 39–85, 177–223.
- 15 See Svärd 2015: 48–61.
- 16 Translation mine, based on Grayson 1996: 227. See Svärd 2015: 48–61.
- 17 Bernbeck 2008: 358–364.
- 18 See Svärd 2015: 40–48, 177–223, and Melville 1999.
- 19 Melville 1999: 40–42.
- 20 Svärd 2015: 52–59.
- 21 Svärd 2015: 48–61.
- 22 See also Parpola 2007[1983]: 176, 220.
- 23 Melville 1999: 91–92.
- 24 King only wishes good things for the recipients who are very high-ranking people (e.g., SAA 16 1, a letter to the king of Elam).
- 25 See Svärd 2015: 48–61.
- 26 Svärd 2015: 39–85.
- 27 For the mural crown, see Ornan 2002: 474–477.
- 28 See Svärd 2015: 74–80 and Macgregor 2012: 87–93, 109–118 for images and details on these depictions.
- 29 Miglus 1984: 133.
- 30 Translation mine, based on Andrae 1913: 6–8, no. 1.
- 31 Miglus 1984: 137–138.
- 32 Macgregor 2012: 111–112, 116–117.
- 33 Most recently, see Roobaert 2012.
- 34 Macgregor 2012: 89–93.
- 35 Svärd 2015: 74–80.
- 36 For magnates in general, see Mattila 2000.
- 37 See Svärd 2015: 91–105.
- 38 See Svärd 2015: 91–105.
- 39 Nissinen 2013: 38.
- 40 Svärd 2015: 123–126
- 41 Most of the royal inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian era are published in two series: *The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia: Assyrian Periods* (abbreviated RIMA) and *The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period* (abbreviated RINAP). See Svärd 2015: 127–130 and Melville 2004: 40.
- 42 CAD S, s.v. *sekēru*.
- 43 Regarding the *sekretū* and their possible segregation in general, see also Svärd 2015: 109–120 and Melville 2004: 39–42. For an opposing view, see Parpola 2012.
- 44 See, for example, Kertai 2014, who has successfully argued that the dichotomy of public versus private had little significance for Assyrians. For a more thorough discussion on this issue, see Svärd 2015: 109–120.
- 45 Melville 2004: 40.
- 46 Svärd 2015: 105–109.
- 47 See Kinnier Wilson 1972 for an edition of the Nimrud Wine Lists. See also Svärd 2015: 130–133 and Fales 1994: 366, 370.
- 48 Assuming the “heavy” mina of approximately one kilogram (Powell 1990: 515–

516).

- 49 The passage in question is badly damaged and the transliteration is heavily reconstructed.
- 50 See also Melville 2004: 41 (she writes SAA 7 96 and 97, but it seems clear that she means SAA 6, not SAA 7).
- 51 The text is dated to the eponym year of Aššur-gimilli-tere (in the Neo-Assyrian dating system, each year was given the name of a high official). See Svärd 2015: 105–109 on the *sekretū*.
- 52 For a critique of these conventions, see Bahrani 2001: 7–27, 161–179; Van de Mieroop 1999: 138–160; Asher-Greve 1997; and Westenholz 1990.
- 53 Solvang 2008: 417.

References

- Ahmad, A. Y. and Postgate, J. N. (2007) *Archives from the Domestic Wing of the North-West Palace at Kalhu/Nimrud*. London: Nabu Publications.
- Al-Rawi, F. N. H. (2008) Inscriptions from the Tombs of the Queens of Assyria. In J. E. Curtis, H. McCall, D. Collon and L. Werr (eds) *New Light on Nimrud: Proceedings of the Nimrud Conference 11th–13th March 2002*. London: British Institute for the Study of Iraq and the British Museum, pp. 119–138.
- Andrae, W. (1913) *Die Stelenreihen in Assur*. Leipzig, Germany: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.
- Asher-Greve, J. (1997) Feminist research and ancient Mesopotamia: Problems and prospects. In A. Brenner and C. Fontaine (eds) *A Feminist Companion to Reading the Bible: Approaches, Methods and Strategies*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, pp. 218–237.
- Bahrani, Z. (2001) *Women of Babylon: Gender and Representation in Mesopotamia*. London: Routledge.
- Bernbeck, R. (2008) Sex/gender/power and Šammuramat: A view from the Syrian steppe. In D. Bonatz, R. M. Czichon and F. J. Kreppner (eds) *Fundstellen. Gesammelte Schriften zur Archäologie und Geschichte Altvorderasiens ad honorem Hartmut Kühne*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, pp. 351–369.
- Curtis, J. E., McCall, H., Collon, D. and Werr, L. (eds) (2008) *New Light on Nimrud: Proceedings of the Nimrud Conference 11th–13th March 2002*. London: British Institute for the Study of Iraq and the British Museum.
- Dalley, S. (2008) The identity of the princesses in Tomb II and a new analysis of events in 701 BC. In J. E. Curtis, H. McCall, D. Collon and L. Werr (eds) *New Light on Nimrud: Proceedings of the Nimrud Conference 11th–13th March 2002*. London: British Institute for the

- Study of Iraq and the British Museum, pp. 171–175.
- Dalley, S. and Postgate, J. N. (1984) *The Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser*. Oxford, UK: British School of Archaeology in Iraq.
- Donbaz, V. and Parpola, S. (2001) *Neo-Assyrian Legal Texts in Istanbul*. Saarbrücken, Germany: Saarbrücker Druckerei und Verlag.
- Faist, B. (2007) *Alltagstexte aus Neuassyrische Archiven und Bibliotheken der Stadt Assur*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag.
- Fales, F. M. (1994) A fresh look at the Nimrud wine lists. In M. Fales (ed.) *Drinking in Ancient Societies*. Padua, Italy: Sargon srl, pp. 361–380.
- Fales, F. M. and Jakob-Rost, L. (1991) Neo-Assyrian texts from Assur private archives in the Vorderasiatisches Museum of Berlin, [part 1](#). SAAB 5: 3–157.
- Fales, F. M. and Postgate, J. N. (1992) *Imperial Administrative Records, Part I: Palace and Temple Administration*. Helsinki, Finland: Helsinki University Press.
- Grayson, K. (1996) *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millenium BC II (858–745 BC)*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
- Herbordt, S. (1992) *Neuassyrische Glyptik des 8.–7. Jh. v. Chr.* Helsinki, Finland: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.
- Kertai, D. (2014) From *bābānu* to *bētānu*, looking for spaces in late Assyrian palaces. In N. N. May and U. Steinert (eds) *The Fabric of Cities: Aspects of Urbanism, Urban Topography and Society in Mesopotamia, Greece and Rome*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 189–202.
- Kinnier Wilson, J. V. (1972) *The Nimrud Wine Lists: A Study of Men and Administration at the Assyrian Capital in the Eighth century B.C.* London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq.
- Kuhrt, A. (1995) *The Ancient Near East c. 3000–330 BC, Vols. 1 and 2*. London: Routledge.
- Kwasman, T. and Parpola, S. (1991) *Legal Transactions of the Royal Court of Nineveh, I: Tiglath-pileser III through Esarhaddon*. Helsinki, Finland: Helsinki University Press.
- Leichty, E. (2011) *The Royal Inscriptions of Esarhaddon, King of Assyria (680–669 BC)*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Luukko, M. and Van Buylaere, G. (2002) *The Political Correspondence of Esarhaddon*. Helsinki, Finland: Helsinki University Press.
- Macgregor, S. L. (2012) *Beyond Hearth and Home: Women in the Public Sphere in Neo-Assyrian Society*. Helsinki, Finland: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.
- Mattila, R. (2000) *The King's Magnates: A Study of the Highest Officials of the Neo-Assyrian Empire*. Helsinki, Finland: The Neo-Assyrian

- Mattila, R. (2002) *Legal Transactions of the Royal Court of Nineveh, Part II: Assurbanipal through Sin-šarru-iškun*. Helsinki, Finland: Helsinki University Press.
- Melville, S. (1999) *The Role of Naqia/Zakutu in Sargonid Politics*. Helsinki, Finland: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.
- Melville, S. (2004) Neo-Assyrian royal women and male identity: Status as a social tool. *JAOS* 124(1): 37–57.
- Miglus, P. (1984) Another look at the “Stelenreihen” in Assur. *ZA* 74(1): 133–140.
- Nissinen, M. (2013) Gender and prophetic agency in the ancient Near East and in Greece. In J. Stökl and C. L. Carvalho (eds) *Prophets Male and Female: Gender and Prophecy in the Hebrew Bible, the Eastern Mediterranean and the Ancient Near East*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, pp. 27–58.
- Oates, J. and Oates, D. (2001) *Nimrud: An Assyrian Imperial City Revealed*. London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq.
- Ornan, T. (2002) The queen in public: Royal women in Neo-Assyrian art. In S. Parpola and R. Whiting (eds) *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the XLVIIe Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Helsinki, July 2–6, 2001*. Helsinki, Finland: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, pp. 461–477.
- Parker, B. (1954) The Nimrud tablets, 1952 – Business Documents. *Iraq* 16: 29–58.
- Parpola, S. (1993) *Letters from Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars*. Helsinki, Finland: Helsinki University Press.
- Parpola, S. (2007 [1983]) *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal. Part II: Commentary and Appendices*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Parpola, S. (2012) The Neo-Assyrian royal harem. In G. Lanfranchi, D. Bonacossi, C. Pappi and S. Ponchia (eds) *Leggo! Studies Presented to Frederick Mario Fales on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, pp. 613–626.
- Parpola, S. and Watanabe, K. (1988) *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths*. Helsinki, Finland: Helsinki University Press.
- Postgate, J. N. (1973) *The Governor's Palace Archive*. London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq.
- Postgate, J. N. (1976) *Fifty Neo-Assyrian Legal Documents*. Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips Ltd.
- Powell, M. (1990) Masse und Gewichte. *Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 7: 457–517.
- Reynolds, F. (2003) *The Babylonian Correspondence of Esarhaddon and*

- Letters to Assurbanipal and Sin-šarru-iškun from Northern and central Babylonia*. Helsinki, Finland: Helsinki University Press.
- Roobaert, A. (2012) Libbali-Sharrat or Naqia? On queens portrayed on Assyrian reliefs. In T. Boiy, J. Bretschneider, A. Goddeeris, H. Hameeuw, G. Jans and J. Tavernier (eds) *The Ancient Near East, A Life! Festschrift Karel Van Lerberghe*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Peeters, pp. 499–506.
- Solvang, E. (2008) Classifying women: The harem and what it does and doesn't tell us about women. In R. Biggs, J. Myers and M. Roth (eds) *Proceedings of the 51st Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Held at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, July 18–22, 2005*. Chicago, IL: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, pp. 415–420.
- Svärd, S. (2008) *Women's Roles in the Neo-Assyrian Era: Female Agency in the Empire*. Saarbrücken, Germany: VDM Verlag Dr Müller.
- Svärd, S. (2015) *Women and Power in Neo-Assyrian Palaces*. Helsinki, Finland: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.
- Teppo, S. (2007) Agency and the Neo-Assyrian women of the palace. *Studia Orientalia* 101: 381–420.
- Van de Mieroop, M. (1999) *Cuneiform Texts and the Writing of History*. London: Routledge.
- Van de Mieroop, M. (2007) *A History of the Ancient Near East ca. 3000–323 BC*. Second edition. Malden, MA and Oxford: Blackwell.
- Westenholz, J. G. (1990) Towards a new conceptualization of the female role in Mesopotamian society. *JAOS* 110: 510–521.

PATTERNS OF VIOLENce AGAINST WOMEN IN THE IRON AGE TOWN OF HASANLU, SOLDUZ VALLEY, IRAN

Janet Monge and Page Selinsky

Introduction

Violence, both interpersonal and shaped by warfare, is an emerging area of research within bioarchaeology. Since the publication of the Martin and Frayer volume *Troubled Times* in 1997, the topic has captured the interest of many biological anthropologists enlisted to help interpret the archaeological record of human interaction and conflict. Two notable recent publications, *The Archaeology of Violence* (Ralph 2013a) and an issue of the *International Journal of Paleopathology* in 2012 (see editorial comment by Martin and Harrod), contain discussions of wounded bodies as evidence of pre- and proto-historic conflict. The meaning of violence, especially associated with distinct patterns of trauma as it falls along biological sex, socio-economic, cultural, or group/population lines, is difficult to interpret. Moreover, there are structured and unstructured components to violence, which can be sanctified and even ritualized, all of which could potentially influence our interpretation of violence (perhaps more accurately described simply as inflicted traumatic injury) in the past (see, for example, Ralph 2013a, 2013b).

Trauma associated with violence is defined here as trauma delivered by one human onto the body of another person with the purposeful intent of harming that individual. This is to distinguish it from other forms of traumatic injury, sometimes present on the skeleton, as a result of accidental injury sustained during life as, for example, in duties related to work and subsistence activities, or associated with accidental falls (sometimes referred to as household and occupational accidents) (Walker 2001). More important is the analysis of violent

trauma that is not just present but patterned in particular ways (Galloway 1998). Complicating discussions of this type of violence in the past is the burgeoning database showing that this violence is expressed on the skeleton in very different ways within different archaeological contexts (Simmons 1998). Walker (1997: 165) summarized this: “Cultural-historic factors clearly influence patterns of violence and this could account for some of the variation in the skeletal collections.” The interpretation of this traumatic violence in the lives of peoples in the past is based on both the archaeological context and the life history of trauma recorded in the skeletal structures of the inhabitants.

In 2011, Monge and McCarthy approached the topic of patterned violence directed toward females at the sites of Hasanlu and Dinka Tepe, Iran using the extensive and well-preserved skeletal materials excavated over the course of 25 years (from 1959 to 1975) under the supervision of Dr. Robert Dyson at the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Philadelphia, PA (a.k.a. the Penn Museum). The conclusion, that female skeletons sustained a different traumatic patterning from the skeletons of their male counterparts, was based on evidence using skeletal materials from both Dinka Tepe and all of the time periods sampled from Hasanlu (Table 10.1). To further refine this analysis, rather than conflate all of the time frame covered by the original study (ranging from the late fourth century BCE to the fourteenth century CE), the present study concentrates only on a complete sampling of the skeletons from the High and Low Mounds at Hasanlu and from Periods IV, IVB, and V (Dyson 1989, 1997; Dyson and Voight 1989; Dyson and Muscarella 1989). Methods for the analysis of antemortem damage were further refined including the use of CT scans to more effectively determine the extent and presence of healing of wounds sustained by the inhabitants. Examination of the Hasanlu sample demonstrates that there are differential patterns of violence on the skeleton between males and females. While both sexes are affected by the violence associated with warfare, female skeletons show a pattern of interpersonal violence distinct from the pattern in males. Various scenarios can be constructed for this patterned violence.

Background

The town of Hasanlu affords a unique opportunity for the study of violence in the past. Circa 800 BCE (Period IVB), the town itself was sacked and then consumed by fire at the hands of an unknown invading enemy. Based on the pattern of perimortem trauma sustained

by the victims, and on the types of weaponry present within the town at the time of its demise (Muscarella 1989), it appears that the peoples were engaged in close range physical combat. The quantity of perimortem damage sustained by the inhabitants is extensive, reflecting both the effects of one-on-one blows sustained to the body and the traumatic events of building collapse with conflagration. The number of women and children (including infants) killed seems to point to the High Mound as a place of refuge away from the main fighting. To date, there is no biological or physical evidence distinguishing the inhabitants of the town from the skeletons of the invaders.

In a paleodemographic study of Hasanlu, Selinsky (2009a) determined that the mortality profile of the town (archaeologically described as the High Mound) conforms to a *catastrophic* profile. In addition to the skeletal evidence from the High Mound, Dyson and colleagues excavated a contemporary cemetery adjacent to the High Mound, the Low Mound sample, showing a typical *attritional* mortality profile. Both High and Low Mound skeletons show evidence of peri- and antemortem damage indicating that violence was a sustained part of life of the inhabitants of this region.

Table 10.1 Chronology of Hasanlu..

Period	Dates
VII	Late fourth millennium–c.1600 BCE
VI	c.1600–c.1450 BCE
V	c.1450–c.1250 BCE
IV	c.1250–c.750 BCE
III	c.750–c.300 BCE
II	c.300–c.275 BCE
I	thirteenth and fourteenth centuries CE

A total of 265 skeletons (186 adults and 79 subadults) were excavated over all periods at Hasanlu. Of these, 197 derived from Periods IV, IVB, and V and are the focus of this analysis. The destruction level at 800 BCE at the High Mound yielded the remains of 108 skeletal individuals; the remaining number (89) derive from Levels IV and V. Although approximately 80 percent of the skeletal individuals are represented by both cranial and postcranial remains, assessment of traumatic injury was confined exclusively to the skull. The hypothesis that males and females were subjected to distinct patterns of violence throughout life, demands control over, or at least minimizing the effects of, systematic sustained trauma from other

sources that could consistently divide males from females, but that are not best described as reflecting violence. More specifically, markers of occupational stress (MOS) are more likely to affect postcranial elements and show patterns of difference conforming to culturally defined sex roles (Walker 2001).

Sex determination

As used in this work, sex relates to the expressed biological differences between female and male individuals as evidenced by morphological variation in the size, shape, and structure of skeletal elements. Sex should not be confused or conflated with the notion of gender, which is socially defined (Walker and Cook 1998). Sexually dimorphic traits are not fully developed in immature individuals, so sex was only determined for mature specimens. Accuracy of sexing is dependent on the preservation of the skeleton and elements present. When possible, features of the pelvis (Phenice 1969; Workshop of European Anthropologists (WEA) 1980) and skull (WEA 1980; Walrath *et al.* 2004) were preferred for sex determination. In cases where preservation of skull and pelvis were poor, other criteria, such as metrics and overall robustness, were required (Bass 1995; Ubelaker 1999).

Age estimation

Age is arguably easier to estimate in young individuals due to their more regulated processes of growth and development. In older individuals, the vagaries of life history combined with the highly variable processes of degenerative changes make precise aging more difficult. Therefore, age ranges in adult individuals tend to encompass broader year ranges than those of immature individuals. To aid in the accurate aging of adult individuals, a multifactorial approach using several methods was employed to produce a composite age estimate, as the pattern of aging can vary within the skeleton of an individual (Kemkes-Grottenthaler 1996; Ubelaker 2000).

Aging of immature individuals was based primarily on the stage of tooth formation and eruption (Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Scheuer and Black 2004). Despite idiosyncratic and population differences in the sequence of formation and eruption (Smith and Garn 1987; Ubelaker 1999), the technique is the most accurate method for neonatal stages through the eruption of wisdom teeth in the late teens to early twenties. Additionally, each individual was also assessed for

the stages of formation and union of skeletal growth plates (Scheuer and Black 2004), a technique that is especially useful during the teens and early twenties. In neonates and infants, long bone lengths were used to estimate age (Fazekas and Kosa 1978; Scheuer *et al.* 1980; Sellier *et al.* 1997).

In adults, age estimation is based on degenerative changes, which vary significantly among individuals and populations and are dependent on multiple variables, such as diet, activity, and, to some extent, genetics. The primary method for estimating age in the Hasanlu skeletons was dental wear using an adaptation of the Miles method (Miles 1962, 1963, 2001). This approach is arguably the best technique available for archaeological populations (Lovejoy 1985; Brothwell 1989; Mays 1998; Molleson and Cohen 1990; Walker *et al.* 1991), because the wear rates are calculated within the skeletal population based on subadult and adult dentitions. Additional dental markers, including molar crown height (Mays *et al.* 1995) and markers of dental disease (caries, abscess, calculus, periodontal disease, antemortem tooth loss), were integrated with wear to increase the effectiveness of the technique (Selinsky 2009b).

In conjunction with dental aging, multiple techniques for skeletal age estimation were also used. These included areas of the pelvis known to change in predictable ways with age, the pubic symphyseal face (Brooks and Suchey 1990) and the auricular area (Buckberry and Chamberlain 2002). The state of closure and obliteration of cranial sutures (Meindl and Lovejoy 1985) was also observed at standard points on the exterior and interior of the skull. Specific health markers were also included in aging to assist specifically in the identification of older adults, such as joint disease (especially osteoarthritis) (Stewart 1958; Rogers *et al.* 1987; Rogers and Waldron 1995) and age-related loss of bone density (Acsádi and Nemeskéri 1970; Lovejoy *et al.* 1985; Mays 2000). Osteoarthritis and bone loss are known to increase with advancing age and were assessed based on gross morphological examination of the skeleton.

Table 10.2 shows the age categories used in the analysis of the Hasanlu skeletal individuals and Table 10.3 shows the sex categories used in the accumulation of data. Both I(juv) and I – Indeterminate adult, were removed from the analysis.

Identification of trauma

While the Hasanlu cranial materials are ideal for the study of trauma,

the extent of bone breaks/failure and traumatic lesions, present challenges. For example, the adult cranium 75–29–531 (not included in this analysis since sex could not be accurately determined) shows 12 instances of bone failure ranging from excavation/collection storage breaks to completely healed antemortem bone trauma.

Table 10.2 Age categories used in the analysis of the Hasanlu skeletal individuals

Age category	Age range
Fetal (FE)	Preterm
Infant (IN)	Birth–3 years
Child (CH)	4–11 years
Subadult (SA)	12–19 years
Young adult (YA)	20–34 years
Middle adult (MA)	35–49 years
Old adult (OA)	50–64 years
Very old adult (VOA)	65+ years

Table 10.3 Sex categories used in the accumulation of data

Sex category
I (juv) – indeterminate juvenile
I – indeterminate adult
F – female
M – male

Using the criteria outlined by Kaufman *et al.* (1997), each pathological lesion on the skull was assessed to determine if the most probable cause was trauma rather than some other origin including, but not limited to, any of a number of developmental disturbances of cranial bone formation, as well as tumors or lesions of various sorts, etc.

All bone breaks were assessed initially using macroscopic observations of the skull (both cranium and mandible). Bone breaks, in contrast to sustained events of bone trauma, were first assessed to determine if they occurred during excavation of the skeleton or within the 40+ years that the collection was in storage. Early field season excavated materials from Hasanlu (1957 to 1964 seasons) were shipped to the USA and placed under study at the Universities of Kansas, Tennessee, and South Carolina before transport to the Penn Museum in 1988. From 1965 to 1977, skeletal materials were directly shipped from the field to the Penn Museum. The primary criterion for classification as a recent bone break was the color of exposed bone from within the break. No further analysis was necessary to classify

these types of breaks and these are not listed within the category of postmortem trauma.

The placement of assessed trauma into ante-, peri- and postmortem categories presents a distinct challenge, especially to distinguish peri- from early postmortem damage. Assessments were made using visual inspection and, if necessary, 2x to 5x hand magnifiers. The criteria outlined in Lovell (1997), Walker (1997), Berryman and Symes (1998), and Sauer (1998) were applied to the analysis of cranial trauma presented. Some types of trauma as, for example, in burst sutural fractures on young individuals, were assessed based on the independent deformation of the neurocranial bones. Additionally, it was difficult to assess cranial base ring fractures (it has been proposed that some individuals fell to their death during the sacking of the city) due to the differential preservation of the more fragile bones at the base of the skull.

To determine the nature and extent of perimortem fractures, both the internal (where possible) and external bone tables were visually observed, as was the state of the internal diploe, the spongy bone layer between the inner and outer tables of the cranial vault. Compression and tension bone failure at each impact point were noted along with both concomitant radiating and concentric bone failure. Additionally, the assessment of plastic collagen-rich bone deformation at the point of impact was used to distinguish peri- and postmortem impact trauma. [Figure 10.1](#) shows a perimortem depressed skull fracture on the cranium of a Hasanlu male. Note the radiating fractures emanating from the central depression as well as the plastic deformation of the bone.

Healed trauma (antemortem damage) was noted when there was evidence of woven bone at the point of trauma and, in the case of small fractures of face bones, there was significant bone displacement resulting in asymmetry. In many cases, it appears that these asymmetries were the result of multiple smaller fractures to these delicate bones. [Figure 10.2](#) shows antemortem damage around the eye orbit. The fracture extends into the lower margin inside the eye orbit and is partially healed. This trauma was counted as a single event although, given the varied stage of healing on each bone, was probably the result of multiple small fractures.



Figure 10.1 Perimortem depressed skull fracture on the cranium of a Hasanlu male (superior posterior margin of left parietal). (Photo Credit: Janet Monge.)



Figure 10.2 Antemortem fracture of both the right zygomatic and maxillary bones at the external lower margin of the eye orbit. (Photo Credit: Janet Monge.)

Since the exact location of these fractures could not be determined, the specimens were recorded as a single blow and localized to the bone position where the most damage was sustained. Due to the subtle nature of especially the nasal bone fractures, the criteria of Walker (1997) were applied to the specimens. This was especially evident when trauma affected the small bones near the nasal aperture and on the maxilla. The entire cranial collection of Hasanlu was CT scanned as part of the Penn ORSA (Open Research Scan Archive: <http://plum.museum.upenn.edu/~orsa/Overview.html>) project and CT scans were available to confirm evidence of healing.

Results

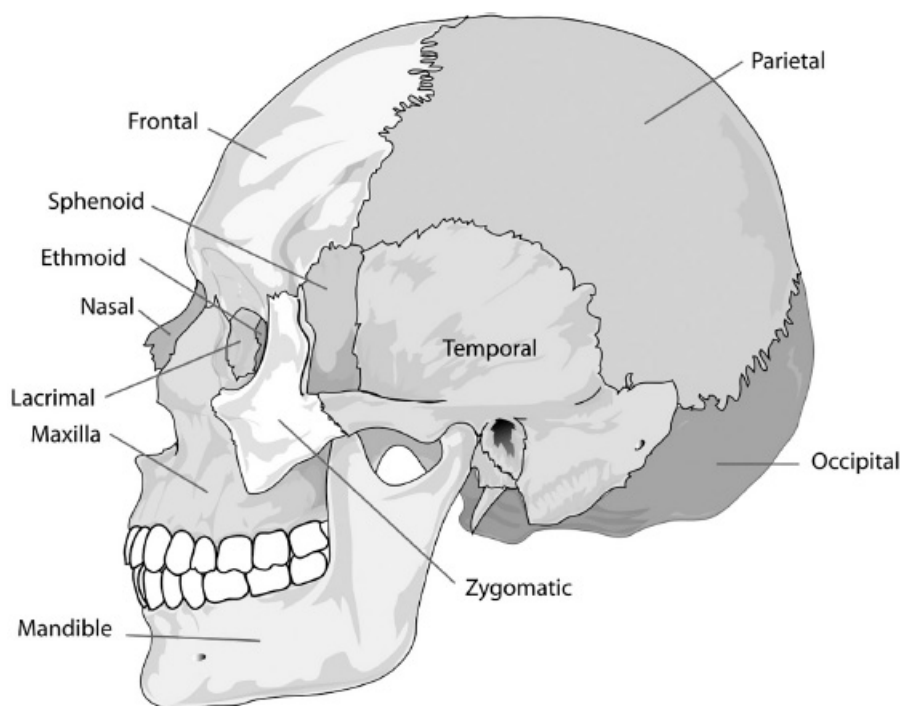
Of the 197 skeletons from Levels IV, IVB and V, 108 were analyzed for ante- and perimortem trauma. Appendix 10.1 gives a complete list of each individual skeleton as well as its origin from either the High (catastrophic) or Low (attritional) Mound. From the original sample of 197, skeletons assessed as fetal, infant, child, and subadult were removed from the analysis because these could not be accurately sexed. Adult individuals were also removed if the specimen could not be accurately assigned to male or female. Additionally, skeletons were removed if represented by only postcranial remains or if less than about one-third of the skull was present. Appendix 10.2 lists each of these skeletal individuals with their Penn Museum number, assessed age and sex, and both the total number of ante- and postmortem fractures present. Table 10.4 shows the distribution of skeletons by sex. Finally, the position and anatomical side of each fracture was assessed and recorded (see Figure 10.3 for a general reference to the bones of the skull).

In this sample of 108 individuals, ante- and perimortem fracture numbers range from zero to a maximum of five on each of the individual cranial remains. (Postmortem fractures are not included in this analysis.) The total number of both ante- and perimortem fractures is high within the sample. Seventy-seven skulls, over two-thirds of the sample, show evidence of traumatic events. Upon the field exposure and analysis of the destruction level at Hasanlu, the excavators estimated that approximately 20 percent of the skeletal individuals showed evidence of perimortem skull fractures. This estimation was accurate based on the analysis of the skeletal sample at the Penn Museum. Although it might be productive and generative to test different and unique hypotheses, numbers of individuals within each age category were too small to be effectively analyzed separately although it is clear, based on trends within the dataset, that older

individuals sustained a cumulative number of traumatic events over the life course. [Table 10.5](#) shows the distribution of ante- and perimortem trauma by sex.

[Table 10.4](#) Distribution of skeletons by sex..

	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent of sample</i>
Male	65	60%
Female	43	40%
Total = 108		



[Figure 10.3](#) Bones of the human skull – lateral view. (Credit: Public domain.)

It seems clear that the trauma pattern in females is distinct from the pattern in males. Men appear to have sustained more traumatic events associated with death and, in general, just a greater number of traumatic events in life. Thirteen males (20 percent) are without trauma. Females, on the other hand, sustain almost exclusively antemortem trauma and consistently survived these non-fatal violent events, as the number of healed trauma seems to indicate. Forty-two

percent (n = 18) of female cranial remains have no evidence of trauma.

The distribution of antemortem trauma in males and females is very interesting. [Table 10.6](#) breaks down the distribution of antemortem fractures by sex.

Face fractures are defined here as affecting the maxilla, mandible, nasals, orbits, and zygomatics. Females sustained a higher percentage of healed fractures on the face including the lower jaw. In addition, the non-face traumatic events are almost exclusively on the orbital and brow area of the frontal bone. On the other hand, males sustained the bulk of fractures (both ante- and perimortem) on the frontal squama and parietals and to a lesser extent on the temporals and occiput. Interestingly and unexpectedly, based on patterns in modern populations where face fractures are primarily distributed on the left side from right-handed blows to the face, there is only a slight tendency (57 percent in females) for antemortem trauma in females to be present on the left side and no pattern at all in males.

[Table 10.5](#) Distribution of ante- and perimortem trauma by sex..

<i>Trauma type</i>	<i>Perimortem</i>	<i>Antemortem</i>	<i>Ante- and pperimortem</i>
Male	8	28	16
Female	1	24	0

[Table 10.6](#) Female/male antemortem fracture patterns

<i>Antemortem trauma</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Right side fractures</i>	<i>Left side fractures</i>	<i>Fractures on face</i>
Male	69 ^a	30	30	24
Female	37 ^b	15	21	26

^a Eight are central on the bone

^b One is central on the bone

Discussion

The recognition of interpersonal violence among peoples in the past is fraught with difficulty. One reason for this is the challenge of separating the effects of interpersonal violence on the skeleton from other forms of skeletal trauma, including those associated with disease

process. Wu *et al.* (2011) describe over 40 fossil specimens representing all time frames within the Pleistocene with craniofacial injuries. Recognizing the origin or etiology of these traumatic events from interpersonal violence has been explored extensively and there is much controversy within the literature. From this set of fossils, only one specimen, from St. cesaire (a Neanderthal dated to 36,000 BP), is considered to have a healed traumatic lesion inflicted as part of interpersonal violence (Zollikofer *et al.* 2002) by a weapon produced for hunting but repurposed as a tool of interpersonal violence. At the site of Krapina in Croatia (dated to 125,000 years BP), there are several fossil specimens with healed cranial trauma. On close examination, it is clear that these are accidental injuries associated with living in caves, where falling debris was common (Mann and Monge 2006). On a theoretical side, Carrier (2011) has gone so far as to argue that the origin of habitual bipedalism within our lineage at 3–4 million years BP was to engage in fighting behaviors, a view point that reinforces the notion that there is a deep biological basis for violent behavior.

The evidence for systematic interpersonal trauma, however, in order to be confirmed, demands a larger skeletal series with an intact interpretable archaeological context. Using various forms of evidence beyond the analysis of skeletal materials to the broader archaeological context, violence as exposed within archaeological contexts with or without skeletal materials, is explored in the edited volume by Ralph (2013a). Patterned interpersonal violence among women has been documented in a subset of skeletal series (Shermis 1984; Wilkinson and Van Wagenen 1993; Robb 1997; Walker 1997; Baustian *et al.* 2012; De la Cova 2012; Schug *et al.* 2012; Spencer 2012). Cohen *et al.* (2014) have shown that in over 6,000 years of prehistory and history in the Southern Levant, violence, as recognized by the examination of close to 800 skulls from many archaeological sites, had become a consistent, undeniable part of life in that region of the world. Often, interpersonal violence is determined to run concurrent with the time frame of social upheaval or with times of ecological stress.

In an excellent review of the sociologic and ethnographic literature, Redfern (2013) discusses the different ways to understand violence against women globally. She argues that much of our notion of female violence is based on Western standards, and these do not necessarily apply to women in other contexts including within a prehistoric context. It is indeed the case that the majority of the data used to understand violence against women comes from the medical, clinical, or forensic/medical anthropological literature and presents a strong culture-bound biomedical bias (Garcia-Morano *et al.* 2005; Haj-Yahia

2003; Shepherd *et al.* 1988). Redfern challenges our assumptions that violence against women is always perpetrated by male counterparts and the implicit assumption that women are the victims of violence and not the perpetrators. Thus, an interpretation of what the patterns of violence toward the female body at Hasanlu mean, as reflected in the skeleton, is difficult if not impossible.

Using more effective diagnostic tools for the assessment of ante- and perimortem trauma, along with narrowing the focus of time frame and geography in the sampling of the Hasanlu skeletons, as well as a broader consensus on the aging and sexing of the skeletal materials, a similar pattern emerges from the analysis to that presented by Monge and McCarthy (2011).

That is, it appears that the Hasanlu peoples experienced a great deal of violence and that this violence applied over the life course. There appear to be two distinct types of violence patterned within the cranial skeleton: the traumatic violence of warfare and the less lethal violence in interpersonal or perhaps intimate contexts.

The vast majority of skull fractures in males occur on neurocranial bones. Of this subset of fractures, the bulk appear on the frontal and parietal bones. This pattern, thought to represent a pattern of violence typical in warfare, was recorded by others including Walker (1989) on an archaeological collection from Southern California, and Strouhal and Jungwirth (1980) and Alvrus (1999) both among ancient Nubians. Frayer (1997), using materials from the Ofnet site in Bavaria, shows a somewhat different pattern of trauma, including a greater frequency of both occipital and temporal bone wounds. A review of the literature on interpersonal violence in the past indicates that a great deal of variation exists in the position, degree of expression, and patterns of cranial vault wounds associated with warfare (Martin and Frayer 1997; for alternative explanations, see Ferguson 1997).

Both males and females experienced a great deal of trauma to the slender fragile bones of the face. The expression of this type of trauma is much greater in the skeletons of females versus males. In addition, this form of trauma is evident as antemortem damage with substantial healing. While it is possible that face fractures in males and females are the result of accidental trauma (falls or occupational exposure to injury), the higher frequency in females is not explained well using this scenario unless females are routinely exposed by occupation or other aspects of life-style to greater levels of these forms of trauma. The alternative explanation, better fitting the data, is that a sub-portion of face fractures are the result of accidental violence in both

males and females, while the remaining and significant portion in females, are associated with interpersonal violence directed specifically against females (Monge and McCarthy 2011). It is unclear if this violence is the result of violence by men against their spouses or women in general, or if the violence is expressed among women exclusively.

It also appears to be the case that this type of trauma, witnessed within the skeletons of the Hasanlu females, conforms to the trauma patterns of domestic violence reported in the clinical literature, where the primary areas of concentration of trauma are on the face, neck, and upper torso (Zachariades *et al.* 1990; Perciaccante *et al.* 1999). Since the bulk of this type of violence will result in soft tissue damage with a small subset resulting in bone failure, it is likely that the trauma seen in the skeletons of the Hasanlu females grossly underrepresents the amount of violence to which they were exposed. Finally, it is possible that since females have a tendency to have smaller, slighter bones than their male counterparts that break more easily, the Hasanlu males might actually have been exposed to an identical amount of trauma to the face without affecting the underlying skeletal frame. It would appear that women in this region of the Near East (Iranian plateau) led lives subject to abuse or injury, in addition to the risk of violent death at the hands of enemies (fulfilled at Hasanlu c.800 BCE).

Appendix 10.1 Origin of each skeleton from either the High (catastrophic) or Low (attritional) Mound

<i>Id number</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Sex</i>
38-4-102	IV	Low Mound	MA	F
38-4-103	IV	Low Mound	YA	F
38-4-105	V?	Low Mound	MA	F
38-4-106	V	Low Mound	YA	F
38-4-107	IV	Low Mound	VGA	M
38-4-108	IV	Low Mound	YA	M
38-4-109	V	Low Mound	CA	M
38-4-112	IV	Low Mound	CA	M
38-4-95	II/IV	Low Mound	MA	F
38-4-99	IV	Low Mound	YA	M
39-4-103	V?	Low Mound	MA	F
39-4-104	V	Low Mound	MA	F
39-4-105	IVB	High Mound	YA	M
39-4-106	IVB	High Mound	YA	M
39-4-107	IVB	High Mound	MA	F
39-4-108	II or later	High Mound	MA	F
39-4-109	II or later	High Mound	CA	M
60-2C-221	IV	Low Mound	MA	F
60-2C-222	IV	Low Mound	MA	F
60-2C-223	V	Low Mound	MA	M
60-2C-224	IV	Low Mound	MA	F
60-2C-225	IV	Low Mound	YA	F
60-2C-227	V?	Low Mound	CA	F
60-2C-228	V	Low Mound	VGA	F
60-2C-231	II or later	High Mound	SA	M
60-2C-231	IVB	High Mound	MA	F
60-2C-232	IVB	High Mound	CA	M
60-2C-233	IV	Low Mound	MA	M
60-2C-236	V	Low Mound	VGA	M
61-5-340	IVB	High Mound	YA	M
61-5-341	IVB	High Mound	YA	M
61-5-345	IVB	High Mound	MA	F
61-5-346	IVB	High Mound	YA	M
61-5-347	IVB	High Mound	MA	F
61-5-349	II or later	High Mound	CA	M
63-5-301	IVB	High Mound	CA	M
63-5-302	IVD	High Mound	YA	F
63-5-303	IVB	High Mound	YA	M
63-5-305	IVB	High Mound	YA	F
63-5-306	Post IIE	High Mound	CA	F
63-5-307	IVB	High Mound	MA	M
63-5-308	IVB	High Mound	MA	M
63-5-309	IVB	High Mound	CA	M
63-5-310	IVB	High Mound	MA	F
63-5-311	IVD	High Mound	YA	M
63-5-313	IVB	High Mound	YA	M
63-5-314	IVB	High Mound	MA	M
63-5-323	IVB	High Mound	MA	M

65-31-732	IV	Low Mound	MA	F
65-31-732	IV	Low Mound	MA	F
65-31-734	IV	Low Mound	MA	M
65-31-742	IV	Low Mound	VQA	F
65-31-744	IV	Low Mound	MA	M
65-31-745	IV?	Low Mound	YA	M
65-31-746	III B or later	High Mound	MA	F
65-31-747	IV	Low Mound	YA	M
65-31-749	IV	Low Mound	MA	M
65-31-751	IV	Low Mound	CA	M
65-31-755	IV?	Low Mound	YA	M
65-31-753	IV	Low Mound	CA	M
65-31-757	IV	Low Mound	CA	M
65-31-756	IV	Low Mound	MA	M
65-31-758	IV	Low Mound	YA	F
65-31-765	IV B	High Mound	MA	M
65-31-772	IV B	High Mound	MA	M
65-31-772	IV	Low Mound	CA	M
65-31-774	IV	Low Mound	MA	F
65-31-775	V	Low Mound	YA	F
65-31-776	IV	Low Mound	CA	M
65-31-777	IV B	High Mound	MA	M
65-31-785	post IV D	High Mound	MA	F
65-31-788	V	Low Mound	MA	M
65-31-785	V	Low Mound	MA	M
65-31-790	IV	Low Mound	MA	F
65-31-791	IV	Low Mound	CA	F
65-31-792	IV B	High Mound	CA	M
65-31-795	IV	Low Mound	MA	F
65-31-796	IV	Low Mound	MA	F
65-31-800	III B or later	High Mound	MA	M
65-31-806	IV	Low Mound	YA	F
71-23-500	IV B	High Mound	YA	F
71-23-504	IV B	High Mound	YA	M
71-23-505	IV B	High Mound	CA	M
71-23-511	IV B	High Mound	YA	F
71-23-511	IV D	High Mound	YA	M
71-23-512	IV B	High Mound	MA	M
71-23-515	IV B	High Mound	MA	M
71-23-516	IV B	High Mound	MA	F
71-23-515	III A	High Mound	YA	M
71-23-522	IV B	High Mound	YA	F
71-23-526	IV B	High Mound	MA	F
71-23-545	IV B	High Mound	YA	M
73-5-503	IV B	High Mound	MA	M
73-5-799	IV B	High Mound	YA	M
73-5-800	IV B	High Mound	MA	M

<i>Id number</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Sex</i>
75-29-500	IV B	High Mound	YA	F
75-29-501	IV B	High Mound	YA	M
75-29-504	IV B	High Mound	OA	M
75-29-510	IV B	High Mound	YA	M
75-29-514	IV B	High Mound	SA	F
75-29-527	IV B	High Mound	MA	F
75-29-534	IV B	High Mound	OA	M
75-29-536	IV B	High Mound	YA	M
75-29-540	IV B	High Mound	SA	M
75-29-542	IV B	High Mound	MA	M
75-29-543	IV B	High Mound	MA	M
75-29-553	IV B	High Mound	MA	M
75-29-554	IV B	High Mound	MA	M

Appendix 10.2 Skeletal individuals with Penn Museum number, assessed age and sex, and number of ante- and postmortem fractures present

<i>Id number</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>Total fractures</i>	<i>F1</i>	<i>F2</i>	<i>F3</i>	<i>F4</i>	<i>F5</i>
58-4-102	IV	Low Mound	MA	F	1	LNA				
58-4-103	IV	Low Mound	YA	F	1	LFA				
58-4-105	V?	Low Mound	MA	F	3	LXA	LZA	LQA		
58-4-106	V	Low Mound	YA	F	1	RXA				
58-4-107	IV	Low Mound	VOA	M	2	LNP	RPA			
58-4-108	IV	Low Mound	YA	M	0					
58-4-109	V	Low Mound	OA	M	0					
58-4-112	IV	Low Mound	OA	M	0					
58-4-95	III/IV	Low Mound	MA	F	0					
58-4-99	IV	Low Mound	YA	M	5	RFA	CPP	LPP	RMA	COP
59-4-103	V?	Low Mound	MA	F	0					
59-4-104	V	Low Mound	MA	F	0					
59-4-105	IV B	High Mound	YA	M	1	RXA				
59-4-106	IV B	High Mound	YA	M	3	RZA	RFA	LPP		
59-4-107	IV B	High Mound	MA	F	1	LNP				
59-4-108	II or later	High Mound	MA	F	1	LQA				
59-4-109	II or later	High Mound	OA	M	2	LFA	LNA			
60-20-221	IV	Low Mound	MA	F	1	RMA				
60-20-222	IV	Low Mound	MA	F	0					
60-20-223	V	Low Mound	MA	M	2	LNP	CPA			
60-20-224	IV	Low Mound	MA	F	0					
60-20-225	IV	Low Mound	YA	F	0					
60-20-227	V?	Low Mound	OA	F	2	LNA	RPA			
60-20-228	V	Low Mound	VOA	F	0					

60-2C-230	I or later	High Mound	SA	M	2	RPT	COP	
60-2C-231	I7B	High Mound	MA	F	1	LPA		
60-2C-232	I7B	High Mound	OA	M	0	CFA	RPA	
60-2C-233	I7	Low Mound	MA	M	2	CFA	IMA	
60-2L-236	V	Low Mound	VOA	M	3	LFP	LNP	LXA
61-5-340	I7B	High Mound	YA	M	0			
61-5-341	I7B	High Mound	YA	M	2	CFA	RNP	
61-5-345	I7B	High Mound	MA	F	1	LMA		
61-5-346	I7B	High Mound	YA	M	1	COA		
61-5-347	I7D	High Mound	MA	F	1	RNA		
61-5-349	I or later	High Mound	OA	M	3	RPA	LPA	LNA
63-5-301	I7R	High Mound	OA	M	1	LFA		
63-5-302	I7R	High Mound	YA	F	0			
63-5-303	I7B	High Mound	YA	M	3	LFP	LFA	RPP
63-5-305	I7B	High Mound	YA	F	2	CFA	RZA	
63-5-306	Post	High Mound	OA	F	2	LFA	RZA	
	I7B							
63-5-307	I7D	High Mound	MA	M	2	LNA	RPA	
63-5-308	I7D	High Mound	MA	M	3	RPA	LPT	RNA
63-5-309	I7B	High Mound	OA	M	1	RMA		
63-5-310	I7B	High Mound	MA	F	0			
63-5-311	I7R	High Mound	YA	M	4	LPP	RFA	LPA COP
63-5-313	I7B	High Mound	YA	M	2	LPP	RNP	
63-5-314	I7B	High Mound	MA	M	3	LNA	LTA	LFA
63-5-323	I7B	High Mound	MA	M	0			
65-31-732	I7	Low Mound	MA	F	0			
65-31-733	I7	Low Mound	MA	F	1	LMA		
65-31-734	I7	Low Mound	MA	M	1	RNA		
65-31-743	I7	Low Mound	VOA	F	1	LNA		
65-31-744	I7	Low Mound	MA	M	2	CFA	RFA	
65-31-745	I7?	Low Mound	YA	M	2	ROA	LPF	
65-31-746	I7 or later	High Mound	MA	F	0			
65-31-747	I7	Low Mound	YA	M	0			
65-31-749	I7	Low Mound	MA	M	0			
65-31-751	I7	Low Mound	OA	M	1	RFA		
65-31-752	I7?	Low Mound	YA	M	1	RNA		
65-31-753	I7	Low Mound	OA	M	3	RNP	LPA	LFA
65-31-754	I7	Low Mound	OA	M	2	LFA	LZA	
65-31-756	I7	Low Mound	MA	M	0			
65-31-768	I7	Low Mound	YA	F	3	LZA	LPA	RMA
65-31-769	I7R	High Mound	MA	M	1	RVA		
65-31-772	I7B	High Mound	MA	M	0			
65-31-773	I7	Low Mound	OA	M	4	LFA	LFA	LPA RNA
65-31-774	I7	Low Mound	MA	F	1	RZA		
65-31-775	V	Low Mound	YA	F	2	LNA	LZA	
65-31-776	I7	Low Mound	OA	M	1	LNA		
65-31-777	I7D	High Mound	MA	M	3	RNA	RPA	LPA

<i>Id number</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Sex</i>	<i>Total fractures</i>	<i>F1</i>	<i>F2</i>	<i>F3</i>	<i>F4</i>	<i>F5</i>
65-31-785	post IVB	High Mound	MA	F	0					
65-31-788	V	Low Mound	MA	M	1	LPA				
65-31-789	V	Low Mound	MA	M	1	RNA				
65-31-790	IV	Low Mound	MA	F	1	LQA				
65-31-791	IV	Low Mound	OA	F	3	RFA	RPA	LNA		
65-31-793	IVB	High Mound	OA	M	1	LPA				
65-31-795	IV	Low Mound	MA	F	2	RXA	RPA			
65 31 796	IV	Low Mound	MA	F	0					
65-31-800	IIIB or later	High Mound	MA	M	1	CFA				
65-31-806	IV	Low Mound	YA	F	0					
71-23-500	IVB	High Mound	YA	F	0					
71-23-504	IVD	High Mound	YA	M	2	RPT	RFT			
71-23-505	IVB	High Mound	OA	M	1	RMP				
71-23-510	IVB	High Mound	YA	F	0					
71-23-511	IVB	High Mound	YA	M	2	LFP	LPP			
71-23-513	IVB	High Mound	MA	M	1	LTA				
71-23-515	IVD	High Mound	MA	M	2	LFA	RFA			
71-23-516	IVB	High Mound	MA	F	0					
71-23-519	IIIA	High Mound	YA	M	0					
71-23-522	IVB	High Mound	YA	F	1	LNA				
71-23-526	IVB	High Mound	MA	F	2	LFA	RNA			
71-23-545	IVB	High Mound	YA	M	0					
73-5-503	IVB	High Mound	MA	M	1	LFA				
73-5-799	IVB	High Mound	YA	M	1	RTA				
73-5-800	IVB	High Mound	MA	M	3	RPP	COP	RMA		
75-29-500	IVB	High Mound	YA	F	2	RMA	ROA			
75-29-501	IVB	High Mound	YA	M	3	LPP	RPP	RFA		
75-29-504	IVB	High Mound	OA	M	0					
75-29-510	IVB	High Mound	YA	M	2	COP	LTP			
75-29-514	IVB	High Mound	SA	F	1	LPA				
75-29-527	IVB	High Mound	MA	F	0					
75-29-534	IVB	High Mound	OA	M	4	ROP	LPA	RXA	LNA	
75-29-536	IVB	High Mound	YA	M	2	RMP	LFP			
75-29-540	IVB	High Mound	SA	M	3	RMP	LFA	LPP		
75-29-542	IVB	High Mound	MA	M	5	CFP	CFP	RNP	RPP	
75-29-543	IVB	High Mound	MA	M	3	LPP	LNA	RFA		
75-29-553	IVB	High Mound	MA	M	2	CFA	RNA			
75-29-554	IVB	High Mound	MA	M	0					

KEY TO THE 3-LETTER FRACTURE CODE:

FIRST LETTER – Side: L = Left; R = Right; C = central

SECOND LETTER – Bone: F = Frontal; P = Parietal; O = Occipital; N = Nasal; X = Maxilla; M = Mandible; T = Temporal; Z = Zygomatic; Q = Orbital

THIRD LETTER – Time: A = Antemortem; P = Perimortem

References

- Acsádi, G. and Nemeskéri, J. (1970) *History of Human Life Span and Mortality*. Budapest, Hungary: Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Alvrus, A. (1999) Fracture patterns among the Nubians of Semna South, Sudanese Nubia. *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 9: 417–429.
- Bass, W. M. (1995) *Human Osteology: A Laboratory and Field Manual*. Columbia, MO: Missouri Archaeological Society.
- Baustian, K. M., Harrod, R. P., Osterholtz, A. J. and Martin, D. L. (2012) Battered and abused: Analysis of trauma at Grasshopper Pueblo (AD 1275–1400). *International Journal of Paleopathology* 2: 102–111.
- Berryman, H. E. and Symes, S. A. (1998) Recognizing gunshot and blunt cranial trauma through fracture interpretation. In K. J. Reichs and W. M. Bass (eds) *Forensic Osteology: Advances in the Identification of Human Remains*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, pp.333–352.
- Brooks, S. T. and Suchey, J. M. (1990) Skeletal age determination based on the os pubis: A comparison of the Acsádi-Nemeskéri and Suchey-Brooks methods. *Human Evolution* 5: 227–238.
- Brothwell, D. R. (1989) The relationship of tooth wear to aging. In M. Y. Iscan (ed.) *Age Markers in the Human Skeleton*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, pp.303–318.
- Buckberry, J. L. and Chamberlain, A. T. (2002) Age estimation from the auricular surface of the ilium: A revised method. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 119: 231–239.
- Buikstra, J. E. and Ubelaker, D. H. (1994) *Standards for Data Collection from Human Skeletal Remains*. Trans. D. Aftandilian. Fayetteville, AR: Arkansas Archeological Survey.
- Carrier, D. R. (2011) The advantage of standing up to fight and the evolution of habitual bipedalism in Hominins. *PLoS One*. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0019630.
- Cohen, H., Sarie, I., Medlej, B., Bocquentin, F., Toledano, T., Hershkovitz, I. and Slon, V. (2014) Trauma to the skull: A historical perspective from the Southern Levant (4300 Bce–1917 ce). *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 24: 722–736.
- De la Cova, C. (2012) Patterns of trauma and violence in 19th-century-born African American and Euro-American females. *International Journal of Paleopathology* 2: 61–68.
- Dyson, Jr. R. H. (1989) Rediscovering Hasanlu. *Expedition* 31: 3–11.
- Dyson, Jr. R. H. (1997) Hasanlu. In E. Myers (ed.) *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology of the Near East*, volume 2. Oxford, UK:

- Oxford University Press, pp.478–481.
- Dyson, Jr. R. H. and Muscarella, O. W. (1989) Constructing the chronology and historical implications of Hasanlu IV. *Iran* 27: 1–27.
- Dyson, Jr. R. H. and Voigt, M. M. (eds) (1989) *East of Assyria: The highland settlement of Hasanlu. Expedition* 31(2/3).
- Fazekas, I. G. and Kosa, F. (1978) *Forensic Fetal Osteology*. Budapest, Hungary: Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Ferguson, R. B. (1997) Violence and war in prehistory. In D. L. Martin and D. W. Frayer (eds) *Troubled Times: Violence and Warfare in the Past*. Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, pp.321–355.
- Frayer, D. W. (1997) Ofnet: Evidence for a Mesolithic massacre. In D. L. Martin and D. W. Frayer (eds) *Troubled Times: Violence and Warfare in the Past*. Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, pp.181–216.
- Galloway, A. (1998) The biomechanics of fracture production. In A. Galloway (ed.) *Broken Bones: Anthropological Analysis of Blunt Force Trauma*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, pp.35–62.
- Garcia-Moreno, C., Heise, L., Jansen, H. A. F. M., Ellsberg, M. and Watts, C. (2005) Violence against women. *Science* 310: 1282–1283.
- Haj-Yahia, M. H. (2003) Beliefs about wife beating among Arab men from Israel: The influence of their patriarchal ideology. *Journal of Family Violence* 18: 193–206.
- Kaufman, M. H., Whitaker, D. and McTavish, J. (1997) Differential diagnosis of holes in the calvarium: Application of modern clinical data to palaeopathology. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 24: 193–218.
- Kemkes-Grottenthaler, A. (1996) Critical evaluation of osteomorphognostic methods to estimate adult age at death: A test of the complex method. *Homo* 46: 280–292.
- Lovejoy, C. O. (1985) Dental wear in the Libben population: Its functional pattern and role in the determination of adult skeletal age at death. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 68: 47–56.
- Lovejoy, C. O., Meindl, R. S., Mensforth, R. P. and Barton, T. J. (1985) Multifactorial determination of skeletal age at death: A method and blind tests of its accuracy. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 68: 1–14.
- Lovell, N. C. (1997) Trauma analysis in paleopathology. *Yearbook of Physical Anthropology* 40: 139–170.
- Mann, A. and Monge, J. M. (2006) A Neandertal parietal fragment from Krapina (Croatia) with a serious cranial trauma. *Periodic Biologorum* 108: 495–502.
- Martin, D. L. and Frayer, D. W. (eds) (1997) *Troubled Times: Violence and Warfare in the Past*. Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach.

- Martin, D. L. and Harrod, R. P. (2012) Body parts and parts of bodies: Traces of violence in past cultures. *International Journal of Paleopathology* 2: 49–52.
- Mays, S. (1998) *The Archaeology of Human Bones*. New York: Routledge.
- Mays, S. (2000) Age-dependent cortical bone loss in women from 18th and early 19th century London. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 112: 349–361.
- Mays, S., De la Rua, C. and Molleson, T. (1995) Molar crown height as a means of evaluating existing dental wear scales for estimating age at death in human skeletal remains. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 22: 659–670.
- Meindl, R. S. and Lovejoy, C. O. (1985) Ectocranial suture closure: A revised method for the determination of skeletal age at death based on the lateral-anterior sutures. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 68: 57–66.
- Meindl, R. S., Lovejoy, C. O., Mensforth, R. P. and Don Carlos, L. (1985) Accuracy and direction of error in the sexing of the skeleton: Implications for paleodemography. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 68: 79–85.
- Miles, A. E. W. (1962) Assessment of the ages of a population of Anglo-Saxons from their dentitions. *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine* 55: 881–886.
- Miles, A. E. W. (1963) The dentition in the assessment of individual age in skeletal material. In D. R. Brothwell (ed.) *Dental Anthropology*. New York: Pergamon Press, pp.191–209.
- Miles, A. E. W. (2001) The Miles method of assessing age from tooth wear revisited. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 28: 973–982.
- Molleson, T. and Cohen, P. (1990) The progression of dental attrition stages used for age assessment. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 17: 363–371.
- Monge, J. M. and McCarthy, C. (2011) Interpersonal violence against woman at the site of Hasanlu, Iran. In R. Dyson (ed.) *Hasanlu*, Volume 4. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Museum Press, pp.184–193.
- Muscarella, O. W. (1989) Warfare at Hasanlu in the late 9th century B.C. *Expedition* 31: 24–36.
- Perciaccante, V. J., Ochs, H. A. and Dodson, T. B. (1999) Head, neck, and facial injuries as markers of domestic violence in women. *Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery* 57: 760–762.
- Phenice, T. W. (1969) A newly developed visual method of sexing the os pubis. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 30: 297–301.

- Ralph, S. (ed.) (2013a) *The Archaeology of Violence: Interdisciplinary Approaches*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Ralph, S. (2013b) Introduction: An interdisciplinary approach to the study of violence. In S. Ralph (ed.) *The Archaeology of Violence: Interdisciplinary Approaches*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, pp.1–13.
- Redfern, R. C. (2013) Violence as an aspect of the Durotriges female life course. In S. Ralph (ed.) *The Archaeology of Violence: Interdisciplinary Approaches*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, pp.63–97.
- Robb, J. (1997) Violence and gender in early Italy. In D. L. Martin and D. W. Frayer (eds) *Troubled Times: Violence and Warfare in the Past*. Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, pp.111–144.
- Rogers, J. and Waldron, T. (1995) *A Field Guide to Joint Disease in Archaeology*. New York: Wiley.
- Rogers, J., Waldron, T., Dieppe, P. and Watt, I. (1987) Arthropathies in palaeopathology: The basis of classification according to most probable cause. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 14: 179–193.
- Sauer, N. J. (1998) The timing of injuries and manner of death: Distinguishing among antemortem, perimortem and postmortem trauma. In K. J. Reichs and W. M. Bass (eds) *Forensic Osteology: Advances in the Identification of Human Remains*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, pp.321–332.
- Scheuer, J. L., Musgrave, J. H. and Evans, S. P. (1980) The estimation of late fetal and perinatal age from limb bone length by linear and logarithmic regression. *Annals of Human Biology* 7: 257–265.
- Scheuer, L. and Black, S. M. (2004) *The Juvenile Skeleton*. New York: Academic Press.
- Schug, G. R., Gray, K., Mushrif-Tripathy, V. and Sankhyan, A. R. (2012) A peaceful realm? Trauma and social differentiation at Harappa. *International Journal of Paleopathology* 2: 136–147.
- Selinsky, P. (2009a) Death a necessary end: Perspectives on paleodemography and aging from Hasanlu Iran. Dissertation in Anthropology. University of Pennsylvania, PA.
- Selinsky, P. (2009b) Dental aging using multiple tooth wear indicators in conjunction with antemortem tooth loss. *American Association of Physical Anthropologists, 78th Annual Meeting, March 31 to April 4*. Chicago, IL.
- Sellier, P., Tillier, A-M. and Bruzek, J. (1997) The estimation of the age at death of perinatal and postnatal skeletons: Methodological reassessment and reliability. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 24S: 208.

- Shepherd, J. P., Gayford, J. J., Leslie, I. J. and Scully, C. (1988) Female victims of assault: A study of hospital attenders. *Journal of Cranio Maxillo Facial Surgery* 16: 233–237.
- Shermis, S. (1984) Domestic violence in two skeletal populations. *Ossa* 11: 143–152.
- Simmons, T. (1998) Home alone: Distinguishing blunt force trauma from possible taphonomic processes. In A. Galloway (ed.) *Broken Bones: Anthropological Analysis of Blunt Force Trauma*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, pp.301–303.
- Smith, B. H. and Garn, S. M. (1987) Polymorphisms in eruption sequence of permanent teeth in American children. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 74: 289–303.
- Spencer, S. D. (2012) Detecting violence in the archaeological record: Clarifying the timing of trauma and manner of death in cases of cranial blunt force trauma among pre-Columbian Amerindians of West-central Illinois. *International Journal of Paleopathology* 2: 112–122.
- Stewart, T. D. (1958) The rate of development of vertebral osteoarthritis in American whites and its significance in skeletal age identification. *The Leech* 28: 144–151.
- Strouhal, E. and Jungwirth, J. (1980) Paleopathology of the Late Roman–Early Byzantine cemeteries at Sayala, Egyptian Nubia. *Journal of Human Evolution* 9: 61–70.
- Ubelaker, D. H. (1999) *Human Skeletal Remains*. Washington, DC: Taraxacum.
- Ubelaker, D. H. (2000) Methodological considerations in the forensic applications of human skeletal biology. In M. A. Katzenberg and S. R. Saunders (eds) *Biological Anthropology of the Human Skeleton*. New York: Wiley-Liss, pp.41–68.
- Walker, P. L. (1989) Cranial injuries as evidence of violence in prehistoric Southern California. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 80: 313–323.
- Walker, P. L. (1997) Wife beating, boxing, and broken noses: Skeletal evidence for the cultural patterning of violence. In D. L. Martin and D. W. Frayer (eds) *Troubled Times: Violence and Warfare in the Past*. Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, pp.145–179.
- Walker, P. L. (2001) A bioarchaeological perspective on the history of violence. *Annual Reviews of Anthropology* 30: 573–596.
- Walker, P. L. and Cook, D. C. (1998) Brief communication: Gender and sex: Vive la difference. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 106: 255–259.
- Walker, P. L., Dean, G. and Perry Shapiro, P. (1991) Estimating age

- from tooth wear in archaeological populations. In *Advances in Dental Anthropology*. New York: Wiley-Liss, pp.169–178.
- Walrath, D. E., Turner, P. and Bruzek, J. (2004) Reliability test of the visual assessment of cranial traits for sex determination. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 125: 132–137.
- WEA (1980) Recommendations for age and sex diagnosis of skeletons. *Journal of Human Evolution* 9: 517–549.
- Wilkinson, R. and Van Wagenen, K. (1993) Cranial injuries as evidence of violence in perhistoric southern California. *Midcontinental Journal of Archaeology* 18: 190–216.
- Wu, X-J., Schepartz, L. A., Liu, W. and Trinkaus, E. (2011) Antemortem trauma and survival in the late Middle Pleistocene human cranium from Maba, South China. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 108(49): 19558–19562.
- Zachariades, N., Koumoura, F. and Konsolaki-Agouridaki, E. (1990) Facial trauma in women resulting from violence by men. *Journal of Oral Maxillofacial Surgery* 48: 1250–1253.
- Zollikofer, C. P. E., Ponce de Leon, M. S., Vandermeersch, B. and Leveque, F. (2002) Evidence for interpersonal violence in the St. cesaire Neanderthal. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 99(9): 6444–6448.

NO REASON TO HIDE

Women in the Neo-Elamite and Persian Periods

Maria Brosius

Introduction

Prior to the Persian settlement on the Iranian plateau in the early centuries of the first millennium BCE the region had been inhabited by the Elamites, an ancient people whose first historical records date back to the fourth millennium. The Elamites, who called themselves Haltamti, were ruled by kings whose core power extended from Khuzestan to Persis. After 1500 BCE the royal title “King of Anshan and Susa” reflected the Elamite claim to two royal capitals on either side of the Zagros Mountains, the city of Anshan in Persis, and Susa in Khuzestan. The Elamites possessed a distinctive language and cuneiform script of their own; their pantheon, which included the goddess Kiririša and the gods Napiriša and Inšušinak, was distinct from that of Mesopotamia. Elam’s lifelong political enemy was Assyria, having repeatedly come under her control over the centuries. When the Assyrian king, Aššurbanipal, finally destroyed the Elamite capital Susa in 646 BCE, petty kingdoms arose in the region. By this time, Persian tribes had settled alongside the indigenous Elamite population, having migrated into the region at some time after 1000 BCE. The collapse of the Assyrian empire, which began with the death of Aššurbanipal in 627 BCE, aided the Persians’ gradual rise to power. Under their king, Cyrus II (c.559–530 BCE), the conquests of the kingdoms of Media, Lydia, and Babylonia led to the foundation of the first Persian empire, which came to be known as the Achaemenid empire.

Due to their geographical as well as their political and cultural proximity, a discussion of women in Persia will be enhanced by the inclusion of that of Elamite women. For each, the sources pose

markedly different problems: the paucity of Elamite written and archaeological evidence allows but a brief glimpse into the upper stratum of women in the Elamite period. In contrast, classical Greek and Roman sources provide ample material about Persian royal women, though they are predominantly driven by their aim to highlight the negative influence Persian women exercised over the king as well as the empire, beginning with the “all-powerful” queen Atossa (Herodotus. 7.3.4: Gr. *pan kratos*), and ending with queen Parysatis on whom Darius II depended to make political decisions (Ctesias *FGrH* 688 F15 (48–49)). Archaeological evidence, mostly available from the empire’s satrapies, permits comments on the presentation of Persian women and through these visual images on some of their activities. The most valuable primary source, however, are texts from the Persepolis archive.¹ They not only provide significant—and unbiased—insights into the activities of royal and high-ranking women, but also form a unique source in the discussion on female workers. These are mentioned in the ration texts from the archive, accounting for the receipts of foodstuffs for male and female workers in the province of Persis during the reign of Darius I. Ration scales, differentiating in the levels of specialized labor, account for different amounts of foodstuffs received by workers and allow a comparison to ration amounts received by male and female workers. A few texts even provide evidence as to the kinds of work women and men carried out. The fact that a single female worker is found consistently at the top of these ration payments as the recipient of the highest ration amount,² is perhaps one of the most surprising discoveries the Persepolis archive has yielded.

Women in the Neo-Elamite Period (c.1000–539 BCE)

Commencing the discussion slightly before the Neo-Elamite period, one of the best known royal women of the Middle Elamite II period (c.1400–1200 BCE) was Queen Napir-Asu, the wife of the Elamite king Untaš-Napiriša (1340–1300 BCE). She is depicted on a stele found in Susa (now in the Louvre Museum, Sb 12), but which originally had been erected at Chogha Zanbil, a city c.30 km southwest of Susa, founded by her husband. The stele pictures a religious and mythological scene in four tiers. The two top tiers depict the king before a deity seated on a serpent throne, receiving the ring of power, but it is the second tier which is of interest to us. It shows the king accompanied by Napir-Asu who is identified by an inscription. Both are facing another female, the priestess U-tik. Both women hold their hands in a hand-over-wrist gesture; the king’s hands are half-raised

with upturned palms.³ This hand-over-wrist gesture can equally be observed on a life-size statue of Napir-Asu. The statue, recovered in Susa and now in the Louvre Museum (*Sb* 2731), was cast in bronze and it undoubtedly counts among the most spectacular objects from this site. The head and left arm of the figure are missing, but the exceptional quality and perfection of this work of art still shine through. The queen is depicted in a full-length, short-sleeved, patterned dress which ends in a long fringe. An inscription on the lower part of the skirt reads:

I (am), Napir-Asu, wife of Untaš-Napiriša. He who would seize my statue, who would smash it, who would destroy its inscription, who would erase my name, may he be smitten by the curse of Napiriša, of Kiririša, and of Inšušinak, that his name shall become extinct, that his offspring be barren, that the forces of Beltiya, the great goddess, shall sweep down on him. This is Napir-Asu's offering.⁴

As the statue was found in a temple, F. Tallon argued that it was to represent the queen in perpetual prayer.⁵ While thus Napir-Asu's statue ought to be placed in a religious context, we nevertheless can acknowledge that statues of the queen, and by extension, statues of other female members of the royal household, were crafted and publicly displayed.

Margaret Cool Root first recognized the similarities between the gesture found in this statue as well as in other examples of the Elamite and Achaemenid periods, making the case for a continued artistic tradition linking Elamite and Achaemenid culture.⁶ As Root pointed out, the hand-over-wrist gesture can be observed on two rock reliefs at Šekaft-e Salman. The reliefs, possibly dated to the Middle Elamite period, depict an Elamite royal family; they were (re-)claimed by the late Elamite ruler of Ayapir (modern Izeh), called Hanni, who added inscriptions to the figures. The importance of these reliefs not only lies in the presentation of the royal family in an act of religious worship, but especially in the fact that the children depicted here are daughters. One relief represents Hanni and his wife Huhun, with one daughter standing between them,⁷ and the other two daughters and an additional adult.⁸ The daughters are named as Ammaten and Hah-[x].⁹ Their depiction probably reflects the exalted status royal daughters held in the selection of the (male) heir to the throne. Elamite kings practiced endogamy which meant that male offspring born from the union between the king and his sister, or even between the king and his own daughter had a higher claim to the throne than a son born from an exogamic union between the king and a woman of the Elamite aristocracy.¹⁰

This may explain the special status held by the Elamite princess, Bar-Uli, daughter of king Šilhak-Inšušinak of Susa (c.1150–1120 BCE) who is depicted alongside her father on an engraved gemstone. The image shows the king seated on a throne handing the very object to his young daughter standing before him. It is accompanied by the inscription: “I Šilhak-Inšušinak, Enlarger of the Empire, this piece of jasper from (the land of) Purališ, I offer. That what I have made with care, I show here and give it to Bar-Uli, my beloved daughter.” Bar-Uli’s special status among the king’s offspring is further emphasized in an inscription from Susa which indicates the existence of a dynastic royal cult:

O Inšušinak, lord of the Acropolis, I Šilhak-Inšušinak, son of Šutruk-Nahhunte, Enlarger of the Realm, for my life, and for the life of Nahunte-Utu, my beloved wife, the life of Hutelutuš-Inšušinak, the life of (the woman) Išnikarab-huhun, the life of (the woman) Urutuk-E-halahu, the life of Šihina-hamru-Lakamar, the life of Kutir-Huban, the life of (the woman) Utu-ehi-Pinigir, the life of Temti-tur-kataš, the life of Lila-irtaš, the life of Bar-Uli, my beloved daughter, she who presents my welfare(?), this is with this intention, and for the life of our posterity, this is with this intention to establish the glory of the faith(?) of Susa, I refounded and (re-)constructed the temples (made of) backed bricks.¹¹

The inscription exemplifies the public role female members of the Elamite royal court seem to have held, with the King’s Wife and their male and female offspring being mentioned in official inscriptions as well as being depicted on stelae and rock reliefs.¹²

Seals also offer valuable insights into the position of women, and it is interesting to note that some of the key seals for the Neo-Elamite period were found in the Persepolis archive, attesting to a desire of the Achaemenids to continue Elamite traditions. One seal in particular, PFS 77*, depicts a woman seated on a throne, a female servant standing behind her, and a further female figure in front of her, separated from the seated lady by an incense burner. The women wear long dresses gathered at the waist by a belt. Their hair shows a bobbed hairstyle. Also visible are objects, possibly bowls, held by the two women facing one another, while the servant bears a fly-whisk. The scene, which clearly depicts an audience scene, is accompanied by an Elamite inscription which—we may surmise—identifies the lady depicted: “MUNUS Šeraš DUMU Hubanahpina,” “(I am the) woman Šeraš, daughter of (the man) Huban’ahpi.”¹³ There is a possibility that there is a link between the seal’s late artistic style and the appearance of the name, Huban’ahpi, especially if we consider that this might be the same Huban’ahpi who is mentioned in a bronze plaque and in several documents from Susa.¹⁴ Dated to the late sixth century BCE, these documents provide evidence for Susa’s revival after its

destruction by the Assyrians.¹⁵ Huban'ahpi is referred to as "son of the king";¹⁶ his own son, Addaten, is mentioned in a further text from Susa, MDP IX 167, as well as in the bronze plaque.¹⁷ More importantly, both documents also mention a female called Ammaten,¹⁸ the same name which identified the daughter of Hanni in the inscription of Šekaft-e Salman I. If these two princesses are identical, Hanni's daughter may have entered the royal household of Huban'ahpi through a marriage alliance. We seem to have here, then, evidence of a ruling family in Neo-Elamite Susa, as well as of a dynastic alliance between local rulers of Susa and Ayapir.

The importance of these pieces of information for the discussion on women of this period and the possible link between the courts of Elam and Persia is twofold. First, the bronze plaque from Persepolis, which, as Basello convincingly argued, may have been transferred from its original location, Susa, when Persepolis extended its administrative influence in the region, may indicate a continuity from the Elamite to the Persian periods. Second, the fact that several seals imprinted on the administrative tablets from Persepolis are carved in an antique style, which may be identified as Neo-Elamite or Anzanite,¹⁹ connects this late Elamite period with the Persian dynasty. Its subject matter, the female audience scene, allows us to draw conclusions about the situation of women in Elam and the influence of the Elamite cultural heritage on Persian women and their position at the royal court, as the following examples make clear.

PFS 77* offers us the image of a princess of the Elamite court of the late sixth century. It seems to have served as a model for later Achaemenid seals depicting comparable female audience scenes. One can be found in an Achaemenid seal, now in the DeClerq collection in the Louvre, which shows a woman in the long, many-folded Persian dress, wearing a crown and veil and seated on a high-backed throne, her feet resting on a footstool.²⁰ In her right hand, she holds a lotus flower. She is receiving a female visitor, equally in Persian dress, crowned, with a veil hanging down her back. Directly in front of the seated figure is a female servant holding a bird. An incense burner separates these two figures from the female visitor. A further seal in the Buffalo Museum of Science depicts a variant of the female audience scene showing a female in the long Persian dress seated on a high-backed throne; in her hand, she is holding a spindle. A female servant is standing behind her holding up a fly-whisk. In front of the seated female stands an incense burner.²¹ The importance of the Elamite seal from Persepolis lies in its depiction of a female audience scene. As was noted above, Šeraš must have been of high rank in order to be depicted on her seal. The fact that she used a seal at all indicates

that she was in a position to authorize orders. By extension, and in the context of comparable uses of seals by women, this Elamite lady must have been able to dictate orders to be carried out in her name and/or controlled some level of economic wealth whose use she could determine using her seal as authorization. As for the scene itself, it points to the fact that Elamite as well as Achaemenid royal women held audiences which enabled them to admit (female) petitioners in an official setting. In turn, this allows conclusions to be drawn as to the range of activities these women were able to carry out.²²

There can be no doubt as to the close cultural and possibly political links between Elam and Persia from the late seventh to the mid-sixth centuries. The revival of the region, evidenced in the appearance of several smaller kingdoms which were all sufficiently established to manifest royal authority in inscriptions, administrative texts, and seals as well as in art, will have led to contact with the Persians who were establishing themselves in Persis. They, in turn, were able to look at their immediate neighbours when they created their own court and administration. This means that they could well have adopted features of the royal court, specifically the role of women: their presentation in art, their reference in written records, their ability to own and use personal seals, and, by extension, their ability to own property whose proceeds they were able to manage. The impression given from the evidence, however scant, is that women of the Elamite court were neither hidden in the palace nor restricted to a life of passive existence,²³ but publicly visible, active, and most likely enjoyed independent economic wealth.

Royal women in Achaemenid Persia

It is the female ownership of seals and the written record which attest to the economic power of Persian royal women and draws the strongest links to their Elamite counterparts. It is for this reason that the discussion of Persian women should begin with a discussion of their economic status:

Tell the accountants of (the place) Šullakke, (the woman) Irdabama spoke as follows: “I ordered, for Pirmakša (?) the nurseryman (?), 150 (?) *kurrima* (of grain from my estate. And a parchment document . . . , concerning (?) (the place ?) Raku . . . (?), he will be making the report. Do you look at the sealed document, and do the accounting.”

This text, PFa 27, at first glance merely a humble administrative document from the Persepolis Fortification archive, in fact opens up worlds into the life of women in Achaemenid Persia. It allows an

extraordinary insight into the activities of high-ranking, royal women, in this case of an order dictated by a woman, Irdabama. The order itself is no less revelatory: it deals with the transfer of foodstuff from Irdabama's estate. The amount is substantial: 150 *kurrima* are the equivalent to about 15,000 litres. Her personal seal, PFS 51, is impressed at the end of the text and acts as her signature, authenticating the order and authorizing action to be taken according to the letter's contents. Thus, the document is a prime example of the economic status high-ranking Persian women held: as an independent property owner able to manage her own affairs within the royal administrative system and able to authorize actions with her personal seal.

Further texts from the same archive provide evidence not only for Irdabama's ability to authorize substantial provisions to be drawn from the royal stores, but also attest to her role as manager of a considerable work force in Persis. The following three documents serve as examples of such food distributions reaching from Susa to Persepolis. All texts are dated to the twenty-second year of Darius' reign, that is, 500/499 BCE.

2,360 *marriš* of wine, supplied by Marriya, were dispensed on behalf of Irdabama at Susa, in year 22 (of the king).

(PF 737)

4,620 quarts of grain and flour, supplied by Marriya, were dispensed on behalf of Irdabama at Hidali, in year 22 (of the king).

(PF738)

1,440 quarts of barley loaves(?) supplied by Daušaka, were expended on behalf of Irdabama at Persepolis in year 22 (of the king).

(PF 739)

All three texts were sealed by Irdabama's own seal, PFS 51, which indicates that these foodstuffs came from her own estates located at Susa, Hidali, and Persepolis. We may surmise that Irdabama was at these places in person when she ordered these food rations to be handed out, presumably for personal consumption for herself and her entourage since she is unlikely to have travelled between the royal capitals without personnel and servants.²⁴

Irdabama appears in the Persepolis Fortification texts as an employer of various work forces. The largest work force is based in a place named Tirrazziš, tentatively identified with Shiraz, located 60 km southwest of Persepolis, where groups of up to 480 people are

attested as working in her service.²⁵ These “workers of Irdabama” (Elamite *kurtaš Irdabamana*) include male and female workers as well as children. Tirrazziš is also the location of a small work force consisting of only three individuals, two women and one man. They are the smallest work force attested in the Persepolis texts. These workers are variably identified as *kurtaš Irdabamana*, as *abbakannaš Irdabamana*, or as *matištukkašp*. They are recipients of wine rations which, like the food rations for the large work groups, are accounted for by two male administrators in particular, one man named Rašda, the other Uštana, using their own seals, PFS 36 and PFS 78, respectively. As these texts attest, they are effectively Irdabama’s own administrative personnel.

This set of texts suggests that the terms *abbakanaš* and *kurtaš* are interchangeable, though it might be the case that *abbakanaš* is a more specific professional title than the generic *kurtaš* for worker, while the term *matištukkaš* most likely signifies their occupational designation, in addition to being identified as workers of Irdabama.²⁶ Other records referring to wine rations relate to the same group of workers, but these texts identify them as “workers of *abbamuš*,” instead of “workers of Irdabama.” They even might be called “*abbakannuš abbamušna*.” Initially, Hallock considered the term *abbamuš* to be an occupational designation,²⁷ but on the basis of a Fortification text in which the name *abbamuš* appears together with that of Irtašduna, he concluded that *Abbamuš* must be a personal name.²⁸ This leaves us with two possibilities, one, that *Abbamuš* and Irdabama are two separate individuals, or two, that the names *Abbamuš* and Irdabama are interchangeable. In light of the fact that the work force linked to both names is identical and centered on Tirrazziš, as well as the fact that foodstuffs are being deposited for both women at Hidali, and for both officials to administer their business, it is highly likely that Irdabama and *Abbamuš* are one and the same person.²⁹ In this case, either *Abbamuš* was a title for Irdabama, or the two names reflect the fact of name-changing for Persian royal women who would have a private personal name and an official personal one.³⁰ Indicators for this may be found in later and post-Achaemenid history, when different names for royal princesses caused confusion in the Greek sources, such as the name of the daughter of Darius III who was married to Alexander. While Arrian knows her as Barsine, Diodorus, Plutarch, and Justin know her as Stateira.³¹ Rather than assuming that Arrian made an error on this occasion, as he is otherwise regarded as the most reliable source for this period, he might have known her private personal name, Barsine, while later authors knew only her official name, Stateira.³²

Most intriguing in this context is the confusion over a double name of a daughter of Artabazos, called Artakama by Arrian (Arr.*an.*7.4.6), but known as Apama by Plutarch (Plut.*Eum.*1.7). Scholars appear to be in agreement that the name Apama was a second name given to Artakama, though without recognizing the implications.³³ The name Apame is also attested for a daughter of Artaxerxes II (Plut.*Art.*27.7), and for the daughter of Spitamenes in Darius III's reign who, as the wife of Seleucus I, helped to consolidate the Seleucid empire with the birth of Seleucus' son and heir, Antiochus (Arr.*an.*7.4.6).³⁴ Hallock himself already considered it a possibility that Apame and Abbamuš are two renderings of the same name.³⁵ Recently R. Zadok identified a woman named Apame (Bab.f.Ap-pa-mu-ú) in three Babylonian texts dated to the reign of Darius I,³⁶ evidently belonging to the royal household, as one text identifies her as “ša é.GAL,” “woman of the palace.”³⁷ If Abbamuš refers to Irdabama, and if the name is the Elamite rendering of Babylonian Apamu, the Babylonian documents may provide evidence for Irdabama's estates outside Persis. Together with the Persepolis texts they also are a first attestation of the name Abbamuš/Apamu, rendered Apama/Apame in Greek sources.

Despite the details related to Irdabama's economic status, it is difficult to identify her position at Darius' court.³⁸ Yet while there is still a mystery surrounding her, Irdabama is certainly the most significant royal woman to date to appear in the Fortification texts providing us with evidence of a rather active, and economically significant life royal women could lead. But she is not the only female estate owner mentioned in the Persepolis Fortification archive. Her immediate peer seems to have been a woman named Irtašduna, whose identity as one of the wives of Darius I seems secured thanks to the appearance of her hellenised name, Artystone, in Herodotus. Like Irdabama, Artystone authorized food transfers from her estates with her own seal (PFS 38); the estates seem to have been located in Persis, at three places, known as Kukannakan, Matannan, and Mirandu.

The Persepolis Fortification texts confirm as fact the allusions made in Greek sources regarding the economic wealth of Persian royal women: high-ranking, royal women owned estates and could dispose of the proceeds of those estates in their own right. According to Plato, Amestris, the wife of Xerxes I (486–465 BCE) and mother of Artaxerxes I (465–424 BCE), owned large estates (Plato, *Alcibiades I* 121c–123d), as did Parysatis, the wife of Darius II Ochus (424–404 BCE) and mother of Artaxerxes II (404–359 BCE). In *Anabasis* 1.4.9 Xenophon mentions the fact that Parysatis owned villages near the Chalus River in the satrapy Across-the-River, i.e., Syria, which had been given to her as a dowry, and later notes that she also owned villages in Media which

had an abundance of grain, cattle, and other unspecified property. Xenophon does not so much mention this fact to point out a remarkable situation in regard to royal women, but to emphasize their propensity to commit, or at least support, morally bad acts: the villages of Across-the-River supported the troops of her favored son, Cyrus the Younger, who challenged his brother's kingship and led an army against him at Kunaxa in 404. Extrapolating from this example, the fact that royal women owned villages and estates in different parts of the empire only served to show that even in this they misused and undermined the authority of the king. Similarly bound to evoke negative connotations is Plato's remark on Amestris' wealth: it most likely served to mock Alcibiades by comparing his wealth to that of someone who not only was a foreigner, but also a woman.³⁹

Looking beyond the negative connotations Greek writers attach to the key information given in the snippets regarding the King's Mother—for in both cases the sources point out that this was their status at the time—they offer a valuable glimpse into the economic status of royal women: they owned villages and estates in different lands of the empire and by all accounts could dispose of the proceeds as they wished. But land ownership seems to go beyond that of the status of the King's Mother, and here we can extract vital information from Xenophon. If his first statement is accurate, i.e., that Parysatis received Babylonian villages as a dowry when she married the Persian prince Darius Ochus, we not only need to revise the idea that Parysatis was a Babylonian concubine, but also the idea purported in Greek sources that the ownership of land and estates was restricted to the King's Mother/King's Wife. With regard to the first point, this means that she must have received a dowry from her family which, in Babylonian law, could be a parent or a brother.⁴⁰ In any case, it excludes her from being regarded as a concubine. Her marriage to Ochus, then merely satrap of Hyrcania, and not the designated heir to the throne, also means that her marriage was part of a political alliance between presumably an aristocratic Babylonian family and a male member of the Achaemenid royal family. That type of marriage would be consistent with the Persian marriage policy of marrying non-Persian women to members of the Achaemenid clan as well as Persian nobility, as we know for example of the Persian Bubares with the Macedonian princess, Gygea, daughter of Alexander I (Hdt. 7.22; 8.136). With regard to the second point, we may deduce that the ownership of villages and estates was not limited to the King's Mother, but that, by extension, other female members of the royal family possessed the same right to property and estates. While Parysatis' estates in Across-the-River might be explained by her own descent,

thus a Babylonian dowry, her estates in Media allow us to argue that land ownership was not limited to one's ethnic background. Plato does not specify where Amestris' holdings were located, but Herodotus mentions an Egyptian town of Anthylla as the place which provided the King's Wife with shoes (Hdt.2.98.1).

In addition, several texts from the private banking house of the Murašû family of Babylon provide further information on women's land holdings. According to these texts, Parysatis (Bab. Purrušatu) let her land, with rent being collected by a bailiff working on her behalf called Ea-bullitsu:

317 *kur* 2 PI, 3 *sātu* of barley, 5 *kur*, 2 PI, 3 *šatu* of wheat, (as) tax, part of the land of Parysatis and of the private domain of Ea-bullitsu, the administrator of Parysatis, (part) of Year 4 of Darius (II) the king who is at the service of Rîmût-Ninurta, son of Murašû. Concerning the barley, 317 *kur* 2 PI, 3 *sātu*, concerning the wheat, 5 *kur*, 2 PI, 3 *sātu*, (as) tax, part of the lands of year 4 of Darius (the) king, Nabû-iddin son of Bêl-erîb, and Bêl-amât-ušur, slave of Ea-bullitsu, on the order of Ea-bullitsu, administrator of Parysatis, (from) the hands of Rîmût-Ninurta son of Murašû, have been received. They have been paid. Nabû-iddin and Bêl-amât-ušur shall draw up (the receipt) and, coming from Ea-bullitsu, administrator of Parysatis, to Rîmût-Ninurta, they give (it).

(Written) in the presence of Ištubuzana, judge of the Sin canal. (Written) in the presence of Nabu-mit-uballit, judge of the house of Parysatis, son of Mukin-apli.

(List of six witnesses follows.)

Nippur, day 11, month 6, year 4 of Darius.⁴¹

A recently published text provides evidence for Parysatis' economic activity in Babylon in 395 BCE:

Šamšaja, son of Upaḥḫir, has received from Bel-ittanna, son of Bel-īpuš [x silver], equivalent to barley and dates, [rent from arable land of] Parysatis, adjoining? The property of Damqija, [son of . . .]-gaddu, (the rented land being) under the control of [Šamšaja], son of Upaḥḫir, (the rent being) for year 10 of King Artaxerxes. He is paid in full.

(Any promissory note or (any) document by a *sepiru*-scribe? Concerning silver or any other obligation owed by Bêl-ittanna that may turn up in the possession of Šamšaja is [the property of Bêl-ittanna(?)]).

Witnesses: [. . .]-mā, son of Bel-ereš, Patnetu?, servant of Paysatis; Nabû-ittanna, son of Upaḥḫir. Nidintu, [son of?] Bel-ereš, servant of [. . .]

Scribe: [. . .], son of Esagil-lilbir. [Babylon?]. Month 7 day 5, year 10, Artaxerxes, King of Lands (= 30 September 395 BCE). (*Seals of the three witnesses follow.*)⁴²

We have no reason to doubt that this situation of royal women as land

holders changed during the Achaemenid period, though the lack of administrative records for the later Achaemenid period prevents us from ascertaining continuity. The more interesting question, however, is to ask about the origins of this practice. One possibility, of course, is that we see here a Persian innovation in regard to the position of women; the other, that it was a practice known from a previous or contemporary society which the Persian king adopted. There are several possibilities: first of all, we may consider that the Persian kings took over practices from the Elamites in whose territory they had settled several centuries earlier. Alternatively, land ownership by women could have been a practice known in Media and Babylonia. The seal of Šeraš, as mentioned above, points to economic activities of Elamite royal women in the Neo-Elamite period, while we lack any administrative records which would attest to the extent of their economic activities. Here we may turn to evidence from Babylon: administrative documents of the Neo-Babylonian period, as well as from Babylonia after the Persian conquest of 539 BCE allow us to propose that the Persian king may well have extended the economic position of Babylonian women to high-ranking Persian women.

Other documents refer to the income (Bab. *erbu*) of Kaššaya, or her tithe (Bab. *ešru*). The documents seem to refer to donations made on behalf of Kaššaya to the goddess Nanaya and the Eanna temple in Uruk. Another daughter of Nebuchadnezzar II, Ba'u-asītu, is mentioned as a property owner in Uruk. The document, which records the sale of real estate, refers to "the house of Ba'u-sītu, the daughter of the king" (Bab. é Ba'u-sītu DUMU.Mi.LUGAL). Babylonian documents of the Persian period suggest that the practice of land and property ownership of royal women continued under the Achaemenids: a Babylonian text dated to 502/1 BCE refers to Apama as "ša é.GAL," "woman of the palace."⁴³ The term recurs as a reference to a woman not identified by name in another document dated to the reign of Artaxerxes I, and a further document dated to 431 BCE mentions rent being collected on behalf of a woman named Madumitu who is identified as a lady "belonging to the house of (the woman) Amisiri" (PBS 2/1 75 and BE 9 39). Amisiri herself is mentioned in a Babylonian document (BE 10 45) dated to 423 BCE, which refers to land adjacent to the Euphrates-of-Nippur canal belonging to her.⁴⁴ She may be linked to the Persian Artaremu, identified as Artarios, a brother of Artaxerxes I and satrap of Babylonia.

Did landownership of women extend beyond it being a privilege of Persian royal women? The sources only allow the occasional glimpse on this issue, such as the Persepolis Fortification text documenting a tax payment in the form of small cattle, made by a woman named

Madamiš (PF 2070). Meanwhile, Aramaic documents from Egypt attest to the possibility of landownership by women, as at least one lady, Miptaḥiah, is attested as having been given a house and some land by her father (459 BCE), both of which she seems to have controlled. Another lady, named Tamut, owned property jointly with her husband 'Anani. Fifteen years into the marriage, Tamut was given part of a house belonging to her husband.⁴⁵

As landowners and property holders, as managers of estates and their own work forces located in different regions of the Persian empire, it is clear that these women must have been able to travel. Again, texts from the Persepolis Fortification archive attest to travel rations being issued to royal women, among whom we find sisters of Darius. The text PFa 31 actually refers to them as daughters of Hystaspes (Elam. *puhu Mišdašba pakbe*); they were recipients of 210 quarts of wine for their journey from Media (Susa) to Persepolis in 500/499 BCE.⁴⁶ Dated one year later, several texts record the movements of an illustrious travel group on the Royal Road to Persepolis, including Darius' daughter, Artazostre, her father-in-law, Gobryas, and a woman named Radušamuya. It is tempting to identify her with another lady mentioned as a recipient of travel rations, whose name is rendered Radušdukka, and who is related to Gobryas, perhaps his wife.⁴⁷ Travel further afield is undertaken by a lady who draws daily rations for a journey from Susa to Gandara in the east (PF1550).

What may be concluded from this information? Royal women owned seals, authorized the distribution of food stuffs from their estates, some of which are based outside Persis, employed their own bailiffs and other administrative personnel, and indeed large work forces of several hundred workers. They could dispose of the income and produce from these estates and labor forces as they saw fit. Not only the King's Wife/King's Mother could own land and estates, as well as workers, but seemingly so too could other female members of the extended royal family. All this implies a considerable level of economic independence.

Royal marriage alliances

Female members of the king's household, i.e., his sisters, daughters, and nieces, were given in marriage to Persian nobles in order to strengthen the bond between the two families, or as reward for a particular service for the king. By the same token, female members of the households of Persian nobles could be married to the king or his

sons and brothers. Cyrus II married Cassandane, the daughter of the Persian noble, Pharnaspes. Cambyses II had probably married Phaidyme, the daughter of Otanes (Hdt.3.68.3), who became Bardiya's wife after Cambyses' death (Hdt.3.88.4), and then that of Darius I, who had already married a daughter of Gobryas (Hdt.7.2.2). Two of Darius' sisters had been given in marriage to Gobryas and Otanes, the heads of the most notable Persian houses (Hdt.7.2.2.; Hdt.7.82). That link between the king and the house of the two Persian nobles was strengthened further in the marriage of Darius' daughter, Artazostre, with Gobryas' son Mardonius (Hdt.6.43; PFa 5), and his son Xerxes' marriage to Otanes' daughter, Amestris (Hdt.7.61.2).⁴⁸ Darius, the designated heir to the throne of Xerxes I was married to Artaynte, daughter of Xerxes' brother, Masistes (Hdt.9.108.1), and as Ochus, satrap of Hyrcania, Darius II married the Babylonian Parysatis, while his daughter Amestris was married to a son of Hydarnes (Ctes. FGrH 688 F15 (53)). Artaxerxes II married Stateira, a daughter of the Persian noble, Hydarnes (Ctesias FGrH 699 F15 (44); his own daughters were married to Orontes, Pharnabazos, and Tissaphernes.⁴⁹ Artaxerxes III had married a daughter of Oxathres (Curt.Ruf.3.13.13), and Darius III a sister of Pharnaces (Diod.Sic.17.21.3).⁵⁰ In the early Persian period, Persian kings also married foreign princesses: Cambyses I married Mandane, daughter of the Median king (Hdt.1.107.1), while Cyrus II is also said to have married a Median princess, Amytis, according to Ctesias (Ctesias FGrH 699 F9 (2)). According to Herodotus, Cambyses II requested the daughter of the Egyptian pharaoh in marriage (Hdt. 3.2). While these marriages served to strengthen political alliances with foreign and/or conquered kings, Darius I married the daughters of Cyrus II, Atossa and Artystone, as well as Bardiya's daughter, Parmys (Hdt.3.88.2–3) to prevent their potential offspring from marriages with other Persian nobles claiming greater legitimacy to the throne due to their direct descent from Cyrus II.

Marriages between members of the extended royal family or the Persian nobility and foreigners are also attested, as, for example, in Darius I offering the Greek Metiochus a Persian wife (Hdt.6.41.4), or in marriage between Barsine, daughter of Artabazus, and the Macedonian Memnon (Plut.Alex.21.8). A funerary inscription of the Persian period on a stele from Saqqara commemorates the death of Djerbherbes, the son of a Persian, Artam, and an Egyptian lady called Tanofrether.⁵¹ It is doubtful that women had any say in the matter to whom they were married. Their status as a royal or aristocratic daughter destined them to enter a politically advantageous marriage alliance decided upon by their father or next male kin.

If royal and noble women had little or no say in the choice of their husbands, few were certain to hold the positions of power: the King's Wife and the King's Mother.⁵² Claiming this status meant that these women could hold active roles at the court. Together with their economic wealth, this must have amounted to considerable positions of power. Achaemenid kings were in all likelihood polygamous. The presence of several royal wives, however, necessitated a hierarchy which was headed by the King's Mother and the King's Wife. The elevated position of the King's Wife was most likely determined with the appointment of the heir to the throne, a position which would also identify this wife as the future King's Mother. As a general term of address, female members of the royal household were referred to as *dukšiš*, "princess," in the Persepolis Fortification texts.⁵³

Female workers of Persis

The texts from the Persepolis archive allow a unique insight into the situation of female laborers in the Persian heartland. This is due to the information provided in the so-called ration texts, those documents that recorded the monthly payment for workers, distinguishing clearly between male and female workers as well as between boys and girls. These workers received payment in the form of foodstuffs, predominantly grain and wine, sometimes also beer, less frequently meat. Different "pay grades" account for different levels of qualifications of professional workers, and, in the case of the children, probably payment according to age and ability. Among these groups of workers, whose number can range from as few as 3 to up to 500 workers, one single female worker within these groups stands out as the recipient of the highest ration. These women are known as *araššarap*, which may be translated as "chiefs."⁵⁴ The *araššara* receives a total monthly ration of 30 quarts of wine, 50 quarts of barley or grain, and portions of meat. In a few instances, these chief female workers are known by their personal name, an unusual mentioning in these ration payments for workers. Thus, PF 1790 names the women Dakma, Ir[. . .]na, Harbakka(?), Sadukka, and Matmabba in an order issued by Parnaka, the head of the Persepolis administration under Darius I. Each woman is located at a different place, supporting the idea that there was one female head of a work group in one given location:

Tell Irtuppiya, Parnaka spoke as follows:

31 sheep and 7 "portions" (are) to be issued as rations to women chiefs of the *paša* women whose apportionments are set by Iršena. (They are) to be issued as rations to Dakma (at the place) Hunar, and Ir[. . .]na (at) Liduma,

and Harbakka(?) (at) Hidali, and Sadukka the Zappiyan, and Matmabba (at) Atek, total 5 women.

(*This is followed by a list of individual months*). For a period of a grand total (of) 19 months, they receive (for) a whole year each 4 sheep.

Ansukka wrote (the document). He received the *dumme* (copy?) from Nanitin. Maraza knew about this. The sealed document was delivered (at) Tamukkan (in the district) of Ranmesa.

(PF 1790. PFS 9)

There is reason to assume that these *araššara* women were in fact heads of a work group referred to in this tablet as *pašap*. *Pašap* seems to describe a particular work force, in which female workers receive 40- and 30-quarts rations, while their male co-workers receive only rations of 30 quarts. One of the few ration texts which provide details regarding the professions of the workers in the different pay grades is the following:

8,960 quarts (of) grain supplied by Iršena, treasury workers subsisting on rations, whose apportionments are set by Baratkama, received (at) Rakama, in the 28th year, fifth month. 1 scribe receives 40 quarts, 1 *etira* receives 40 quarts, 1 treasurer receives 30.5 quarts, **x attendants each receives 40 quarts, 2 ramikurraš each receives 30 quarts, 1 hazarna handler receives 20 quarts, x mulatap each receives 30 quarts** [. . .]. x female *arraššap* each receives 50 quarts, **75 female attendants each receives 40 quarts, 113 female ramikurraš each receives 30 quarts**, 13 female *ammalup* each receives 20 quarts, 12 female “ration makers” each receives 20 quarts [. . .] Total 311(?) workers received (it) as rations.

(PF 866. *My highlights*)

The texts indicate that male and female workers who carried out the same profession were given equal pay, as in the case of the attendants and the *ramikurraš*. The scribe and the *etira* receive the highest rations for men, with 40 quarts each, while the *arraššarap* receive the highest rations at 50 quarts each. The *araššara pašabena* appears to be the head of this work force, which also seems to receive an extra ration payment, called *kamakaš*.

A second group of female workers is the *harrinup*. Although it has not yet been possible to translate the term, *harrinup* seems to describe predominantly female work groups, often with children, and working with a small number of male workers. Ration scales lack the differentiation found in other documents: either both genders receive the same amount of 30 quarts of grain, or women receive a third less than the male workers of that group. Like the *pašap*, the workers listed as *harrinup* are recipients of special rations, *kamakaš*. As a list of

special rations reveals, one reason for these to be issued was the birth of a boy or a girl which entitled the mother, who is then referred to by her personal name in the text, to an extra combined provision of grain or flour and wine or beer for one month.⁵⁵

Women in legal documents

No legal documents have come to us from the Persian heartland which would allow insights into the legal position of Persian women. But we can catch a glimpse of their situation in contemporary legal documents recovered from other centers. Among those exceptional documents are marriage contracts from Susa. One text, Sb 9385, is dated to the reign of Artaxerxes⁵⁶ and reads:

Man(nu)-ki-Nanaia, son of Huru, servant of Šamu the Treasurer, who has declared to Kinunaia, son of Peṭi'u, servant of Šamu the Treasurer: "(The woman) Šammandu, your servant [. . .] I have given [bring her back] 'from Agamatanu' (= Ecbatana) to Susa and [give her to me] as a wife."

Kinunaia complied with this [agreed with his request(?) and declared(?)]:
"The (one) named Šammandu [. . .] who I will bring [to Susa . . .], give me [. . .]"

Kinunaia [. . .] declared [. . .] [when] it suits him, and concerning Šammandu, he [will not have a claim(?)].

Witnesses: Qupsupu, servant of Šamu. Pamunu, servant of Šamu, Sih[u . . .], Šihu and Harnuninapirru, *ku[maru]* of DN], [PN], son of Hartini, Pahutu, son of Pa' [. . .] and Bandakku, *kumaru* of Nanaia, [PN and PN], servants of Šamu, Panu, servant of Tamm[u . . .]

Bêl-tattanu-ušur, the scribe, son of Belšunu.

Susa. month [x, day x, year x] of Artaxerxes, King of Lands.

*(This is followed by the seals of the witnesses.)*⁵⁷

A further text in which Ḫarri-menna (H.) asks Pisisamaska (P.) to give him his sister Naḥdi-Esu (N.) in marriage, stipulates not only the dowry but also the conditions of a potential separation:

P. voluntarily [promised to give] to H. as dowry with N., his sister: One and two-thirds minas of refined silver, two-thirds of a mina (worth) of silver in jewelry for a woman; one roll of homemade(?) cloth; one s.-garment; three assorted garments, one of which has a multicoloured trim; one HUM-HUM-garment; [. . .]; one [. . .]-garment; [. . .]; two couches. [. . .] Should H. release N. his wife, and have another wife live (in the house) in preference to her, he will give her five minas of silver in addition to her dowry. And should N. release H. her husband, she will forfeit(?) her entire dowry in favor of H., and thereby she will relinquish her means of support(?).

While is it probably apt to assume that a comparable legal situation existed for marriage agreements of Persian couples and their families, and that accordingly we may surmise that women were provided with a dowry at the point of marriage and that equally the dowry was returned to them when they got divorced, we should certainly understand that, under normal circumstances, i.e., with a male at the head of the family, the father or brother negotiated the marriage with the groom's family.

Through a Greek lens

For a description of the activities of women at the Persian court, we are dependent on the classical writers. These, however, tend to measure the women's activities against the moral standards of Greek society in their evaluations. This not only leads to a distorted view of individual females, as it is most apparent in the description of Atossa in Aeschylus' *Persians* but also to a description which, on the one hand, emphasizes the "Otherness" of Persian women in contrast to Greek women and, on the other, underlines the Otherness of the Persians themselves, beginning with the king.⁵⁹ The description of Persian women, in other words, becomes an instrument of historiography to emphasize the decadence of the king as well as the empire as a whole: effeminacy, female influence on political decision-making, intrigues at the court leading to strife, murder, rebellion, and even war can be traced back to female interference and scheming. This concept can easily be shown: the Greek notion that women least mentioned are those who are morally good, in contrast to immoral women whose names are spoken in public, is reflected in the fact that the names of all Persian queens are known to Greek writers, even if nothing else is known about them, as in the case of Damaspia, the wife of Artaxerxes I, while a few other Persian women remain unnamed. Most notable is the wife of Intaphernes, whose moral act was her attempt to save the life of her brother in recognition of the tight bond with her family rather than her in-laws (Hdt.3.119.2), thus showing an ideal Greek female trait. Similarly, the wife of Teaspes pleaded with Xerxes to save the life of her son, Sataspes (Hdt.4.43.2); as in the case of Intaphernes' wife, her morally good act ensures her anonymity. Also in contrast to Greek social behaviour is the claim made by Greek writers that Persian royal women participated in banquets.⁶⁰ Their presence at these occasions not only emphasized Persian Otherness compared to the Greek *symposia*, which only admitted *hetairai* as female company but also emphasized the

effeminacy and decadence of the Persian court. Curiously, the Old Testament opts for a more diplomatic solution: Persian women did celebrate banquets at the court, but they were held separately from those given by the king—the presence of the queen at the men’s banquet was not usual (Book of Esther 1: 9–12; Book of Daniel 5: 2, 10). The issue may not be resolved, but what sparse evidence we have suggests that certainly private dining occurred involving the king and queen. A depiction of high-ranking women on funerary stelae from the Persian period recalls the banqueting scene of the famous relief of Aššurbanipal.⁶¹ Respectively, the two stelae show the woman seated alongside a male figure *en couchant*. Both couples hold drinking cups and are attended by servants (see also Svärd, this volume).⁶²

Some of the women’s actions can be understood as being motivated by their concern for the stability of the kingship and the preservation of their family. For example, as King’s Mother at the court of Artaxerxes I, Amestris intervened with the king to save the life of her son-in-law, Megabyzos, who had been sentenced to death for conspiring against the king.⁶³ Amestris succeeded in turning the death sentence into a spell in exile, from where, eventually, she is said to have the king recall him. Her eagerness to kill Inaros equally may be understood as her “duty” to avenge the death of her son, Achaemenes. Similarly, Parysatis did not rest until those she held responsible for the death of her son, Cyrus the Younger, were killed. In contrast to the overwhelmingly negative view of Persian women in Greek historiography, behind some of the actions committed by Persian royal women might stand a rationale: to preserve and protect the king and members of his family and to that end, both acts of revenge and acts of mediation are employed.

Conclusion

Persian royal women, like their Elamite predecessors, were a visible entity at court. Their royal status, headed by the King’s Wife and the King’s Mother, entitled them to land holdings and effectively enabled them to act as entrepreneurs. The work force itself, comprised of male and female workers, assigns distinctive positions to women, be it the *arraššara*, or the female work groups of the *pašap* and *harrinup*. A special ration assignment recognizes their position as women who had just given birth to a child.

There is some indication that land ownership was not an exclusive economic right of royal women, but that other high-ranking women likewise managed estates and controlled their own personnel. These

women may have had no say in the matter of marriage alliances, but they had rights as married women, including the right to a dowry. As landowners and managers of an extensive labor force, their economic independence underlined their status at the court and beyond. They gave audiences and intervened with the king on behalf of members of the nobility. They travelled in both an official and in a private capacity; they belonged to the king's entourage and held and participated in feasts. Judging from Herodotus' statement that Darius had a statue of Artystone cast in gold (Hdt.7.69.2), no restrictions existed against the visual presentation of women, a view which finds further support in women's depictions in minor Persian art, such as funerary stelae and seals. Extant evidence allows the suggestion that some concepts of the role of women at the Persian court were shaped by their immediate cultural environment and the courts of their political predecessors, especially those of the Neo-Elamite and Neo-Babylonian kings.

List of abbreviations

<i>AfO</i>	Archiv für Orientforschung.
Bab.	Babylonian.
BE	The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, Series A: Cuneiform Texts (Philadelphia).
<i>Cah.D. A.F. I.</i>	Cahiers de la Délégation archéologique française en Iran.
Elam.	Elamite.
FGrH	Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker ed.F. Jacoby (Berlin, Leiden 1923–1958).
<i>HdO</i>	Handbuch der Orientalistik.
<i>IrAnt</i>	Iranica Antiqua.
<i>JNES</i>	Journal of Near Eastern Studies.
NCh	Nabonidus Chronicle.
MDP	Mission de la Délégation française en Perse.
<i>NABU</i>	Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires.
NS	New Series.
PBS	University of Pennsylvania: The Museum Publications of the Babylonian Section.
PF	siglum for Persepolis Fortification

PFa	texts published in Hallock 1969.
PFS	siglum for Persepolis Fortification Texts published in Hallock 1978.
RA	Persepolis Fortification Seal.
Sb	Revue Assyriologique.
TMHC	siglum of the Louvre Museum.
	Texte und Materialien der Frau Prof. Hilprecht Collection of Babylonian Antiquities im Eigentum der Universität Jena (Leipzig).
VAT	siglum for tablets in the Vorderasiatische Museum Berlin.
YBC	Yale Babylonian Collection.

Notes

- 1 See Hallock 1969 and Hallock 1978. Further archival texts were found in the Treasury of Persepolis and were published by Cameron in 1948 and 1958.
- 2 This is only topped in a single instance with a ration payment of 60 quarts of grain being made to a male worker identified as a keeper of *atna*. He receives 10 quarts more than is normally attested as the highest ration for labourers (PF 865). One quart equals 0.9l.
- 3 For a depiction of the stela, Sb12, and discussion, see Harper *et al.* 1992: 127–130.
- 4 König 1965: 69–71; Harper *et al.* 1992: 133.
- 5 Harper *et al.* 1992: 134.
- 6 Root 1979: 272–276 with Pl.66. The most striking parallel to this statue in Achaemenid art is the high-relief figure of a Persian woman which was found in Egypt and is now in the Brooklyn Museum (acc. no. 63.67). The figure depicts a woman wearing the long, many-folded Persian dress held by a belt; a crown covers her bob-styled hair. Her hands are clasped in the same hand-over-wrist gesture as those on the statue of Napir-Asu. Based on this artistic evidence, as well as the Elamite attestations for female audience scenes, we may well be justified in suggesting a degree of continuity between the Elamite and the Persian court in the way royal women could act and were represented at court.
- 7 Šekaft-e Salman II.
- 8 Šekaft-e Salman I. For the reliefs, see Vanden Berghe 1963; Potts 1999: 303; Álvarez-Mon 2013: 207–248. 237, fig. 3.
- 9 König 1965: 168, no.76 I and 76 H.
- 10 Vallat 1998: 307.
- 11 Br.2078; Malbran-Labat 1995: 107–108.
- 12 At Naqš-e Rostam an Elamite relief from the second millennium BCE was carved depicting a scene no longer discernible as it was erased by a later Sasanian relief of Bahram II. Visible, however, is the head of one of these figures, thought to be a female, wearing a bobbed hairstyle and a mural crown.

There appears to be a question whether the female figure is part of the earlier Middle Elamite relief or the counterpart of the Neo-Elamite king on the right of the religious scene. Root 1979: 274 considers the queen the counter-figure of the Neo-Elamite king, but the reconstruction by Seidl suggests that the figure belonged to the three figures, probably the royal family, before the two deities seated on separate snake thrones (cf. Seidl 1986: Abb.2b; Potts 1999: 186 fig. 6.9).

- 13 For a discussion of PFS 77* see Garrison 2011: 383–387; Brosius 2010.
- 14 The bronze plaque originated in Susa, but was found in Persepolis. Together with the Neo-Elamite seals, it allowed Basello to argue for an administrative shift from Susa to Persepolis. However, Garrison 2011: 382–383 wants to distinguish between the late Neo-Elamite style observed in Susa and that of the Anzanite seals from Persepolis, in which case we need to recognize two different figures bearing the same name, Huban’ahpi. Yet if Basello’s suggestion is correct, the idea of a separate Anzanite style may need to be reconsidered.
- 15 The texts had been tentatively dated to c.600 BCE, but recently a lower date as late c.520 has been suggested. See Scheil 1907; Álvarez-Mon 2012: 755.
- 16 MDP IX 167. A seal from Persepolis, PFS 4*, identifies Huban’ahpi as the son of Šati-hupan. Cf. Basello 2013: 253.
- 17 Basello 2013: 258.
- 18 See Basello 2013: 253; Waters 2000: 88. A son of Huban’ahpi was Šuktiti whose name is inscribed on a seal from Susa depicting a human-headed winged bull (Amiet 1973: pl. VII no. 43).
- 19 Garrison 2011: 401–402.
- 20 AO22359, Musée du Louvre, Paris. J. Lerner identifies the seated figure as the goddess, Anahita, on the basis of the fluting of her headdress, which she compares to that of the crown worn by the female on the Sasanian relief of Narseh (Lerner 2010: 159 with n.18). There are several problems with this suggestion in my view. Apart from the difficulty of differentiating the level of fluting on the crowns on other depictions of Persian women (and here one ought to take into account not only the depiction of the crowned females on the Pazyryk carpet, but also the Persian women on the Lydo-Persian gems and rings), there is considerable doubt as to the presentation of Persian gods and goddesses in the Achaemenid period. Furthermore, the Sasanian relief at Naqš-e Rostam is less likely to depict Anahita than the royal family of Narseh, his queen, and, standing between them, their son and designated heir to the throne, Hormuzd (Shahbazi 1983: 266–267; Brosius 2009).
- 21 The seal has been discussed by Lerner 2010.
- 22 On audiences held by Achaemenid women, see Brosius 2010.
- 23 This makes it even more surprising that Potts 2010 omits any mention of this in his discussion of the Elamite court.
- 24 For further texts related to provisions of Irdabama see Brosius 1996: 131–132 with table 1.
- 25 They are attested in PF1028, PF NN-1068, and PF NN-1146. Cf. Brosius 1996: 143 (table 5).
- 26 Cf. Brosius 1996: 135.
- 27 Hallock: 1969: 20, 97.
- 28 PFa 14. Cf. Hallock 1978: 111.
- 29 Brosius 1996: 139–141. Cf. Henkelman 2010: 697.

- 30 The practice of name changing is not limited to Persia, but was also a feature of the Macedonian court, as E. Carney has demonstrated (Carney 1991).
- 31 Arrian, *Anabasis*.7.4.6; Diodorus Siculus 17.107.6; Plutarch, *Alexander* 70.2; Justinus 12.10.9.
- 32 This is distinct from the recurrence of female royal names throughout the Persian dynasty, as can be found in the following names: Amestris, (1) daughter of Otanes and wife of Xerxes I (Hdt.7.61.2); (2) daughter of Darius II (Ctes. FGrH 688 F15 (49.53)); (3) daughter of Artaxerxes II (Plut.*Art.*23.6); (4) daughter of Oxathres and niece of Darius III (Diod.Sic.20.109.7; Arr.*an.*7.4.5).
Amytis (1) daughter of Astyages and wife of Cyrus II (Ctes. FGrH 699 F9(2); (2) daughter of Xerxes (FGrH 699 F13 (20.22)).
Atossa (1), daughter of Cyrus II and wife of Darius I (Hdt.3.88.2); (2) daughter of Artaxerxes II (Plut.*Art.*23.7).
Mandane (1) daughter of Astyages and wife of Cambyses I (Ctes. FGrH 699 F9 (2); (2) daughter of Xerxes (Ctes. FGrH 688 F13 (20.22)),
Parysatis (1) daughter of Artaxerxes I (Ctes. FGrH 699 F15 (44); (2) daughter of Artaxerxes III (Arr.*an.*7.4.4; Curt.3.13.12).
Roxane (1) wife of Cambyses II (Ctes. FGrH 688 F13 (12); (2) half-sister of Teritouchmes (Ctes. FGrH 699 F15 (53)).
Rhodogune (1) daughter of Darius I (Jerome adv. Jov. 1.45)?; (2) daughter of Xerxes I (Ctes. FGrH 699 F13 (20); (3) daughter of Artaxerxes II (Xen.*an.*2.4.8; 3.4.31).
Stateira (1) daughter of Hydarnes and wife of Artaxerxes II (Ctes. FGrH 699 F15 (53); (2) daughter of Pharnaces and wife of Darius III (Plut.*Alex.*30.5.8; Curt.4.10.2); (3) daughter of Darius III.
- 33 Wilcken 1894: 2662; Berve 1926: 52 n.97; Shahbazi 1983: 151; Mehl 2006 erroneously regards the name Artakama as the Persian translation of Apama.
- 34 Antiochus' daughter was named after her grandmother. She was to become the wife of Magas, king of Cyrene.
- 35 Manuscript Hallock. Linguistically, this is not impossible: Elamite does not distinguish between the voicing of consonants p/t/k and b/d/g. Double consonants also do not appear to have significance (cf. Reiner 1969: 75). Thus abba- could be written as apa-. Further, it is possible that the Persian name *Apamu- was rendered in Greek with the female stem -α/η. However, this contradicts the form *apamā- which is considered the original Iranian form, although other forms are not excluded (Rüdiger Schmitt, pers. comm.). This problem is not made easier by the fact that the etymology of *apamā- is uncertain. While it is acknowledged that generally female Iranian personal names have an -a stem, the female name Abbamuš is not exceptional as a personal name ending in -s, or even having a -u stem. PF 2070 refers to a woman, Madamiš (Elam. ^fMa-da-mi-iš) and PF NN-2274 Upanduš (Elam. ^fU-pan-du-iš). If, thus, female personal names could have a u-stem, we might consider the possibility that the Greek name Apama/e may not derive from Iranian *apamā-, but that the Greek replaced the Persian u-stem *apamu- with the more familiar form -a (I owe this suggestion to Elizabeth Tucker).
- 36 BM 29447, BM 85009, BM 28899. See Zadok 2002, 2003. Cf. Henkelman 2010: 697.
- 37 See below n. 50 on BM 85009.
- 38 Cf. Zadok 2002: 63; Henkelman 2010: 693.

- 39 Brosius 1996: 123.
- 40 On Babylonian marriage agreements, see Roth 1989.
- 41 TMHC 185; cf. Cardascia 1951: 95–96.
- 42 VAT 16518. See Stolper 2006.
- 43 BM 85009. Cf. Zadok 2002: 63.
- 44 Amisiri' might reflect the name Amestris.
- 45 Azzoni 2013: 136–138.
- 46 Hallock reckoned that this ration served 3 women, receiving 70 quarts each (Hallock 1978: 115).
- 47 Cf. Brosius 1996: 92.
- 48 A number of other daughters also were married to members of the Persian nobility. Cf. Brosius 1996: 70–72.
- 49 Brosius 1996: 74–75.
- 50 Persian kings were also accused of entering incestuous marriages. Cambyses II allegedly married two of his sisters, while Artaxerxes II is said to have married his own daughters. Darius III is also alleged to have married his sister. The problem here is that it is not known whether the sisters were full sisters or merely half-sisters, that is, from the same father but from different mothers, in which case the union would not have been considered as incestuous. The allegations, as they are made in Greek historiography are, however, an effective means to demonstrate the immoral excesses of the Persian king. See Brosius 1996: 66–69; Bigwood 2009.
- 51 Mathiesen *et al.* 1995: 35.
- 52 We may extrapolate that the wives of the heads of the Persian noble families and wives of satraps held comparable positions to those of the King's Wife and the King's Mother.
- 53 Cf. Brosius 1996: 27–28.
- 54 Cf. Brosius 1996: 146–163.
- 55 For a discussion of these special rations, see Brosius 1996: 169–180 with table 10.
- 56 It is not possible to ascertain which Artaxerxes this could be.
- 57 Joannès 1990.
- 58 See Roth 1989: 108–112.
- 59 On Atossa's depiction in the Greek sources, see Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1983; Hall 1989.
- 60 Cf. Xenophon *Cyr.*1.3.4 which mentions Mandane dining with Astyages and Cyrus II. A—certainly unhistorical—anecdote recounted by Herodotus has Persian ambassadors expecting the presence of Macedonian women at a banquet, allegedly in accordance with their own custom (Hdt. 5.18.2). Greek writers emphasize the fact that the king's women were present at banquets but replaced by concubines afterwards (Heracleides of Kyme FGrH 689 F2; Plutarch, *Moralia*.140b). Plutarch, following Heracleides, found it noteworthy that the king dined with his mother and his wife (Plutarch, *Artaxerxes* 5.5. 26.6).
- 61 Amiet 1976: 416, no.634.
- 62 See Dusinberre 2013: 175. fig. 98 for the two stelae from Hellespontine Phrygia. For banqueting scenes from the Middle and Neo-Elamite periods depicted on seals and a bitumen plaque from Susa, see Álvarez-Mon 2013: 245,

References

- Álvarez-Mon, J. (2012) Elam: Iran's first empire. In D. T. Potts (ed.) *A Companion to the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East*, 2 vols. London: Routledge, pp. 740–757.
- Álvarez-Mon, J. (2013) Elamite sculptural reliefs from the highlands. In K. De Graef and J. Tavernier (eds) (2012) *Susa and Elam. Archaeological, Philological, Historical and Geographical Perspectives. Proceedings of the International Congress held at Ghent University, December 14–17, 2009*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 207–248.
- Amiet, P. (1973) La glyptique de la fin d'Elam. *Ars Asiaticae* 26: 3–32.
- Amiet, P. (1976) *Les Antiquités de Luristan*. Collection David-Weill. Paris, Diffusion de Boccard.
- Basello, G. P. (2013) From Susa to Persepolis: The pseudo-sealing of the Persepolis bronze plaque. In K. De Graef and J. Tavernier (eds) (2012) *Susa and Elam: Archaeological, Philological, Historical and Geographical Perspectives. Proceedings of the International Congress held at Ghent University, December 14–17, 2009*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 249–264.
- Berve, H. (1926) *Das Alexanderreich auf Prosopographischer Grundlage, i. Darstellung*. Munich, Germany: Beck.
- Bigwood, J. (2009) “Incestuous” marriage in Acchaemenid Iran: Myths and realities. *Klio* 91: 311–341.
- Brosius, M. (1996) *Women in Ancient Persia (559–331 BC)*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Brosius, M. (2009) Women in pre-Islamic Persia. *EnclIr*, available at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/women-i>.
- Brosius, M. (2010) The royal audience scene reconsidered. In J. Curtis and St. J. Simpson (eds) *The World of Achaemenid Persia: History, Art and Society in Iran and the Ancient Near East*. London: Tauris, pp. 141–152.
- Cameron, G. G. (1948) *Persepolis Treasury Tablets*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago.
- Cameron, G. G. 1958) Persepolis treasury tablets old and new. *JNES* 17: 161–176.
- Cardascia, G. (1951) *Les Archives des Murašû*. Paris: L'Imprimerie Nationale.

- Carney, E. (1991) "What's in a name?" The emergence of a title for women in the Hellenistic period. In S. Pomeroy (ed.) *Women's History and Ancient History*. Chapel Hill, NC, and London: University of North Carolina Press, pp. 154–172.
- De Graef, K. and Tavernier, J. (eds) (2012) *Susa and Elam: Archaeological, Philological, Historical and Geographical Perspectives. Proceedings of the International Congress held at Ghent University, December 14–17, 2009*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Dusinberre, E. R. M. (2013) *Empire, Authority, and Autonomy in Achaemenid Anatolia*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Garrison M. B. (2011) The seal of Kuraš the Anzanite, son of Šespeš (Teispes, PFS 93*: Susa—Anšan—Persepolis. In J. Álvarez-Mon and M. B. Garrison (eds) *Elam and Persia*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, pp. 375–405.
- Hall, E. (1989) *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition through Tragedy*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Hallock, R. T. (1969) *Persepolis Fortification Texts*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago.
- Hallock, R. T. (1978) Selected fortification texts. *Cah.D.A.F.I.* 8: 109–136.
- Harper, P. O., Aruz, J. and Tallon, F. (eds) (1992) *The Royal City of Susa: Ancient Near Eastern Treasures in the Louvre*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Henkelman, W. (2010) "Consumed before the King." The table of Darius, that of Irdabama and Irtašduna, and that of his Satrap, Karkiš. In B. Jacobs and R. Rollinger (eds) *Der Achämenidenhof. The Achaemenid Court*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, pp. 667–775.
- Joannès, F. (1990) Textes babyloniens de Suse d'époque achéménide. In F. Vallat (ed.) *Contribution à l'histoire de l'Iran. Mélanges offerts à Jean Perrot*. Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, pp. 173–180.
- König, F. W. (1965) *Die Elamischen Königsinschriften*. Graz, Austria: AfO Beih. 16
- Lerner, J. (2010) An Achaemenid cylinder seal of a woman enthroned. In J. Curtis and St. J. Simpson (eds) *The World of Achaemenid Persia: History, Art and Society in Iran and the Ancient Near East*. London: IB Tauris, pp. 153–164.
- Malbran-Labat, F. (1995) *Les Inscriptions Royales de Suse. Briques de l'époque paléo-élamite à l'Empire néo-élamite*. Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux.
- Mathiesen, I., Bettles, E., Davies, S. and Smith, H. S. (1995) A stele

- from the Persian Period from Saqqara. *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 81: 23–41.
- Mehl, A. (2006) Apama, *Der Neue Pauly*. Edited by H. Cancik, H. Schneider and M. Landfester. Available from Brill online at <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/der-neue-pauly>.
- Potts, D. T. (1999) *The Archaeology of Elam: Formation and Transformation of an Ancient Iranian State*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Potts, D. T. (2010) Monarchy, factionalism, and warlordism. In B. Jacobs and R. Rollinger (eds) *Der Achämenidenhof. The Achaemenid Court*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, pp. 107–137.
- Reiner, E. (1969) The Elamite language. In *HdO I & II*, 1. u.2. Abt. Lief. 2. Leiden, The Netherlands and Cologne, Germany, pp. 54–118.
- Root, M. C. (1979) *The King and Kingship in Achaemenid Art*. Leiden, The Netherlands, Acta Iranica IX.
- Roth, M. T. (1989) *Babylonian Marriage Agreements 7th–3rd centuries B.C.* Neukirchen-Vluyn, Germany: Neukirchener Verlag.
- Sancisi-Weerdenburg, H. (1983) Exit Atossa: Images of women in Greek historiography on Persia. In A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt (eds) *Images of Women in Antiquity*. London: Routledge, pp. 20–33.
- Scheil, V. (1907) *Textes Elamites-Anzanites, Troisième Série*. Paris: Ernest Leroux, MDP IX.
- Seidl, U. (1986) *Die Elamischen Felsreliefs von Kurangun und Naqš-e Rostam*. Berlin: Iranische Denkmäler, 12/II/H.
- Shahbazi, S. (1983) Studies in Sasanian prosopography I. *AMI NS* 16: 255–268.
- Stolper, M. W. (2006) Parysatis in Babylon. In A. K. Guinan et al. (eds) *If a Man Builds a Joyful House: Assyriological Studies in Honor of Erle Verdun Leichty*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 463–471.
- Wilcken, U. (1894) Apame. *Realencyclopädie des Klassischen Altertums* 1: 2662–2663.
- Vallat, F. (1998) Elam. *EncIr* 8: 301–313.
- Vanden Berghe, L. (1963) Les reliefs élamites de Malamir. *IrAnt* 3: 22–39.
- Zadok, R. (2002) An Achaemenid queen. *NABU*: 65.
- Zadok, R. (2003) Updating the Apammu dossier. *NABU*: 33.

PART II

Egypt



Map by Paul C. Butler.

Chronology

3100–2686	Early Dynastic (Dynasties I–II)
2686–2181	Old Kingdom (Dynasties III–VI)
2180–2040	First Intermediate Period (Dynasties VII–XI)
2040–1730	Middle Kingdom (Dynasties XI–XIII)
1730–1550	Second Intermediate Period (Dynasties XIII–XVII; Hyksos Interlude)
1550–1080	New Kingdom (Dynasties XVIII–XX)
1080–664	Third Intermediate Period (Dynasties XXI–XXV)
664–525	Saïte Period (Dynasty XXVI)
525–332 BCE	Late Period (Dynasties XXVII–XXXI)

Introduction

The kingdom of Egypt emerged when the relatively culturally and politically unified region of Upper Egypt (south) spread into and dominated Lower Egypt in the northern Delta region. This was a gradual process that probably lasted at least a century and was completed finally and conclusively by King Narmer, the last king before the 1st Dynasty. He is depicted on the so-called Palette of Narmer, excavated at Hierakonpolis and now in the Egyptian Museum of Cairo. Hieroglyphic writing had already begun to appear in the Predynastic period, with the earliest extant writing dating to c.3200 BCE on labels attached to containers in the royal tomb Uj at Abydos. Beginning as early as the 1st Dynasty and extending throughout the Old Kingdom, united Egypt was ruled from the central capital of Memphis, known originally as the “White Walls” and later, accurately, as “the Balance of the Two Lands.” By the early third millennium, an elaborate government bureaucracy had evolved which assisted the divine king, the earthly manifestation of Horus, in governing the land.

The paucity of historiographic documents deriving from Old Kingdom Egypt are counterbalanced by the extraordinary archaeological remains—the Old Kingdom was the age of the great pyramids. Starting with King Djoser in the 3rd Dynasty (mid-third millennium), the kings of Egypt invested heavily in their funerary

buildings. The Step Pyramid of Djoser is the first large stone edifice that survived from ancient Egypt; it evolved from a series of increasingly smaller *mastabas* (low, flat, rectangular tombs) one on top of the other, set within the king's funerary enclosure. The Egyptians themselves viewed this achievement as a turning point in their cultural history, and its architect—Imhotep—was later revered as a god, as popularly depicted in the film “The Mummy, II.” In the 4th Dynasty, the “classic” pyramids emerged. The first were constructed by the founder of the 4th Dynasty—Snefru—at Dashur. The best-known versions are those at Giza at the northern end of the Memphite cemetery, constructed for kings Khufu, Khafre, and Menkaure. These majestic structures pointing to the heavens appear to have emerged hand-in-hand with a new religious ideology that claimed that the king, in addition to being Horus, was also the “Son of Re,” the solar deity. It was King Redjedef (c.2560) who first used this title in his formal titulary.

Little is known of foreign relations during the Old Kingdom. To the north, commercial and cultural relations already existed between Egypt and the Levantine city of Byblos, from whom Egypt was especially interested in importing cedar wood as early as the fourth millennium. To the south, the Egyptians actively sought gold, diorite, and manpower from Nubia, even establishing a fort at Buhen at the northern side of the second cataract which lasted until the late 5th Dynasty. It may have been Egyptian influence that brought about the fading of Nubia's “A Group” (see Phillips for more specific information on Nubia). But this was counteracted with the emergence of the “C-Group” in the 6th Dynasty. Although at the start of this new regime the kings of Nubia swore fealty to the envoy of the Egyptian King Merenre, Nubia had established its own independence by the end of the Old Kingdom.

The Old Kingdom came to an end during the reign of King Pepi II, who died after a reign of some 65 years. Economic and possible environmental decline ushered in the fall of the dynasty, as did the growing power of the provincial elites. During the First Intermediate Period, there were two primary rivals for the hegemony of Egypt. To the north were the 9th and 10th Dynasties at Herakleopolis (modern Ihnasya al-Medina); to the south was the 11th Dynasty centered on the city of Thebes. In the end, it was the southern dynasty that seized control and established the Middle Kingdom with its center in Thebes, first ruled by King Nebhepetre Mentuhotep. The transition from the 11th to the 12th Dynasty was marked by the accession of King Amenhotep I, who was probably the chief assistant (vizier) of the last king of the 11th Dynasty—Nebtowyre Mentuhotep. This Amenemhat

moved the capital from Thebes in the south back north to Itjtawy —“Holder of the Two Lands”—located at modern Lischt between Herakleopolis and Thebes, where the center of Egyptian politics remained for the rest of the Middle Kingdom.

Culturally, the Middle Kingdom marked the apex of Egyptian literature, notable for such masterpieces as *The Tale of Sinuhe* (with strong correlations to the biblical narrative of Moses), *The Instruction of Amenemhat*, *The Dispute between a Man and his Ba*, *The Eloquent Peasant*, and *The Tale of the Shipwrecked Sailor*. Politically, power was more evenly divided than in the Old Kingdom, with the individual nomarchs (rulers of the subdivisions of Egypt, known as *nomes*) having more independence than did their predecessors in the Old Kingdom under Khufu and Pepi. Regarding international relations, Egypt still showed little interest in the north, where *The Tale of Sinuhe* refers to the occasional royal messenger passing through, while the *Execration Texts* pronounced curses on possible enemies—not Byblos, but those other “vile Asiatics.” To the south, the 12th Dynasty re-entrenched Egypt in Nubia, constructing a series of fortresses running through Lower Nubia at the second cataract to protect Egypt and Egypt’s interests in the Nubian gold mines and diorite quarries against the rising African Kingdom of Kerma at the third cataract. The project was begun under King Sesostri I (heir to Amenhotep I), and completed under Sesostri III.

The end of the Middle Kingdom emerged out of the growing weakness of the monarchy in the 13th Dynasty and a concomitant growing independence of the *nomes*, especially to the north. In the Delta, the 14th Dynasty arose to watch the passing of the 12th under Queen Nefrusobek. But soon this northern 14th Dynasty was overcome by the 15th, the Levantine Dynasty, located at the trading site of Avaris, modern Tell el-Dab’a—the Hyksos. These Hyksos—the Greek rendering of “Foreign Kings” in Egyptian—were probably composed of Canaanites and Amorites already living in Egypt, possibly reinforced by new settlers from the Levant; they came to rule all of the Delta and Middle Egypt. To the south, a rump indigenous state survived at Thebes—the 17th Dynasty. The Kingdom of Kerma expanded northwards into Nubia, seizing the forts at the second cataract. As recorded by Kamose, the final king of the 17th Dynasty, “One ruler is in Avaris and another in Kush, while I sit associated with an Asiatic and a Nubian. Each man has his slice of Egypt, dividing the land with me.”¹

This Kamose and his brother, Ahmose, succeeded in driving the Hyksos out of Lower Egypt while reconquering the region of the

second cataract, and in so doing reunified the land. Ahmose's reign was later recognized as a turning point, the beginning of the 18th Dynasty and the start of the New Kingdom. Foreign policy under the next two kings—Amenhotep I and Thutmose I—focused on establishing complete control over Nubia, extending Egyptian control all the way to the fourth cataract and beyond. Some Nubian dignitaries were left in charge of local affairs, all under the authority of the “King's Son of Kush,” a military leader responsible directly to the Egyptian Pharaoh.

In Egypt itself, concern for the afterlife continued in importance, although without the huge monuments that had characterized the Old Kingdom. The kings' tombs were built in the remote Valley of the Kings, while their mortuary temples, where offerings were made to sustain their spirits in the afterlife, were located on the outer side of the range of hills opposite the city of Thebes. In the 18th Dynasty some of the queens shared their husband's tombs, but in the 19th Dynasty queens, princes, and princesses came to be buried at a separate site—The Valley of the Queens. The royal tombs were built by workers who lived in the workmen's village of Deir el-Medina, one of the very few well-preserved residential sites in ancient Egypt. Unlike other domestic areas within the fertile band of the Nile's flood zone, continuously inhabited for millennia, Deir el-Medina was located in the western desert near the royal necropolis that provided its livelihood. It is partially because of this site that much can be gleaned not only about the royals in ancient Egypt in the New Kingdom, but also the “common folk,” or at least the high end craftsmen and artists.

At the royal level, familial/dynastic affairs became complicated in the early 18th Dynasty. Amenhotep I himself had no male heirs, and adopted his successor Thutmose I through marriage to his daughter. This marriage itself produced no male heirs, only the princess, Hatshepsut. On a secondary wife Thutmose fathered a son who later became Thutmose II and husband of his half-sister, Hatshepsut. Thutmose II himself fathered an heir on his secondary wife Isis (not the goddess!) before dying during his son's early childhood. Hatshepsut took over the regency of the young heir, eventually having herself made king, and then co-king to Thutmose III.

It was this Thutmose III who first expanded Egyptian imperialism into Syria from the conquests made in southern Canaan in the early 18th Dynasty. Soon after the death of Hatshepsut he marched into Canaan to quell a coalition of local chieftains. Upon his victory, he demanded oaths of fealty from the conquered polities, including royal

hostages to return with him to be raised and educated in Egypt. Egyptian hegemony extended up to Qadesh in Syria, where the Egyptians clashed with the Mitanni Empire dominating southern Anatolia. These two superpowers eventually achieved an alliance with one another and with the great power to the east—Kassite Babylon. It was the start of a great age of international relations in the Near East, cemented by the exchange of royal princesses and Egyptian gold.

The 18th Dynasty reached its apex under Amenhotep III. But dramatic (to say the least) changes occurred under his son, Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten. In a radical departure from Egypt's traditional polytheistic religion, Akhenaten and his queen Nefertiti sought to establish a monotheistic religion in Egypt revering the solar disk—the Aten. They established a new capital at Akhetaten, modern Tell el-Amarna. Here was found the archive of the correspondence between the “Great Kings” of the Near East and Egypt and their vassals in the Levant, such as the princes of Canaan and southern Syria. It is for this reason that the mid-fourteenth century is called “the Amarna Age.”

The Aten revolution did not long outlive its progenitor. Nefertiti had only daughters, one of whom married Akhenaten's heir, Tutankhamun (who may also have been a son of Akhenaten). The sickly king died young, leaving the queen alone and helpless. She contacted the Hittite kingdom to the north, which had come to replace the Mitanni Empire (see the *Introduction* to Hittites section), to ask them to send her a prince for her to marry and make king of Egypt. The dispatched prince died on the journey by either plague or assassination. The 18th Dynasty ended with the rule of the chief general, Horemheb, who appointed his vizier Ramesses I as successor. This latter, who became the founder of the 19th Dynasty, already had both a son and grandson, thus evading the on-going problem of heirlessness.

The kings at the beginning of the 19th Dynasty attempted to regain their northern Levantine possessions, which had turned to the Hittites after the fall of Mitanni. In 1274 Ramesses II of Egypt challenged King Muwattalli II of Hatti for control of the northern Levant. Although the Egyptian texts record the outstanding, inevitable victory of their king, it was actually the Hittites who won this confrontation at Qadesh, reaffirming the border of the two kingdoms' spheres of influence. Later, in 1257, Ramesses II and the Hittite king, Hattušili III, negotiated a peace treaty, and Ramesses married a Hittite princess (and later her sister), sealing political alliance with the customary exchange of women.

This same Ramesses II and his successor, Merneptah, were ruling Egypt when the Sea Peoples, invaders from the north, came, heralding the fall of the Bronze Age. These People of the Sea made alliances with Libya under both Merneptah and Ramesses III, threatening to invade the Delta. Egypt's ally to the north—Hatti—had already fallen, and Egypt was forced to shrink its borders. The Ramesside rulers of the 20th Dynasty pulled out of the Levant, concentrating their forces on the traditional boundaries of Egypt. Internal dynastic rivalries and corruption further weakened Egypt, and the capital in the northern Delta region had difficulty controlling the southern regions. The King's son of Kush—Panehsy—was ordered to come north to pacify Thebes, but his army caused such disorder that Ramesses XI sent his general, Piankh, to expel him. Piankh himself took over the office of high priest of Amun and put Thebes under military rule. His successor, Herihor, served both as high priest of Amun and king.

The Third Intermediate Period ended after the death of Ramesses XI in c.1080. The land was once again split in two, with the high priest of Amun taking control of the south. To the north, Smendes, founder of the 21st Dynasty, ruled from the new capital of Tanis (of “Raiders of the Lost Ark” fame) alongside Tentamun, who may have been the royal consort of Ramesses XI. The most (in)famous Pharaoh of the Third Intermediate Period was King Shoshenq of the 22nd Dynasty, who in the tenth century led an invasion into the Levant that was recorded in 1 Kings 14:25–26.

The country split yet again into warring factions, which permitted the rise of a Nubian Dynasty in the mid-eighth century. By this time, the rulers of Thebes were forced to acknowledge the hegemony of King Kashta of Kush. Kashta's successor, Pianky, spread the Nubian domination up the Nile, solidifying the 25th Dynasty.

A final powerful Egyptian dynasty arose in the 26th Dynasty, led by King Psamtik in the mid-seventh century. Cut off from the rest of the Near East by the power of Assyria, Egypt made overtures to Greece, welcoming in Greek merchants and providing them with a base for operations—a Greece away from home—at Naukratis. Nevertheless, this was to be the last period of independence for Egypt, as it could not remain detached from the political events rocking Mesopotamia. Egypt was conquered by the Assyrians during the reign of Esarhaddon. In 525, the Persians under King Cambyses conquered the land along the Nile. Although there were attempts to overthrow their foreign overlords in the fourth century, in the end Egypt came under Hellenistic rule—the Ptolemies—after the conquests of Alexander the Great in the late fourth century, and from there into Roman

jurisdiction after the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE between Octavian Caesar (later Augustus) and his rivals Marc Antony and Queen Cleopatra VII, the last of the Hellenistic monarchs.

Note

- 1 Murnane 1995: 702.

Further reading

Kuhrt, A. (1995) *The Ancient Near East c. 3000–330 BC*. London: Routledge.

Murnane, W. J. (1995) The history of Ancient Egypt: An overview. In J. Sasson (ed.) *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. Peabody, MA: Henrickson Publishers, Inc., pp. 691–717.

The UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology, Available at http://escholarship.org/uc/nelc_uee (accessed 22 February 2016).

UNDERSTANDING THE LIVES OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN WOMEN

The contribution of physical anthropology

Rosalie David

Egypt has a unique geographical context: most of the country is desert but, although the rainfall is generally negligible, the Delta, Nile Valley and scattered oases in the Western Desert are fertile. In antiquity, this landscape was the result of the Nile inundation: river water and alluvial mud were used to irrigate a limited area of land where people could pursue agriculture, animal husbandry and build their habitations. This fertile land was scarce, and so the dead were buried in graves, tombs and pyramids on the edges of the desert; here, environmental conditions were ideal for preserving funerary structures and their contents.

Egyptologists therefore have access to source material which includes archaeological sites and monuments, artefacts, texts, botanical specimens and human remains. Although traditional studies have mainly utilised inscriptional and archaeological evidence, researchers recognise that sometimes these provide a distorted, propagandist, or incomplete perspective. A new sub-discipline, termed 'Biomedical Egyptology', has developed a different approach which encompasses both historical and anthropological data.

Ancient Egypt provides an unparalleled opportunity for biomedical, anthropological, and scientific studies. Environmental conditions and funerary customs, including mummification, have preserved human remains from all social groups; skeletal remains and mummified tissues are available for the application of a wide range of diagnostic techniques; and archaeological and palaeopathological evidence are complemented by Egypt's extensive literature. Since natural barriers have always prevented mass invasion or continuous infiltration, no

dramatic changes have occurred in the population's genetic composition over the millennia, facilitating comparative epidemiological studies over a 7,000-year period.

Although approximately half of the population of ancient Egypt was female, their contribution to society has been largely ignored in the Egyptological literature of the past two centuries; instead, this has focused on the role played by men in the country's history, politics, warfare, religion, and academic and artistic progress. This approach reflects the surviving literary and archaeological evidence which records Egypt's male-dominated political and religious structure. This source material does not provide equally detailed information about women's significance and influence, although they were undoubtedly highly regarded members of society.

More recent studies have attempted to redress the balance. Robins'¹ survey of women's role in society considers their legal, social and religious status as well as healthcare issues, while other studies analyse the contributions of female functionaries in particular religious contexts.^{2, 3}

Such accounts largely rely on inscriptional and archaeological evidence. Another perspective is provided by palaeopathology but, although these studies have been pursued for over 40 years, their true potential is only now being properly recognised. This chapter will provide a resumé of how bio-science can increase current understanding of women's lives in ancient Egypt.

Anthropological and scientific studies

Resources for study

The Medical Papyri

Twelve papyri (dating from c.1825 BCE to the third century CE) provide the main literary discussion of disease and medical treatment; most are probably copies of earlier works now lost or unidentified. These documents essentially compile case studies and remedies devised to treat a range of illnesses and physical conditions, although some also include discussions of physiology. They all include both rational and 'magical' (non-rational) treatments, and most deal with a variety of subject matter, some of which is repeated in more than one papyrus.

Most of the texts discuss conditions that affect both sexes. However, the Kahun Gynaecological Papyrus (the world's first extant treatise on gynaecology, discovered in a pyramid workmen's town, c.1825 BCE) deals specifically with women's conditions,⁴ also discussed in the Ebers Papyrus, Carlsberg Papyrus and Berlin Papyrus.

These papyri, although a unique and important source, pose considerable problems. The original provenance of most documents is uncertain, and the group must surely represent only a fraction of Egyptian medical texts once in existence. Also, translators have difficulties in identifying the meaning of some words, because they are unique to these documents and cannot be confirmed in other literary sources.

Mummies

Technically, a mummy can be defined as a body in which natural or artificial preservation of the tissues has prevented putrefaction. Environmental and funerary conditions in Egypt produced both natural (unintentional) and artificial (intentional) mummies. Intentional mummification, available to royalty from about 2600 BCE, was soon adopted by the elite, and ultimately by all who could afford the procedure. Even after artificial mummification was introduced, unintentional mummification remained widespread, because most burials continued to be in desert graves. Both methods of mummification survived into the Christian Period (first to seventh centuries CE), providing evidence that spans many centuries.

Resources for scientific investigations include mummies held in museums or private collections, the International Ancient Egyptian Tissue Bank,⁵ and human remains recovered from excavations. Whereas some projects have examined a specific series of mummies,^{6, 7, 8, 9} others have concentrated on individual mummies, such as Ramesses II (Dynasty 19, 1304 BCE–1237 BCE)¹⁰ whose mummy was discovered in the Valley of the Kings at Thebes (modern Luxor). The Archaeological Survey of Nubia, established in the early twentieth century in response to the construction of the first Aswan Dam,¹¹ salvaged archaeological and palaeopathological evidence from some 10,000 graves (see further: <http://www.knhcentre.manchester.ac.uk/research/nubiaproject>).

Investigative techniques

Mummies, brought to Europe and Britain by wealthy travellers, were

first unwrapped and ‘scientifically’ investigated in the sixteenth century CE, and this remained a popular pursuit from the eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries CE. By the early twentieth century, scientists had begun to recognise that ancient disease studies could elucidate epidemiology and the pathogenesis of certain conditions, and Sir Marc Armand Ruffer, Professor of Bacteriology in Cairo Medical School, 1896–1917, established palaeopathology as a scientific discipline, and pioneered palaeohistological techniques to study mummified tissues.¹² Subsequent studies have adapted techniques, developed for investigation and disease diagnosis in living patients, and applied them to ancient human remains.

Autopsy (unwrapping a mummy and dissecting the body), followed by visual and physical assessment, were the only examination methods available to early investigators. An irreversible and destructive procedure, this nevertheless offers the best chance to gather data and take samples for further analyses. Several multidisciplinary teams undertook autopsies in the 1970s and 1980s, but ethical concerns have since led to the use of non-destructive or minimally invasive techniques.

For this reason, radiography and computed tomography (CT) are often the methods of choice for current mummy investigations (see [Figure 12.1](#)). They can provide information about an individual’s cultural and archaeological background as well as disease and injury data.



Figure 12.1 A mummy is CT-scanned at the University of Manchester. This non-destructive technique provides information about disease processes and mummification procedures. (Courtesy of the University of Manchester.)

Endoscopy is another minimally invasive process whereby an industrial endoscope with an attached retrieval forceps is inserted into bodily cavities (if possible, through natural orifices or existing damage holes), to remove tissue or bone for histological and molecular studies.

Palaeohistology – a major tool in mummy research – only requires small samples and should be used as the initial method of examination, since it helps the researcher to identify the nature of the material (tissue type, resin or plant remains), and indicates whether further diagnostic procedures are required. This technique, sometimes used in conjunction with electron microscopy, has made a considerable contribution to the field, providing evidence about individual nutrition and disease processes.

In recent years, immunological analyses, designed to detect the presence of antigens within the body, have been added to the array of diagnostic methods available to examine mummified tissue and bone samples. Processes such as enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA)¹³ and immunocytochemistry¹⁴ are relatively cheap procedures requiring only small samples and can be used to process large quantities of material.

In his pioneering molecular studies,¹⁵ Pääbo was the first to isolate genetic material from ancient human remains, laying the foundation for the development of ancient DNA (aDNA) identification. Despite its limitations and the problems associated with sample contamination, the technique offers considerable potential for diagnosing disease in mummies. For example, a Manchester researcher¹⁶ has been able to identify the infectious agent for tuberculosis in mummified tissue, and also the DNA of a 2,000-year-old parasite (see below).

Finally, instrumental methods of analysis (e.g. radioimmunoassay, gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GCMS)) have been used to isolate and identify therapeutic and cosmetic substances associated with mummies.¹⁷

The state of women's health

Human remains provide evidence of disease processes, trauma,

deformity and diet; many of these conditions are mentioned in the Medical Papyri which also provide details of medical and cosmetic treatments.¹⁸ The brief resumé given below refers to diseases found in the whole population as well as conditions that specifically affect women.

Parasitic diseases

Investigation of mummies has indicated that parasitic infestation was widespread across the social strata. It is usually impossible to identify the specific causative parasites from descriptions in the Medical Papyri but, as demonstrated by the following examples, evidence is forthcoming from diagnostic studies of mummified remains. Schistosomiasis (a severely debilitating infestation, still a major health concern in Egypt and elsewhere) was certainly present in antiquity. In an epidemiological project at Manchester University (in which, for the first time, immunochemistry was applied to mummified remains), pioneering research demonstrated that the disease was present in over 70 per cent of the samples tested from males and females.¹⁹ Parasite DNA was also identified in a 2,000-year-old schistosome found in a female mummy (Graeco-Roman Period, 332 BCE–fourth century CE) from Hawara. Radiological examination of a nodule found in the abdominal wall of one unprovenanced female mummy (Graeco-Roman Period, 332 BCE–fourth century CE) confirmed the presence of a calcified male guinea-worm, indicating that she had suffered from guinea-worm infestation (*Dracunculiasis*).²⁰ Electron microscopy has demonstrated the presence of larval forms of the parasitic worm *Strongyloides* in intestinal tissue samples taken from another female named Asru. She was a temple-singer in the Temple of Amun at Thebes; the mummy, which probably dates to Dynasty 25 (c.780 BCE–656 BCE), is unprovenanced, but it is most likely that it was discovered at Thebes.²¹ A biopsy of lung from the same mummy showed clear evidence of a hydatid cyst caused by a tapeworm (*Echinococcus granulosus*).²²

Although the ancient texts do not refer to malaria, there have been several attempts to identify the disease in mummies. In one study, the ParaSight™-F test was applied to samples taken from a series of mummies from various periods; this detected the antigen produced by the causative parasite *Plasmodium falciparum* in all groups.²³ Other research, employing immunostaining, immunoassaying and genetic analysis of samples, has also produced encouraging results.²⁴

Bacterial and viral diseases

Identifying the presence of bacterial or viral diseases in mummified or skeletal remains poses considerable problems. Scientists have traditionally relied on critical surveys of pathological and artistic evidence, but this can now be augmented by new methods which detect antigens or bacterial DNA.

A number of examples of tuberculosis (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*) have been reported in Egyptological literature, including the case of pulmonary tuberculosis found in a Byzantine (395 CE–600 CE) female body from the Island of Hesa in Nubia²⁵ and in the Granville Mummy (see below). Evidence for leprosy, poliomyelitis, and smallpox in the population is inconclusive.

Sepsis and abscesses were presumably commonplace; however, although there is ample physical evidence of dental abscesses, there are many instances where limbs have healed with no indication of infection. Indeed, sepsis following bone fracture is surprisingly rare. For instance, in a study of 65 fractures of the upper limb in Nubian skeletal remains, only 1 example of sepsis was found, in the left ulna of a woman (Christian Period, first to seventh centuries CE) whose 2 forearms were fractured,²⁶ while a radiological survey of the Leiden collection of 27 mummies detected only 2 mummies (1 female) with fractures.²⁷ On the evidence of three associated coffins, this female mummy has tentatively been dated to Dynasty 22 (945 BCE–730 BCE) and may have come from Thebes; however, according to the inscriptions, the coffins belonged to a priest, and therefore it is unlikely that they originally belonged with the female mummy.

Cancer

Inconclusive evidence in the Medical Papyri and an apparent scarcity of malignancies in skeletal and mummified remains may indicate that cancer was rare in antiquity; this raises controversial questions about the role of carcinogenic factors in modern societies.²⁸

This low occurrence cannot be convincingly explained by a relatively short life expectation (which might preclude the development of cancer) since even childhood cancers are rarely found whereas evidence of other diseases associated with later life is present. Neither can this be explained by an inadequacy in diagnostic techniques: research has demonstrated that, where tumours exist in mummified tissue, the evidence is well preserved and can be readily

identified.

Radiological surveys have possibly identified osteolytic lesions (probably metastatic) in the mummy of Asru in the Manchester collection²⁹ and in the skulls of two females in the Leiden collection.³⁰ One of these mummies comes from Thebes and dates to Dynasty 22 (945 BCE–730 BCE). In the nineteenth century CE, this mummy was removed from its original coffin and subsequent confusion led to the association of the body with coffins inscribed for two different people; it is therefore now impossible to correctly identify the woman's name or titles. The other Leiden mummy belonged to Diptah and was discovered at Akhmim; it dates to the early Ptolemaic Period (c.300 BCE–250 BCE).

At a meeting held at the Royal Society of London in 1825, Augustus Granville (1783–1872), an eminent obstetrician, described his recent findings from the earliest true scientific autopsy of an Egyptian mummy. The mummy, which came from the necropolis of Thebes, belonged to Irtyersenu, a high-ranking woman who lived during Dynasty 26 (664 BCE–525 BCE). Granville noted a mass around the right ovary which he described as 'ovarian dropsy' (cancer), and concluded that this had caused the woman's death aged around 50. However, the latest investigation of this so-called 'Granville Mummy',³¹ undertaken by a team of experts led by the British Museum where the residual remains are now held, has confirmed that this mass was in fact a benign cystadenoma; the study has also identified tuberculosis as the probable cause of death.

Diseases of internal organs

Atherosclerosis and vascular calcification – usually regarded as conditions associated with advanced modern lifestyles – have been found in ancient Egyptian skeletal and mummified remains. Ruffer³² described arterial lesions in hundreds of mummies; Gray's survey found similar evidence, and a more recent radiological survey of 22 mummies in the Cairo Museum demonstrated vascular calcification in the hearts and arteries of 9 mummies.³³ Arterial calcification has also been reported in studies of individual mummies. These include the unprovenanced mummy of an unidentified woman in the Leiden collection which, on the evidence of an inscribed mummy bandage, has been dated to Dynasty 22 (945 BCE–730 BCE),³⁴ and the mummy of Asru in the Manchester collection.³⁵

These conditions, rare in the whole population, occur

predominantly in the mummies of priests and their families. These people ate the food, rich in saturated fat, which the priests removed from the temple-gods' altars at the conclusion of the daily services and divided amongst themselves. This pattern of occurrence, correlating with the unhealthy diet of the elite compared with the mainly vegetarian intake of most Egyptians, has prompted the conclusion that atherosclerosis was a disease of antiquity which was very probably induced by diet.³⁶

Sand pneumoconiosis (fibrous scarring of the lung due to inhalation of fine sand particles) occurred in ancient populations with desert environments (and today still afflicts residents of the Sahara and Negev deserts). Histological and electron optical studies have demonstrated this disease in lung tissue from mummies, including Asru (who also suffered from a hydatid cyst, see above).³⁷

Various diseases of the alimentary canal, and gastro-intestinal and urinary tracts have been identified, including multiple stones in the gall bladder of a priestess (Dynasty 21, c.1089 BCE–945 BCE),³⁸ and appendicular adhesions (almost certainly indicative of appendicitis) in a Byzantine Period female mummy from Nubia (395 CE–600 CE).³⁹ Rare examples of bladder stones or kidney disease include the atherosclerosis described in the kidneys of Lady Teye (Dynasty 21, c.1089 BCE–945 BCE).⁴⁰

Trauma and bone disorders

The Egyptians experienced many forms of trauma, resulting from industrial injuries, personal conflict, warfare and the bites of dangerous animals. Literary sources⁴¹ demonstrate the competence of medical practitioners in identifying, assessing and treating injuries, while recent anatomical studies have assessed the incidence of fractures sustained by male and female workers at the Giza pyramid site (Dynasties 4–6, c.2613 BCE–2181 BCE),⁴² and by the non-elite residents of Tell el-Amarna (Amarna Period, c.1375 BCE–1361 BCE).⁴³

Many investigations report pathological changes in bones and joints. These are evident in skeletons from across the social spectrum, and the most commonplace conditions include osteoarthritis (identified in bodies from predynastic times to the Christian era), osteopenia, and osteoporosis. In one radiological study, osteoporosis was found in equal numbers of male and female mummies, contrasting sharply with the modern pattern where the disease is most frequently observed in women.⁴⁴

Radiological surveys indicate the presence of Harris Lines (transverse lines of arrested growth in the long bones) in 30 to 45 per cent of mummies examined, probably the result of periods of intermittent disease or malnutrition in childhood and adolescence. In another diet-related study, histology of a bone section from a Nubian female (Christian era) revealed abnormalities which enabled researchers to reconstruct a time-line for this woman's pregnancies, periods of lactation and death.⁴⁵

Dental conditions

Collections of dry skulls and mummified heads (separate or attached to the body) provide a wealth of evidence about the Egyptians' dental status, diet and treatment. Information gained from handling and directly examining dry skulls can help the palaeo-odontologist interpret conditions observed in radiological surveys where details are sometimes impaired or obscured by overlying features.

Dental surveys of large ancient Egyptian population groups and individual mummies in multidisciplinary studies all indicate that caries was relatively rare in pharaonic times, although the incidence increased in the Graeco-Roman Period, probably due to dietary changes.

The Egyptians suffered from ante-mortem tooth loss and general periodontal disease, but the most common dental ailment, found in kings and queens as well as non-royals, was attrition of the cusps (biting surfaces of the teeth).⁴⁶ Microscopic examination of bread-offerings placed in the tombs has demonstrated that contaminated flour included windblown sand, debris from storehouses and particles from quernstones. Regular consumption of bread – the basic component of the Egyptian diet – invariably led to dental attrition, with a marked increase in severity over an individual's lifetime. Attrition sometimes led to exposure of the tooth pulp, and this could have serious consequences. These included infection and even death, as well as alveolar abscesses which occurred in the dentitions of all classes. Even royal men and women suffered in this way: a well-known example of an alveolar abscess occurs in the dentition of Queen Henttawy (early Dynasty 21, 1064 BCE–1045 BCE).⁴⁷

Blindness, deafness, and cerebral palsy

The Egyptians undoubtedly suffered from blindness resulting from

ocular infections, but evidence only survives in the literature and some art representations. Deafness is also attested in the inscriptions, and physical indications of ear disease include evidence of mastoid infection reported in bodies from Nubia and Egypt (dating back as far as the Predynastic Period, before 3100 BCE),⁴⁸ as well as in the mummy of Asru.⁴⁹

Although a living nervous system is missing in mummies, radiological and palaeopathological techniques can be used to identify palaeoneurological abnormalities in skeletal remains – clues which can indicate the presence of neurological dysfunction. Researchers used this methodology to study the mummy of a high-ranking woman named Geheset, the wife of Imeni, a High Court judge; this mummy came from a Dynasty 13 (1786 BCE–1633 BCE) tomb at Dra Abu el-Naga in western Thebes. The results showed that Geheset had probably suffered from cerebral palsy.⁵⁰

Gynaecology and obstetrics

Childbirth and its immediate aftermath were regarded as times of considerable danger for all mothers and newborn infants. Most evidence relating to the conduct of labour, and diseases and afflictions associated with the female reproductive system, occurs in literary sources (see the Kahun Papyrus above). These texts offer protective and curative magical incantations as well as pragmatic prescriptions for contraception, fertility and pregnancy testing, afterbirth problems and treatment of the neonate. They also address prolapse and inflammation of the uterus, menorrhagia, discharges and problems associated with the breasts and urinary tract.

Physical evidence is relatively rare, but includes an ovarian cyst discovered in the Granville Mummy (discussed above), and various complications associated with childbirth. Examination of the body of a chondrodystrophic dwarf excavated at Giza (Dynasty 4, c.2613 BCE–2494 BCE) indicated that the woman had died in childbirth because the head of her normal-sized baby could not pass through her small and deformed birth canal.

The mummy of Queen Makere (1064 BCE–1045 BCE), the wife of Pinudjem I, was discovered at Thebes. From the evidence visible in this mummy – enormously enlarged breasts, and loose and puckered abdominal skin – researchers have concluded that she probably died during or soon after the birth of her daughter, who was buried with her.⁵¹ A physical examination of the mummy of Princess Hehenhit

(from Thebes; Dynasty 11, c.2133 BCE–1991 BCE) revealed a narrow pelvis and the presence of a vesicovaginal fistula; it has been suggested that she too probably died soon after giving birth.⁵²

Medical and cosmetic treatments

Although physical remains are a rich source of disease and dietary evidence, the Medical Papyri provide the prime information about medical and cosmetic treatments.

Smith and Dawson's early study⁵³ claimed that all evidence of surgery was completely lacking in the palaeopathological and archaeological record, apart from the use of splints to treat fractured limbs. Smith⁵⁴ described two sets of splints, originally attached to two bodies found in a rock-cut tomb at Naga ed-Deir (Dynasty 5, c.2494 BCE–2345 BCE). One set had been positioned on the body of a teenage girl, in an attempt to address a comminuted fracture of the middle of her femur, but there was no indication that the fracture had healed prior to death.

More recent skeletal studies overturn Smith and Dawson's above statement. This research indicates that Egyptian practitioners were skilful in applying joint manipulation to reduce fractures, sometimes aided with pads or splints, but it also provides evidence of fractures and amputations. One macroscopic and radiological comparison⁵⁵ has focused on fractures and amputations found in 271 skeletal remains (including 125 females) belonging to workers and high officials employed at the Giza pyramid site (Dynasties 4–6, c.2613 BCE–2181 BCE).

The ulna (right arm) was the most common fracture site in this population, although injuries to the ribs predominated amongst male workers. Fractures occurred less often in male officials than male workers. Amongst the workers, men sustained significantly more injuries than women, but in the elite group, there was little difference between the sexes. The study showed that high-quality medical care was provided equally for men and women, and for both social classes, and ensured that a large proportion of fractures observed in all groups healed successfully.

Examination of mummies has revealed various instances of embalmers' restorations. In one mummy from Akhmim, which dates to the Ptolemaic Period (332 BCE–30 BCE) and is now in the Gulbenkian Museum, Durham (UK), an artificial upper limb has been attached to a

deformed lower arm.^{56, 57} In another example, linen and leather patches have been applied to ante-mortem wounds on the mummy of an elderly priestess of Amun from Thebes (Dynasty 21, c.1089 BCE–945 BCE).⁵⁸ These restorations were an attempt to give the owner a complete and perfect body for use in the afterlife. However, there is now convincing evidence that the Egyptians practised pioneering prosthetic medicine for the living: this has been demonstrated by a recent biomechanical assessment of two replica artificial big toes. One, now in the Cairo Museum, was found in situ on the mummy of a high-ranking woman aged between 50 and 60 years (Figure 12.2). She had been buried in a tomb at Sheikh Abd el-Gurna, western Thebes which, from associated inscriptional evidence, can be dated to between c.1065 BCE and c.740 BCE.⁵⁹

The Medical Papyri are the primary source for pharmaceutical treatments. However, researchers have also attempted to identify medicinal ingredients in the mummies themselves. Smith speculated that mouse remains found in the alimentary canals of several children buried in the predynastic cemetery of Naga ed-Deir (before 3100 BCE) may represent a well-attested medicinal ingredient;⁶⁰ more recently, tissue from Asru has been tested to assess whether identifiable plant DNA residues from a topical remedy (perhaps prescribed for a parasitic infestation) could be retrieved.⁶¹

The Egyptians, with their concern to arrest or ‘cure’ signs of ageing, may represent the world’s first ‘youth culture’. The Medical Papyri prescribe treatments for wrinkled skin, baldness and greying hair, and hair samples from mummies provide information about the use of cosmetic substances. A sample of scalp tissue with attached, red-coloured hair was taken from the mummy of Asru and investigated with spectrometric techniques; these tests identified the presence of henna, providing the first confirmatory scientific evidence that it was used as a hair dye in ancient Egypt.⁶²



Figure 12.2 An ancient Egyptian false toe found on a female mummy (c.950 BCE–710 BCE); research indicates that it was probably worn in life, making it the earliest extant prosthesis. Courtesy Dr Jacky Finch. (Copyright J. L. Finch, with kind permission of The Egyptian Museum, Cairo.)



Figure 12.3 Analysis shows that the elaborately curled hairstyle seen on this mummy in the Ulster Museum, Belfast (UK) was coated with hair-gel composed of fat and camphor. Tests also confirm that the reddish-blond hair colour was the result of degradation rather than natural pigment or the use of dye. (Courtesy of the University of Manchester.)

Another analytical study was carried out on hair taken from the mummy of Takabuti, a high-ranking woman who lived at Thebes, c.660 BCE (the mummy is now in the Ulster Museum, Belfast (UK)). This demonstrated that the reddish-blond colour was a result of degradation, not natural pigment or the use of dye (Figure 12.3). It was also possible to show that the woman's elaborate hairstyle, which incorporated artificial curls, had been coated with a hair-gel composed of fat mixed with camphor;⁶³ similar styling products have been found on mummies elsewhere.⁶⁴

Biomedical and scientific studies on material derived from human remains can make a significant and unbiased contribution to Egyptology, facilitating assessment of pathogenesis and disease evolution, medical and cosmetic treatments, genetics, dietary choices and religious practices. This approach, with its combination of scientific and historical evidence, will undoubtedly continue to enhance our perception of many aspects of women's lives in ancient Egypt.

Notes

- 1 Robins 1998.
- 2 Ayad 2009.
- 3 Galvin 1984.
- 4 Quirke 2002.
- 5 David 2008: 237–246.
- 6 Smith 1912.
- 7 Gray 1973.
- 8 Cockburn *et al.* 1998.
- 9 David 1979.
- 10 Balout and Roubet 1985.
- 11 Smith and Wood Jones 1908, 1910.
- 12 Ruffer 1921a.
- 13 Deelder *et al.* 1989.
- 14 Rutherford 2008a.
- 15 Pääbo 1985.

- 16 Rutherford 2008b.
- 17 Counsell 2008.
- 18 Nunn 1996.
- 19 Rutherford 2008a: 110.
- 20 Tapp 1979: 99.
- 21 Tapp 1979: 99.
- 22 David and Tapp 1984: 94.
- 23 Miller *et al.* 1994.
- 24 Rutherford 2008b: 130.
- 25 Smith and Wood Jones 1908.
- 26 Smith and Wood Jones 1910.
- 27 Raven and Taconis 2005: 62.
- 28 David and Zimmerman 2010.
- 29 David 1979: 31.
- 30 Raven and Taconis 2005: 57.
- 31 Donoghue *et al.* 2010.
- 32 Ruffer 1921b.
- 33 Allan *et al.* 2009.
- 34 Raven and Taconis 2005: 64.
- 35 David 1979: 38.
- 36 David *et al.* 2010.
- 37 Curry *et al.* 1979: 108.
- 38 Smith and Dawson 1924: 156.
- 39 Smith and Wood Jones 1908.
- 40 Long 1931.
- 41 Breasted 1930.
- 42 Sarry el-Din 2003.
- 43 Rose 2006.
- 44 Raven and Taconis 2005: 64.
- 45 Denton 2008: 81–82.
- 46 Smith and Dawson 1924: 159.
- 47 Smith 1912: 19.
- 48 Smith and Dawson 1924: 160.
- 49 David 1979: 31.
- 50 Nerlich *et al.* 2010.
- 51 Smith 1912: 100.
- 52 Williams 1929.
- 53 Smith and Dawson 1924: 161.
- 54 Smith 1908.
- 55 Hussien *et al.* 2010.
- 56 Gray 1966.
- 57 Finch 2012.
- 58 Smith and Dawson 1924: 119.

- 59 Finch 2011.
- 60 Smith and Dawson 1924: 161–162.
- 61 Metcalfe 2010.
- 62 David and Garner 2003.
- 63 Personal communication, N. McCreesh.
- 64 McCreesh *et al.* 2011.

References

- Allan, A. H., Thompson, R. C., Wann, L. S., Miyamoto, M. I. and Thomas, G. S. (2009) Computed tomographic assessment of atherosclerosis in ancient Egyptian mummies. *JAMA* 302: 2091–2094.
- Ayad, M. F. (2009) *God's Wife, God's Servant: The God's Wife of Amun (c.740–525 BC)*. London: Routledge.
- Balout, L. and Roubet, C. (1985) *La Momie de Ramsès II (1976–1977)*. Paris: Musée National d'Histoire Naturelle, Musée de l'Homme.
- Breasted, J. H. (1930) *The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus*. Two vols. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Cockburn, A., Cockburn, E. and Reyman, T. A. (eds) (1998) *Mummies, Disease and Ancient Cultures*. Second edition. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Cockitt, J. and David, R. (eds) (2010) *Pharmacy and Medicine in Ancient Egypt*. BAR International Series 2141. Oxford, UK: Archaeopress.
- Counsell, D. J. (2008) Intoxicants in ancient Egypt? Opium, nymphaea, coca and tobacco. In R. David (ed.) *Egyptian Mummies and Modern Science*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 195–215.
- Curry, A., Anfield, A. and Tapp, E. (1979) Electron microscopy of the Manchester Mummies. In A. R. David (ed.) *The Manchester Museum Mummy Project*. Manchester, UK: Manchester Museum, pp. 103–111.
- David, A. R. (ed.) (1979) *The Manchester Museum Mummy Project*. Manchester, UK: Manchester Museum.
- David, A. R. and Garner, V. (2003) Asru, an ancient Egyptian temple chantress: Modern spectrometric studies as part of the Manchester Egyptian Mummy Research Project. In G. Tsoucaris and J. Lipowski (eds) *Molecular and Structural Archaeology: Cosmetics and Therapeutic Chemicals*. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, pp. 153–162.
- David, A. R. and Zimmerman, M. R. (2010) Cancer: An old disease, a new disease, or something in between? *Nature Reviews Cancer* 10: 728–733.

- David, A. R., Kershaw, A. and Heagerty, A. (2010) The art of medicine: Atherosclerosis and diet in ancient Egypt. *The Lancet* 375 (27 February): 718–719.
- David, R. (ed.) (2008) *Egyptian Mummies and Modern Science*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- David, R. and Tapp, E. (eds) (1984) *Evidence Embalmed*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- Deelder, A. M., De Jonge, N., Boerman, O. C., Fillié, Y. E., Hilberath, G. W. and Rotmans, J. P. (1989) Sensitive determination of circulating anodic antigen in *schistosoma mansoni* infected individuals by enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay using monoclonal antibodies. *AmerJTropMedHyg.* 40: 268–272.
- Denton, J. (2008) Slices of mummy: A histologist's perspective. In R. David (ed.) *Egyptian Mummies and Modern Science*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 71–82.
- Donoghue, H. D., Lee, O. Y.-C., Minnikin, D., Besra, G. S., Taylor, J. H. and Spigelman, M. (2010) Tuberculosis in Dr Granville's mummy: A molecular re-examination of the earliest known Egyptian mummy to be scientifically examined and given a medical diagnosis. *Procs.Roy.Soc. B* 277: 51–56.
- Finch, J. (2011) The art of medicine: The ancient origins of prosthetic medicine. *The Lancet* 377: 548–549.
- Finch, J. (2012) The Durham Mummy: Deformity and the concept of perfection in the ancient world. In R. David (ed.) *Ancient Medical and Healing Systems: Their Legacy to Western Medicine*. *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 89, Suppl. 2012/2013: 111–132.
- Galvin, M. (1984) The hereditary status of the titles of the cult of Hathor. *JEA* 70: 42–49.
- Gray, P. H. K. (1966) Embalmers' restorations. *JEA* 52: 138–140.
- Gray, P. H. K. (1973) The radiography of mummies of ancient Egyptians. *JHumEvol* 2: 51–53.
- Hussien, F., el-Banna, R., Kandeel, W. and Sarry el-Din, A. (2010) Similarity of fracture treatment of workers and high officials of the pyramid builders. In J. Cockitt and R. David (eds) *Pharmacy and Medicine in Ancient Egypt*. BAR International Series 2141. Oxford, UK: Archaeopress, pp. 85–89.
- Long, A. R. (1931) Cardiovascular renal disease: Report of a case of 3000 years ago. *Archiv.Path.* 12: 92–96.
- McCreesh, N., Gize, A. P., Denton, J. and David, A. R. (2011) Hair analysis: A tool for identifying pathological and social information. *Yearbook of Mummy Studies* 1. Munich, Germany: Verlag Dr.

- Friedrich Pfeil, pp. 95–98.
- Metcalfe, R. J. (2010) Molecular methods for the study of ancient pharmacy. In J. Cockitt and R. David (eds) *Pharmacy and Medicine in Ancient Egypt*. BAR International Series 2141. Oxford, UK: Archaeopress, pp. 110–112.
- Miller, R. L., Ikram, S., Armelagos, G. J., Walker, R., Harer, W. B. and Schiff, C. J. (1994) Diagnosis of *Plasmodium falciparum* infections in mummies using the rapid manual ParaSight™-F test. *Trans.Roy.Soc.Trop.Med.Hyg.* 88: 31–32.
- Nerlich, A. G., Panzer, S., Hower-Tilmann, E. and Lösch, S. (2010) Palaeopathological-radiological evidence for cerebral palsy in an ancient Egyptian female mummy from a 13th-Dynasty tomb. In J. Cockitt and R. David (eds) *Pharmacy and Medicine in Ancient Egypt*. BAR International Series 2141. Oxford, UK: Archaeopress, pp. 113–116.
- Nunn, J. (1996) *Ancient Egyptian Medicine*. London: British Museum Press.
- Pääbo, S. (1985) Molecular cloning of ancient Egyptian mummy DNA. *Nature* (314)6012: 644–645.
- Quirke, S. (2002) *Manuscript for Health of Mother and Child: The Kahun Medical Papyrus or Gynaecological Papyrus*. Unpublished transcript. London.
- Raven, M. J. and Taconis, W. K. (2005) *Egyptian Mummies: Radiological Atlas of the Collections in the National Museum of Antiquities at Leiden*. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols.
- Robins, G. (1998) *Women in Ancient Egypt*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Rose, C. J. (2006) Paleopathology of the commoners at Tell Amarna, Egypt, Akhenaten's capital city. *Mem.Instit.OswaldoCruz, Rio de Janeiro* 101 (Suppl. II): 73–76.
- Ruffer, M. A. (1921a) Histological studies of Egyptian mummies. In R. L. Moodie (ed.) *Studies in the Palaeopathology of Egypt*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Ruffer, M. A. (1921b) On arterial lesions found in Egyptian mummies. In R. L. Moodie (ed.) *Studies in the Palaeopathology of Egypt*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, pp. 20–31.
- Rutherford, P. (2008a) The use of immunocytochemistry to diagnose disease in mummies. In R. David (ed.) *Egyptian Mummies and Modern Science*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 99–115.
- Rutherford, P. (2008b) DNA identification in mummies and associated material. In R. David (ed.) *Egyptian Mummies and Modern Science*.

- Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 116–132.
- Sarry el-Din, A. M. (2003) Bone fractures in ancient Egyptians from Giza Old Kingdom, Egypt. *Med.J.NationalResearchcentre* 2(2): 1–13.
- Smith, G. E. (1908) The most ancient splints. *BMJ* (March 28): 732–734.
- Smith, G. E. (1912) *The Royal Mummies: Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire*. Cairo, Egypt: Imprimerie de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale.
- Smith, G. E. and Wood Jones, F. (1908). Anatomical report. *Archaeological Survey of Nubia*, Bulletin 1. Cairo, Egypt: National Printing Department.
- Smith, G. E. and Wood Jones, F. (eds) (1910) *Archaeological Survey of Nubia Report for 1907–1908*, vol. 2. *Report on Human Remains*. Cairo, Egypt: National Printing Department.
- Smith, G. E. and Dawson, W. R. (1924) *Egyptian Mummies*. London: Allen and Unwin.
- Tapp, E. (1979) Disease in the Manchester mummies. In A. R. David (ed.) *The Manchester Museum Mummy Project*. Manchester, UK: Manchester Museum, pp. 95–102.
- Williams, H. U. (1929) Human paleopathology. *Archiv.Path.* 7: 839–902.

WOMEN'S ROLE IN SEXUAL INTERCOURSE IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Marc Orriols-Llonch

There is little evidence left by the ancient Egyptians regarding their sexual habits. Nonetheless, the extant data, although few, are enough to get an interesting overview of sexual practices and the role of sexuality within their culture, not only in the sacred sphere but also in the secular (Orriols-Llonch 2010). This lack of evidence is much more evident when attempting to study the feminine sexuality. First of all, it must be taken into account that women did not have access to writing and, in fact, there are very few examples of female literacy, if any (Baines and Eyre 1983: 81–85). For this reason, we must assume that any documentation that has come down to us was done by male hands. Women were, in scribal culture, marginalized; thus, their thoughts and world view have not endured into the present day. It could be said that all the information we have of the woman in ancient Egypt comes from a masculine point of view.

Written sources and female sexual relationships

The Instructions and the promiscuous woman

The main sources of information used to study this topic are textual documents. Among those, the so-called ‘instructions’ are of utmost importance. In these texts, a master instructs his pupil on the ethical dimension of the ‘ideal’ life that every Egyptian should follow. These are always texts from one man to another, but women’s behaviour is a subject of interest, and some of the instructions relate to female sexuality. For instance, the *Instructions of Ptahhotep* (XII Dynasty), say:

If you want friendship to endure inside the house you enter – whether as lord, or brother, or friend, wherever you enter – beware of approaching the women! The place where this is done is not a happy one; there is nothing welcome in

the man who approaches them. A man will damage in a thousand different ways what is useful and good to him through one brief look, which is like a dream. Death is reached by knowing them (sexually).

(*Ptahhotep, maxim 18, P 277–288*)

A similar warning can be found in the *Instructions of Ani* (New Kingdom), referring to foreign women. It says:

Beware of the woman who is a stranger, one who is not known in her town. Do not stare at her when she goes by. Do not know her body! She is deep water whose depth is not known. When a woman is far away from her husband, 'I am free', she says every day when she has no witness. She is ready to ensnare you.

(*Ani 3, 13–17*)

In the late *Teaching of Ankhsheshonq* (second to first century BC), the master gives his pupil some advice regarding the promiscuity of women. Some of these are: 'If you find your wife with her lover get yourself a bride to suit you' (Lichtheim 1980: 169); 'What she does with her husband today she does with another man tomorrow' (Lichtheim 1980: 170); 'Do not rejoice in your wife's beauty; her heart is set on her lover' (Lichtheim 1980: 173); and 'If a woman does not desire the property of her husband she has another man [in her] heart' (Lichtheim 1980: 179).

Thus, the teachings show us woman as promiscuous and sexually active, being, in that way, a peril to the man. On the one hand, she is a sexual temptation capable of causing a married man to become adulterous; on the other, a man faces the risk of having a sexual relationship with a married woman, as she is able to lie about her marital status just to have sexual intercourse (Orriols-Llonch 2012a: 20–25).

Tales and the seductive woman

Tales are another interesting source to analyse when studying feminine sexuality, although sexual passages within them are few and they are always narrated metaphorically. It is important to note that in the majority of these passages, the sexual act itself is seen as a negative feature, especially if it is a homosexual practice or adultery, so we must read them as stories with a moralistic purpose (Orriols-Llonch 2010: 667–700).

The first example to analyse is the *Tale of Truth and Falsehood* (XIX Dynasty). The story narrates the dispute between two brothers, Truth

and Falsehood. The former, after surviving an attempted murder carried out by Falsehood, lives on the streets until he is hired by a noble woman as a doorman of her house. The name of the woman has not been preserved although it must have been a pseudonym like those of the main characters. Then, the noble woman falls in love with Truth's beauty, orders her maid to bring him to her and they end up having sexual intercourse. The story says: 'the [woman] saw him and she desired him very much when she saw how [handsome] he was in all his [body]. He slept with her that night and knew her (sexually) like the (sexual) knowledge of a man' (*LES*, 32 = *pChester Beatty II*, 4'2-5).

The result of this relationship is the birth of a child, but what it is interesting to point out here is that the behaviour of the noble woman is represented as evil. First of all, she uses her superior social status to have sex with her 'employee'. In fact, she uses the man to give her a child, and right afterwards the man is returned to his previous condition, which was being her doorman. The woman's cruelty even reaches the point of hiding the father's identity from the son until the latter demands the information from her.

Two additional passages from the tales pertain to adulterous sexuality. The first is found in the *Westcar papyrus*, specifically the one with the head priest, Ubainer, and his wife as main characters. Although the text is not complete, the storyline is clear: while Ubainer is occupied with the king performing a ritual at the temple of Ptah, his wife, whose name is unknown, takes the opportunity to seduce a commoner by giving him a box of clothes as a gift. This act sets off the storyline where the lovers have several sexual encounters in a hut located within the garden of the house. When Ubainer returns from his duties at the temple, the gardener tells him about his wife's *affaire* and he decides to punish them. In order to do that he prepares a crocodile made of wax, and then he gives it to the gardener asking him to put it in the lake where the commoner cleans himself after having sexual intercourse. The lovers have one more meeting and, when the commoner enters the lake, the gardener sets free the crocodile which, after a magical recitation uttered by the head priest, becomes real and captures Ubainer's wife's lover. Then, the priest takes both lovers to be judged in front of the king, who decides to hand over the man to the crocodile and condemns the woman to be burnt and have her ashes thrown into the river. In this tale the woman is shown, once again, as sexually active, being the one seducing the man through gifts.

The second tale where adultery appears is in the *Tale of the Two*

Brothers (XIX Dynasty). This tale relates the story of a family composed of two brothers, Inpu, the elder, and Bata, the younger, who live together with Inpu's wife, whose name is unknown. At the beginning of the tale, the idyllic life of the characters is portrayed, until the moment when the woman takes action and sexually entices the younger brother. Horrified, he rejects the proposal and promises not to tell anybody what happened. After this scene, the woman, hurt by the repudiation, decides to distort the incident and tells her husband that his brother has not only sexually harassed her but has even beaten her for not agreeing to his desires.² Then, Inpu tries to kill his brother in revenge for his offence, but Bata makes him reflect on it and makes him also understand that the whole thing has been a set up by his wife. At the end of the episode, when the older brother returns home, he kills his wife and throws her corpse to the dogs.

These two tales have the same features in common: a woman, whose name is unknown, seduces a male of lower social status. In the first one, the woman was unmarried and used the man to have a child before returning him to his original status. In the second story, the woman was married and unfaithful to her husband with the other man. The result is the same in both: the women are killed and their corpses destroyed, which implies that their resurrection in the Afterlife is negated by eliminating their 'physical container' on earth. The fact that neither of the women has a name makes us think that the aim of the tales, besides that of entertaining, was to tell a moralistic story. As will be seen, adultery was forbidden in ancient Egypt, thus, those tales might be a tool to advise all women about the fate they could suffer if they were unfaithful to their husbands. There is no concluding evidence of the death penalty for adulterous men or women, so the end of the tale must be taken as an educational resource to advise, and at the same time emphasize dramatically, the consequences of an extramarital relationship.

Erotic poetry and the female lover

Within the scope of literary texts, the erotic poetry, or so-called love songs, must also be considered. It is only documented, at least in writing, within the village of Deir el-Medina during the XIX and XX Dynasties. This kind of poetry must not be read with our western concepts of romantic love, but rather as it was experienced in African tales and much Arabic poetry, as a genre concerned with carnal love. And so, behind a set of beautiful words western society would interpret as referring to romance, there is in fact an underlying sexual meaning.

In the *Turin Love Song* (XX Dynasty), J. López has made an interesting analysis of some of the fragments where sexual intercourse is narrated metaphorically. One occurs at the end of the speech of the pomegranate tree, referring to the male lover:

Look at him advancing gloriously,

Come to flatter him!

Make him spend the day

Protecting his shelter.

(López 2005a: 143)

López (2005a: 145, n. 10) points out that the final sentence ‘protecting his shelter’ does not make sense in the context where it is written, and he considers it a sexual euphemism. Thus, he understands the ‘shelter’ to be a metaphor for the female vagina that ‘shelters’ the penis within it. This theory is absolutely possible when analysing it together with the expression ‘spend the day’ written in the previous sentence. It is common to find in the literary texts that temporal expressions function as euphemisms for sexual intercourse (Orriols-Llonch 2010: 693–696). Thus, we must understand this expression as an allusion to the lovers’ actual copulation.

There is another interesting sentence at the end of the poem, where the sycamore is speaking. While both lovers lie down beneath his branches, he says:

The sister is in her strolls,

I will remain discreet, not saying what I see,

I will not say a word!

(López 2005a: 145)

As López notices (2005a: 146, n. 30), the sentence ‘the sister is in her strolls’ could be another pun hiding a sexual act. On the one hand, the sycamore says that he will not reveal what he is seeing at the bottom of his trunk, which implies that it is an act that must be hidden, and therefore it cannot be a simple stroll. On the other, he says that only the sister is the one strolling, which does not make sense if we take into account that she is with her lover lying beneath the tree. Thus, these ‘strolls’ must be seen as the movements of the woman while

copulating with her lover, probably above him. In another fragment appearing before the one just analysed, the sycamore talks to the woman and says to her:

Come and spend a beautiful day.

Morning after morning, for three days,

While you are seated in (my) shadow.

(López 2005a: 144)

As shown above, the temporal expression ‘to spend a beautiful day’ is a sexual euphemism which emphasizes the possibility that this passage is actually describing the sexual act between the lovers.

López (2005b: 20–22) goes even further when giving a general interpretation of the poem. He considers the fact that the woman is named Beloved (mryt) as an anomaly in the erotic poetry, since lovers are usually called brother (sn) and sister (snt). After giving it much thought, López concludes that the woman referred to in the poem is the queen herself being unfaithful to the king with one of the courtiers at the palace. By my understanding, this hypothesis is completely admissible, considering the texts mentioned before, where adultery is carried out by a woman of a higher social status than the man she is having sex with. Although we do not know whether the story is finished, we can sense a tragic ending for both lovers.

Letters, legal documents and adultery

Now that the official documentation has been analysed, we must also consider the functional, meaning the documentation used day-to-day and for that reason, outside official decorum. Among those, letters and judicial texts are the most interesting. There are at least three textual data where a woman is directly accused of being unfaithful to her husband. The first one is a letter from an anonymous woman to a man. It says: ‘Behold, I will make you see the continuous copulation which your wife committed against you’ (oDM 439, v^o 7).

The second document is British Museum papyrus 10416. Despite the difficulty in understanding its meaning, it seems to be a letter from an anonymous woman to another anonymous man, where she describes a case of adultery. The sender tells the recipient about his people being annoyed about the situation, willing to beat a woman, reaching the

point at which one of the chiefs has to intervene in order to calm the crowd. The reason for the altercation is described as: 'Eight full months until today, he is copulating with that woman although he is not [her] husband' (*pBM* 10416, r^o 9–10).

Everything seems to indicate that a married man has been having an illicit sexual relationship with another woman, and when his family found out, they chase her in order to beat her as a communal punishment. Right after this situation, the chief asks the guilty woman: 'As for Nesamenope whom you received for copulation, why did you copulate?' (*pBM* 10416, v^o 3–5). Behind this question we must see the chief acting as a judge, first accusing the women of causing adultery and then chastising her for it, just like when a parent asks a child what he was thinking after doing something wrong.

The last document where a case of adultery appears is ostrakon CGC 25227 (XIX Dynasty, Abydos). Although the text is damaged, it seems to narrate the verdict of a local court relative to the prosecution of a man against his wife. The husband says convincingly: 'a woman (= wife) is a woman: she should not desire (sexually) nor copulate' (*oCGC* 25227, v^o 5). Although the rest of the text is confusing, the end suggests, according to Eyre (1984: 100), that the man finally divorced his wife.

As has been pointed out, there are also judicial texts where a man is accused of committing adultery, in which, of course, a woman also plays a part. An example is found in a letter written by the worker, Amennakht, to the vizier. In it, he describes a litany of accusations against a man called Paneb, who lived at Deir el-Medina between Dynasties XIX and XX. This letter says:

Paneb copulated with the citizeness Tuy when she was the woman/wife of the workman Quenna. He copulated with the citizeness Huner when she was with Pendua. He copulated with Huner when she was with Hesysunebef; so said his son. And when he copulated with Huner, he copulated with Ubkhet, her daughter; and Aapehety, his son (= Paneb), he copulated with Ubkhet too.

(*pSalt* 124, r^o 2'2–4)

There are more examples like this one (see *pTurin* 1880, r^o 4'8–4'9; *pTurin* 1887, r^o 1'5–6; *pDM* 26B, v^o 1; and *pDM* 27, r^o 2–7) and the pattern is the same in all of them: man X copulates with woman Y who is the wife of another man Z. It is interesting to point out that in no case do the texts mention whether the man has a wife, while it is always indicated whether the woman is married. The same occurs in the negative confessions of the *Book of the Dead*, where the deceased

must deny in front of Osiris having done in life different illicit acts, such as: 'I have not copulated with the woman of a man' (BD 125).

Considering this, it can be deduced that, as in many other cultures, a married man could have sexual relationships with other women, as long as they were single, while a married woman must be faithful to her husband. Thus, adultery is only forbidden for women, and it becomes a way to control feminine sexuality in order to ensure the man's progeny, meaning his inheritance. It is interesting to notice that, in these legal texts, although the woman is the one who is unfaithful, as she is the one with a husband, there is no accusation made against her. A possible solution for this may be found in the tales noted above. As has been seen in the *Tale of Two Brothers*, the one who punishes the woman is her own spouse; thus, we can deduce that the woman's punishment was meted out by her husband. However, in the tale of the head priest, Ubainer, he sets the entire matter before the king. It is possible, then, that the deceived husband had the potential either to punish his wife himself, or to take her before an official body to decide her penalty. Men, however, are always accused in front of a court, a fact that makes us think that the judicial authorities were the ones with the authority to establish their sentence.

Iconography and sexuality

Besides the main sexual passages that we have seen, it is also important to mention some of the few examples of sexual iconography documented in ancient Egypt. It is basically a corpus of 15 depictions where different couples, always heterosexual, are having sexual intercourse in different coital positions. Other than these, the Turin papyrus 55.001, a hapax whose significance has been thoroughly discussed (the most recent being Janák and Navrátilová 2008: 63–70; O'Connor 2011: 361–380; Brawanski and Fischer-Elfert 2012: 67–97; Vernus 2012: 109–121), has to be added as well. The recto of this papyrus shows 12 sexual scenes, 9 of them representing the copulation between a man and a woman, and the rest of them showing pre- and post-coital scenes.

It is important to point out that the majority of sexual images documented belong to the secular sphere; from the sacred there are only a few examples of Isis and Osiris copulating. To these can also be added the images of Geb (the earth god) and Nut (the sky goddess) in a pre- or post-coital position, dating from Dynasties XXI and XXII. There is only one depiction of a couple having sexual intercourse

located within a tomb, specifically the tomb 140 in Beni Hassan's necropolis, although it is not an image per se but a hieroglyph. However, as it belongs to a cryptographic text not related to any sexual act, it must be considered as an exception. The other iconographic examples are found on different materials: ostraca are the most common, but papyrus and graffiti were also used. Considering this kind of source, it is interesting to ask about the authorship of these documents since, a priori, they could have been drawn by men as much as by women, and not only belonging to a high social status but to a humble one as well. As was demonstrated in a previous study (Orriols-Llonch 2009: 123–137), everything seems to indicate a masculine hand as the producer of these images, and it also seems that some of them might represent humiliating fantasies/acts and the other ones might be erotic dreams of a specific individual. If this theory is correct, then these images would be reflecting a masculine point of view of the sexual act, the feminine perspective being, once again, marginalized.

An analysis of the images of copulation preserved hereto gives us information of utmost importance regarding the role of women while having sexual intercourse. In only a few examples does the woman appear depicted above her *partenaire*, that is, as being the active partner of the sexual act. Those, however, are unusual and belong to the sacred sphere. One of them is the copulation between Isis and Osiris, only possible in that position as Osiris is dead. A second example would be the copulation between Nut and Geb, again the only possible posture because she, representing the sky, can only be located above him, and Geb, being the earth, can only be depicted below. Finally, within the non-official documentation, there is one example where the woman is shown in a female superior position. This is scene VIII of the Turin papyrus which, because of its similarity, some authors consider to be a satire of Nut and Geb's sexual intercourse. Thus, everything seems to suggest not only that the Egyptian man did not like active women during sexual intercourse but also that it was unusual for the woman to be on top while copulating. In fact, there is a late mythological text in which the exceptional nature of this coital position is described:

I am your sister Isis. There is no god or goddess that has done what I have done. I have been in the place of a man, being a woman, in order to make endure your name on the earth; since your divine semen came into my body.

(pLouvre 3079, col. 110, 10)

Even so, some of the depictions show the woman doing some kind of sexual activity. For instance, in the Turin's papyrus 55.001 (Omlin

1973), from the texts and the depictions themselves, women seem to be taking the sexual initiative. In the rest of the examples, the woman shows some interactivity with her sexual partner, looking at him while she is being penetrated or even grabbing his phallus in order to put it in her vagina, as can be seen in a graffito located at the Wadi Hammamat (Figure 13.1).



Figure 13.1 A *tergo* copulation between a man and a woman, Wadi Hammamat. (Photo by the author.)

Regarding other sexual practices, the information that has come down to us is minimal, and it is mostly documented within the mythological sphere. One such example is masturbation, always male, which is one of the methods by which Atum, the demiurge god, created reality (Orriols-Llonch 2012b). We also find the masturbatory act in a passage of the *Contending of Horus and Seth* (XX Dynasty). At a certain point in the tale, the god Seth sodomizes his nephew, Horus. Isis, Horus' mother, needs the semen of Horus to avenge this act, and the only way to do it is through penile stimulation. The scene is related this way: 'Then she got some sweet ointment and put it in the phallus of Horus. Then, she made it become stiff, inserted it into a pot and he let his semen drop into it' (pChester Beatty I, r° 11'6–8).

Until this point of the tale, Horus is presented as a child, but the

fact that in this passage he is able to ejaculate would indicate his maturity. The presence and collaboration of Isis in the act would be understood as the goddess teaching her son the use of the virile member.

Oral sex and semen ingestion are mainly found within the mythological sphere (Orriols-Llonch 2015: 839–848). However, it is important to note that among the negative confessions in the *Book of Going Forth by Day* (also known as the *Book of the Dead*) there is one where the deceased denies having performed fellatio or sodomizing a man. It says: ‘I have neither performed a fellatio nor copulated with a sodomite’ (BD 125).

This passage seems to indicate that fellatio was a common sexual act performed by ancient Egyptians, although in the above example it is done between men. Another example of this practice is an ostrakon from a private collection, where a phallus is depicted ejaculating into a woman’s mouth (Figure 13.2). This image could be understood as fellatio, and it would indicate that women performed this sexual practice on men.

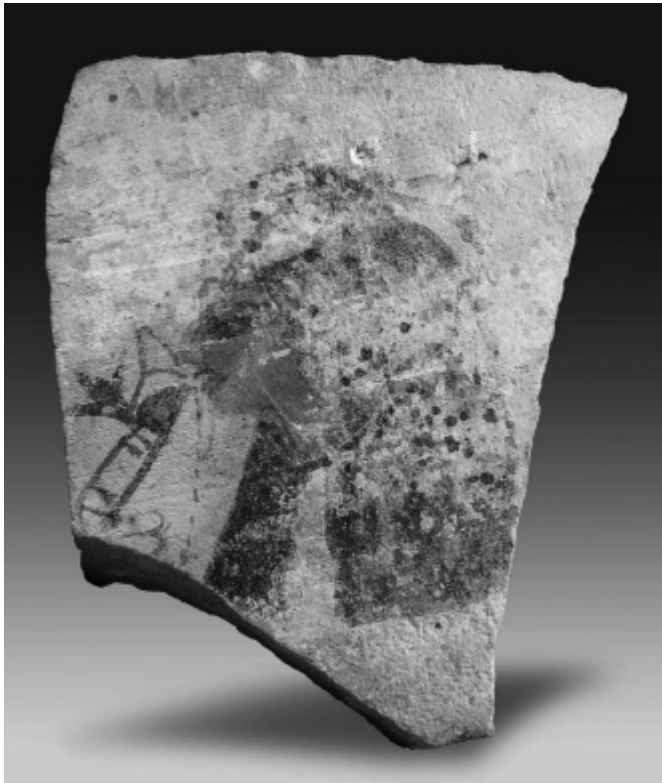


Figure 13.2 Ejaculating phallus in front of a woman's mouth, ostrakon private collection, Deir el-Medina, XIX–XX Dynasty.
(<http://www.pbauctions.com/html/fiche.jsp?id=2145274&np=3&lng=fr&npp=20&ordre=1&aff=1&r>)

Conclusions

As has been seen, information regarding women's sexual activity in ancient Egypt is relatively sparse and, moreover, what has remained until today comes from a male point of view. However, some interesting conclusions do emerge from the data. The textual sources show the women as taking an active part in the search for a sexual partner. This includes not only those women taking sexual advantage of their social inferiors (and even paying them with clothing) but also those women who sought out extramarital relationships, both fictionally and otherwise. For the latter, as in every society where the hegemonic man prevails, female adultery was condemned because it would endanger the husband's legacy: his offspring's legitimacy. On the other hand, the iconography shows a variety of sexual positions, which indicates a search for pleasure, that sexual intercourse was not simply an act of procreation. In some of these positions penetration is deeper, or stimulation of the clitoris is provided, which favours the woman's pleasure. Despite this, the lack of depictions of female superior positions indicates that it was not well accepted that a woman should be dominant in the sex act.

List of abbreviations

CGC:	Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire.
<i>oDM</i> :	ostrakon, Deir el-Medina.
<i>pBM</i> :	papyrus, British Museum.

Notes

- 1 Occasionally, the term *ib* 'heart' refers to 'sexual desire' or 'orgasm' (Orriols-Llonch 2012b: 35–37).
- 2 Some authors have seen this passage as a precedent of the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife (Genesis 39).

References

Baines, J. and Eyre, C. J. (1983) Four notes on literacy. *Göttinger*

- Brawanski, A. and Fischer-Elfert, H. W. (2012) Der 'erotische' Abschnitt des Turiner Papyrus 55001: Ein Lehrstück für das männliche Ego? *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 41: 67–97.
- Eyre, C. J. (1984) Crime and adultery in Ancient Egypt. *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 70: 92–105.
- Janák, J. and Navrátilová, H. (2008) People vs. PTurin 55001. In C. Graves-Brown (ed.) *Don Your Wig for a Joyful Hour-Sex and Gender in Ancient Egypt*. Swansea, Wales: University of Wales, pp. 63–70.
- Lichtheim, M. (1980) *Ancient Egyptian Literature. Volume III: The Late Period*. Berkeley, CA and London: University of California Press.
- López, J. (2005a) *Cuentos y fábulas del Antiguo Egipto*. Madrid: Trotta.
- López, J. (2005b) La Disputa de los árboles del huerto. In J. cervelló, M. Díaz de cerio and D. Rull (eds) *Actas del Segundo Congreso Ibérico de Egiptología*. Bellaterra, Spain: Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, pp. 19–25.
- O'Connor, D. (2011) Satire or parody? The interaction of the pictorial and the literary in Turin Papyrus 55001. In M. Collier and S. Snape (eds) *Ramesseide Studies in Honour of K. A. Kitchen*. Bolton, UK: Rutherford, pp. 361–380.
- Omlin, J. A. (1973) *Der Papyrus 55001 und seine Satirisch-erotischen Zeichnungen und Inschriften (Catalogo del Museo Egizio di Torino, serie prima – Monumenti e testi, volume 3)*. Turin, Italy: Fratelli Pozzio.
- Orriols-Llonch, M. (2009) Léxico e iconografía erótica del antiguo Egipto. La cópula *a tergo*. *Trabajos de Egiptología* 5/2: 123–137.
- Orriols-Llonch, M. (2010) *La sexualidad en el antiguo Egipto. Un estudio léxico y cultural*. Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Unpublished PhD thesis.
- Orriols-Llonch, M. (2012a) Mujer ideal, mujer infractora. La transgresión femenina en el antiguo Egipto. *Lectora* 18: 17–40.
- Orriols-Llonch, M. (2012b) Sex and cosmogony. The onanism of the solar demiurge. *Gottinger Miszellen* 233: 31–42.
- Orriols-Llonch, M. (2015) Semen ingestion and oral sex in ancient Egyptian texts. In P. Kousoulis and N. Lazaridis (eds) *Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Egyptologists, University of the Aegean, Rhodes, 22–29 May 2008 (OLA 241)*, Leuven, Belgium, pp. 839–848.
- Vernus, P. (2012) Stratégie d'épure et stratégie d'appogiature dans les productions dites 'artistiques' à l'usage des dominants. Le papyrus dit 'érotique' de Turin et la mise à distance des dominés. In K. A. Kóthay (ed.) *Art and Society. Ancient and Modern Context of Egyptian Art*. Budapest, Hungary: Museum of Fine Arts, pp. 109–121.

MOTHERHOOD IN PHARAONIC EGYPT

Erika Feucht

Mother and father in the creation of the child¹

The ancient Egyptian was well aware that both parents were needed to create a child and that childlessness may be attributed to either parent.² According to PT 447 §828, the goddess Nut will revive the deceased, giving him his head, reassembling his bones, joining his members and bringing his heart into his body. Later in CT I, 56 the deceased got his heart (*jb*) from his worldly mother and in BD 30B the deceased calls to “my heart of my mother” at his judgement day not to speak against him.³ According to later texts, the child was created in its father’s heart; the semen then went to the testicles from whence it reached the mother’s womb. In the temple of Hibis from the Persian Period, we read that the semen was poured into the bones, an idea which often returns in Ptolemaic texts.⁴ Thus the child developed in the semen while the mother’s womb served as a receptacle.⁵ The mythological precedent for this understanding derives from the birth of Horus: With the seed of Osiris in her womb, Isis moulded the shape of her son in the egg (CT II, 210–217). Thus in the Hellenistic period Diodorus Siculus (I, 80, 3ff.) writes that no child, even though he was born of a slave mother, was regarded as a bastard in Egypt, because the father was the creator of the child while the woman only nourished it. Nevertheless, other texts provided an alternate conceptual paradigm whereby the mother also took part in the creation (not merely moulding) of the child.⁶ pJumilhac XII, 24 from the third century BC, for example, states that the child’s flesh and skin were formed from the mother’s milk and the bones from the semen of the father, an idea which was taken over by Greek authors and probably acquired from African tribes.⁷

If a couple could not achieve pregnancy, they tried to remedy the problem through prayers, medical treatment, or an appeal to a deceased father.⁸ In a letter to his deceased father on an ostrakon from

the First Intermediate Period, a man begs his father to help him have a son and his sister a second son (Chicago 13945).⁹ Furthermore, a 12th-Dynasty potency figurine now in the Egyptian Museum in Berlin (14517) depicts an adult woman who carries a child on her hip. The inscription on it reads: “May a birth be given to your daughter Seh” A similar figurine dating to the 12th–13th Dynasties has an inscription on the legs invoking the deceased to provide a child to the woman, Tjtj (Louvre E 8000). Similar such figurines or figurines of women lying on a bed with a child have been found in women’s and men’s tombs, in temples (mostly of the goddess of love, Hathor), and even on rubbish heaps; it is likely that all would have had the same meaning: a prayer for progeny.¹⁰

Conversely, if a woman chose not to get pregnant, she could use acidic contraceptives—which had the same effect as the contraceptive jellies of today—magic spells, and prescriptions to “let the blood flow down,” which shows that the connection between menstruation and conception was known.¹¹

The gods looked after the child in the womb (CT II, 3, II. 213). According to the *Aten Hymn* of Amarna it is Aten:

Who lets the semen develop in the women,
who makes water to man,
who keeps the son alive in its mother’s womb
and calms him, drying his tears.
Nurse in the womb
Who gives air to enliven what he created.
When he comes forth from the womb
to breathe (?) at the day of his birth,
then you will open his mouth to speak,
and look after his needs.¹²

During the Ptolemaic Period, it is the god Khnum or Ptah-Tatenen who looked after the unborn child.¹³ Burials of foetuses show that the foetus was already regarded as a living being.¹⁴

Pregnancy and birth¹⁵

The Egyptian was well aware of the connection between menstruation and pregnancy. It was the god, Khnum, who “lets the menstruation stop at the right moment.”¹⁶ There were different methods to find out whether a woman was pregnant or not.

Barley (and) emmer, the woman moistens it with her urine each day. If both of them grow, she will give birth. If the barley sprouts she will bear a male child. If the emmer sprouts she will bear a female child. If they do not sprout she will not give birth.¹⁷

Ghaliougui has shown that it is possible to predict pregnancy this way, although not the sex of the child.¹⁸ Physical symptoms, such as the color of the skin, fuller breasts, the linea alba turning brown, the tendency toward nausea (“morning sickness”), or the orientation of the child, are recorded in the medical papyri.¹⁹ Poor hygiene made childbirth a risk for mother and child, the average lifespan of women being two years less than that of men.²⁰ Should both mother and child die, they could be buried together.²¹ Magic spells, amulets, tampons (the Isis knot)²², and apotropaic wands²³ covered with all kinds of protective figures were thought to prevent miscarriage. Deities helpful in this regard were the goddesses Hathor; the pregnant hippopotamus *daimon* Taweret; and the ugly dwarf Bes, who also protected the mother and child after delivery.²⁴ Little vessels in the form of a naked, pregnant woman massaging her abdomen probably once contained oil to prevent stretch marks.²⁵ She lacks genitalia, but sometimes shows a vaginal plug, to prevent miscarriage.

The duration of pregnancy was known. Different gods and demons were called on to accelerate the birth. The mother brought forth the child as she knelt on the floor or on bricks²⁶ laid out on the floor, or sitting on a delivery chair, aided by elder women, one crouching in front of her, another standing behind her, or a midwife.²⁷ Late sources mention the training of midwives in the “house of life” in Sais.²⁸ The child was washed and the umbilical cord was cut and often preserved. As she was regarded as unclean after giving birth, the mother, her hair bound together, and child stayed in the front room of the house or in a confinement pavilion near or on top of the house, looked after by young servants.²⁹ Ostraca show the mother, her hair bound high,³⁰ sitting on a stool or a bed, its feet formed by Bes-figures,³¹ nursing her child. On one ostrakon, she looks into a mirror held by a girl. Possibly, it shows preparations for the end of her purification after 14 days, a time mentioned in pWestcar, 19.

The mother's child and obligations of a child

The child's names would be chosen by the mother and father.³² One of them is called "the name of his mother," which always stands at first place in lists.³³ In women's tombs of the Old and Middle Kingdoms, the deceased's husband is often omitted and the children are simply called "her son/daughter." King's wives and princesses do not mention their husbands of lower rank in their tombs, and their children are attributed solely to their mothers. The Old Kingdom princess, Meresankh III, is called daughter of Hetepheres II, with whom she is depicted in her tomb. Hetepheres II herself was a daughter of Khufu and the wife of a king; as such, she "outranked" Meresankh's father, Kawab, who was a royal prince, but who died before becoming a king himself.³⁴ Another son of Khufu, Khufukhaef, is preceded by his mother in his tomb.³⁵ His father, although known, is not shown. Even in her husband's tomb, a woman of royal blood usually called their children her own, while they are called "his" when both parents were of lower origin. In her own tract of their tomb, the wife of Mereruka, "the eldest bodily daughter of a king," does not mention her husband and calls Meriteti "her son," while Mereruka depicts both her and "his son" Meriteti in his tomb.³⁶ As Redford has noticed, the daughters of Akhenaten and Nefertiti are always called Nefertiti's daughters, she being responsible for their upbringing.³⁷

On women's stelae from the Middle Kingdom, the husband is often omitted and the children are called "her son/her daughter." On men's stelae, by contrast, some children might be called his, others the son/daughter of a woman, which is often the case with servants. At the beginning of the New Kingdom, some children can also be named as born (*ms.n*) of their mother, others made by (*jr.n*) their father; later both parents are named.³⁸ It has been debated whether, when named after the wife, these were the children of a man's first or second wife, or of the wife's first marriage, or if the children of the servants were his own or from the servant's legal husband.³⁹ Probably hereditary rights were the reason for such matronymics, because a child of a first wife inherited more than a child from a later wife and the belongings of a woman went to her children. Khnumhotep II inherited the rights of a monarch from the father of his mother.⁴⁰ In literary texts, where hereditary rights played no role, only the father is named.

Nursing

In "The Instructions of Ani" (pAni 7, 17ff.) the pupil is instructed to double the food he got from his mother because:⁴¹

When you were born after your months, she looked after you. Her breast was

in your mouth for three years. When you grew up and your excrements were disgusting, she sent you to school and you learned how to write. She continued to look after you each day with bread and beer in her house . . . Do not give her cause to blame you, lest she raises her hands to god, and he hears her cries.

The Egyptians probably already knew that the longer the child was breast-fed the better was its chance to survive, and that the long nursing period could prevent a new pregnancy.⁴² The above “Instruction of Ani” suggests that the mother breast-fed her child for three years, while pLouvre recounts that, “Your mother carried you for 10 (lunar) months. She nursed you for three years.”⁴³

The importance of breast-feeding throughout Egyptian history is manifest in the artwork. Since prehistoric times, figurines of women nursing or carrying a child on the hip are preserved. These could be anonymous women in mundane materials, or royalty in elite metals. Two bronze statuettes—Brooklyn 43.137 and Berlin 14078—show a princess and a queen respectively sitting on the floor and nursing a child. On the Berlin piece, it says: “Recitation by Isis, the goddess, (with) her son Horus: we have come to protect the queen.”⁴⁴ Likewise, little flasks were used to preserve superfluous mother’s milk, either for later use, or for older children, or for the preparation of medicines.⁴⁵

If the mother did not have enough milk, a wet-nurse could be employed. Well-off families could have more than one nurse. Through the milk, she became related to her charges and thus included as a member of the family, being depicted with them in their father’s tomb or stele.⁴⁶ These nurses probably continued to care for the child as it grew up. In a few cases, her own children accompany her.⁴⁷ Such nurses are usually called *menat*. In the tomb of Khnumhotep in Beni Hassan, his daughters stand behind his wife and are followed by a nurse.⁴⁸ In the tomb of Paheri in el-Kab, three nurses are sitting amongst Paheri’s relatives.⁴⁹ In Theban Tomb (TT) A 11, nine women are depicted seated and nursing children.⁵⁰ The wet-nurses of royal children were often wives of high officials, and they were highly esteemed.⁵¹ Thutmoses III married Satiah, the daughter of his nurse Ipu.⁵² She had probably grown up in the palace like the *hrd n k3p53* Amenemhab Mahu (TT 85), lieutenant-commander of soldiers, husband of the chief royal nurse, Baki. On pillars of his tomb he makes offerings to his wife shown with the Amenhotep II as a prince on her lap; she also appears suckling the young prince. She is called “great nurse of the lord of both lands, whose breast Horus (the young king) touched” (Urk. IV 913, cf. Urk. IV, 920 and Urk. IV, 921, 925).⁵⁴ In the tomb of Kenamun (TT 93) his mother, the great (royal) nurse is seated with Amenhotep II on her lap, with all his kingly regalia, as he

was Pharaoh at the time when Kenamun decorated his tomb.⁵⁵ The chief royal nurses were so close to their charges that they could be buried in the Valley of the Kings. Sitra, the nurse of Hatshepsut, was buried in KV 60 near Hatshepsut's tomb, and the burial equipment of Senetnay, nurse of Amenhotep II and wife of the mayor of Thebes Sennefer, was found in KV 42.⁵⁶ Tya, the nurse of Nefertiti, is depicted in the tomb of her husband, the chariotry commander, Aye, receiving the gold of honor from the royal couple.⁵⁷ After the death of Tutankhamun, Aye became king. The nurse's own child who shared the milk with the royal child was called his/her foster brother/sister.⁵⁸ These nurses probably also accompanied their nursling after weaning, because the word *menat*, written with the breast, is also used for a male tutor. Paheri, tutor of the early deceased Prince Wadjmose holds the young prince on his knees.⁵⁹ Hekareshu "*menat* of the king's son," Thutmose IV, is shown in the tomb of his own son, the "*menat* of the king's son Amenhotep (III)" Hekaerneheh (TT 64) with the young prince on his knees.⁶⁰ Well known is Senenmut, the *menat* of Hatshepsut's daughter, Neferure, who was buried near the mortuary temple of Hatshepsut.⁶¹

To date, the only contract we have between a man and a nurse dates to 232 BC. Here the nurse lives in the house of her nursling. Whether this was a Greek habit, or whether it was practiced by the Egyptians too, or whether the nurse lived with her own family, regularly coming to nurse the child, we cannot say.

Mothers and childcare

Mothers looked after the household. Their children could accompany them in their daily duties, like grinding corn, going to the market, gleaning in the fields. Should they have to work for their subsistence, mothers could take their smaller children along. We see them nursing their children in a bakery, on a boat, in the kitchen (Figure 14.1), between workers being beaten by an overseer. At festivities children could accompany their mother (Figure 14.2), at funerals their nurslings were carried in a cloth slung in front of them or on their back, older children following.⁶² Herodotos (II, 60) relates that they participated at the festival of Bubastis.

As written in the "Instruction of Ani," the mother looked after her son going to school and getting a good education. Just so, Nefertiti was responsible for her daughters. On the second frontier stele of el-Amarna it says that Nefertiti was under the guidance of the king "and the king's daughter Meritaton and the king's daughter Meketaten,

their children will reach age under the guidance of the queen, their mother.”⁶³

Much later, Ankhsheshonqi 25, 17 advises his son not to marry a godless woman, lest she be a godless model for her children. And in the demotic story of the birth and education of Saosiris, son of Khaemwas, the mother visited her son at school and asked the teacher whether her son was stupid.⁶⁴ Widows could look after the belongings of their small children. The mother of Kheti II, who was a “child of one yard” when he inherited the position of nomarch of Assiut, governed for him until he came of age.⁶⁵ According to demotic marriage contracts mothers looked after the inheritance of their children when the father died until they came of age.⁶⁶

Poor mothers could let their children go to work. The first known case comes from the 18th Dynasty. Here, the mother complained that she had let her daughter go to work “as a child,” but she was doing the work of a grown-up.⁶⁷ More cases come to us from the Ptolemaic Period. Ptolemy Philopator stipulated that a woman needed the confirmation of the father or a male relative if she gave her child to be adopted, sent the child to work, or to be married.⁶⁸



Figure 14.1 Stela of Setjau. Berlin 13466. 6th Dynasty.



Figure 14.2 From Tomb of Neferhotep (TT 49) 18th Dynasty. Time of Aye.

Women had control over property inherited from parents, received from husbands, or acquired themselves, and they bequeathed this property to their children as they saw fit.⁶⁹ The oldest testament of a mother that has come down to us was made by the mother of Metjen (3rd–4th Dynasty).⁷⁰ Wah (12th Dynasty) transferred all he received from his brother to his wife, and “she herself shall give it to any of the children that she shall bear me, as she wishes.”⁷¹ In her will a mother could make over her belongings to certain of her children on the condition that they looked after her during her lifetime and after her death. She could disinherit her children, if they did not comply. Famous is the 20th-Dynasty testament of Naunakhte from Deir el-Medina. Naunakhte had inherited from her father and her first husband, and owned part of an acquisition with her husband:

She said: “As for me, I am a free woman of the land of Pharaoh.
I brought

up these eight servants of yours and gave them an outfit of
everything

(such) as is usually made for those in their station. But see, I am grown

old, and see, they are not looking after me in my turn. Whoever of them

has aided me, to him I will give (of) my property, (but) he who has not

given to me, to him I will not give my property.”⁷²

If the mother made no will, her belongings went to all her children; the child who buried her and looked after her funerary cult received a special part.⁷³

In addition to physical care, mothers also loved their children and tended to them emotionally. This is especially evident in affairs of the heart. She was the person in whom her children confided, and she could mediate in love affairs. A New Kingdom seven-stanza love poem recorded on pChester Beatty I records the words of a love-lorn maiden: “He knows not my wish to embrace him. Or he would write to my mother.” And:

I passed before his house,

I found his door ajar;

My brother [sweetheart] stood by his mother . . .

If only the mother knew my heart.

She would have understood by now;

O Golden [Hathor], put it in her heart,

Then will I hurry to my brother! ⁷⁴

In exchange for her lifetime of care, children were charged to be good to their mothers. Duakheti in his Middle Kingdom instructional text (§28) admonishes the son to be honest toward his mother.⁷⁵ When the children had grown up, they were expected to honor their parents, care for them when they were old, bury them, and look after their funerary cult.⁷⁶ A son could have a statue or a stele erected for his mother. Antefoker (12th Dynasty) built a tomb for his mother, Senet, although he mostly depicted himself in it.⁷⁷ Children were obliged to look after their mother if their father died. On a Middle Kingdom papyrus, the family of Hori, probably an eldest son, included his wife, daughter, and his mother with her unmarried daughters. After his

death, his son's household comprised his mother with a daughter, his father's mother, and two of his father's sisters.⁷⁸ Away from home, Hekanakhte wrote letters to his mother who lived in his household.⁷⁹

Royal mothers

Silke Roth has shown the importance of the queen in the transfer of royal power to her son.⁸⁰ Already in the 1st Dynasty Merit-Neith, the mother of king Den, is called "mother of the king" and "wife of the king." Furthermore, the annals recording the kings of the first to fifth dynasties mention the names of the kings' mothers. From the 3rd Dynasty on, her title read *mw.t nswt bjt* "mother of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt." Though common during the Old Kingdom,⁸¹ it only appears during the 11th and 12th Dynasties once, and twice during the 18th Dynasty. "Mother of the king" once again becomes a common title in the Late Period.⁸² During the 4th to 6th Dynasties, the title "daughter of the god" can be added. The title is common for queens of royal as well as common blood.

Budin proposes that the Old Kingdom queens Khentkaues II and Iput I were depicted with the vulture headdress of Nekhbet and rewarded with a funerary cult because, although not of royal blood, they had ensured the throne for their young sons, Niuserre and Pepi I, just as Anknesmeryre did for Pepi II.⁸³

At the beginning of the New Kingdom, the king's mothers had a most prominent position. After his elder brother, Kamose, had been killed in battle, Ahmose ascended the throne at about ten years of age. His mother, Ahhotep I, and probably his grandmother, Tetisheri, took over the regency before he was mature. Later when he was far away during his campaigns against the Hyksos and the Nubians, it was Ahhotep "who made plans for the people, who knows everything . . . protected Egypt . . . pacified Upper Egypt and made the rebels to withdraw" (Urk. IV, 21).⁸⁴ On a stele in a chapel erected for his grandmother, Tetisheri in Abydos, Ahmose tells his wife and sister, Ahmes-Nefertari, that, though her tomb was in Thebes, he decided to have a pyramid and a temple built near his own monuments in Abydos for his grandmother and to provide for her offerings and cult. "His Majesty did this because he loved her above all. Never did earlier kings do anything similar for their mothers" (Urk. IV, 26–29).⁸⁵ His mother's tomb he furnished richly with objects he had seized during his campaigns.⁸⁶

Later, Ahmes-Nefertari was regent for her young son, Amenhotep

I.⁸⁷ She was deified and worshiped with her son, Amenhotep I, from the time of Thutmoses III till to the end of the Ramesside Period. The power of the queen and king's mother also appears in the inscription of the confidant of Queen Ahhotep II from year ten of the reign of her husband, Amenhotep I. She too was worshiped during the Ramesside Period.⁸⁸

In TT 72 (5), Merytre-Hatshepsut, wife of Thutmoses III and mother of Amenhotep II, is cast as the maternal goddess Mut and wears her vulture headdress. Her titles read "god's wife, god's hand, mistress of the two lands" or "king's mother, great king's wife, god's wife, god's hand."⁸⁹ Tiaa, great king's wife of Amenhotep II and mother of Thutmosis IV, with the same titles as Merytre, was probably not of royal birth. On the preserved monuments, she is often represented with her son. According to pWilbour II, 132, §57 (25, 25), a chapel of hers in Karnak was still in use during the 20th Dynasty (Zivie, LÄ VI, 552–555).

The title "god's mother" is first recorded from the 6th Dynasty, thus the king's mother received the same status as her son. During the New Kingdom, Mutemwia, mother of Amenhotep III, Tiya, mother of Amenhotep IV, and Satre, mother of Seti I—none being of royal blood—are called god's mother and are compared with the goddesses Mut, Hathor, Sakhmet, Maat, or Isis. Mutemwia, though not the first wife of Thutmoses IV, must have had great influence when Amenhotep III ascended the throne at the age of about 12 years. She probably was regent for her son until he came of age and so saved the throne for him. Later he not only legitimized his right to the throne as a son of the god Amun, but also through his mother as the legal wife of his father. In the birth myth depicted in the temple of Luxor,⁹⁰ she is presented to Amun by Hathor who embraces her. She is called "king's wife."⁹¹ Furthermore, when she is depicted with her son, she is called mother of the king (LÄ IV, 251 sq.). In TT 226(4) Mutemwia stands behind her son.

Tiya, wife of Amenhotep III and mother of Amenhotep IV Akhenaten, too was not of royal origin. On scarabs, of which 56 were found throughout Egypt, Amenhotep names her as his great king's wife. As great king's wife she took over the position at the side of her husband from Mutemwia.⁹² Her name was recorded on official acts, decrees signed in both her and her husband's name. The correspondence of her husband with the rulers of Mittani shows that she was well informed in political matters. She even corresponded with the ruler and his wife herself. Her importance lasted after her husband's death, when the ruler Tušratta of Mittanni writes to her son

Amenophis IV Akhenaten: “All the words I told your father, your mother knows. Nobody else knows them. But you may ask your mother Tiya about them.”⁹³

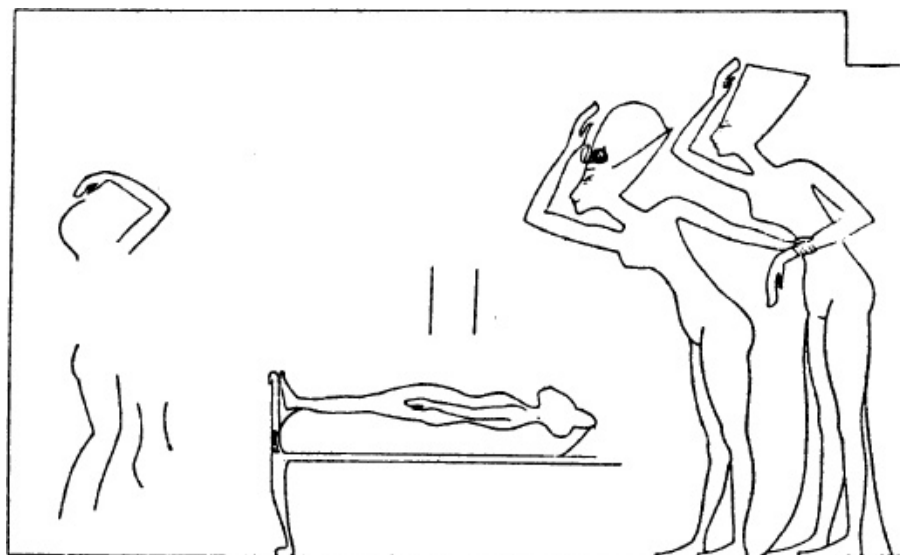


Figure 14.3 Royal tomb at Amarna.

After the death of her husband, Tiya seems to have resided in Thebes, where she was well provided for.⁹⁴ In year 14 of Akhenaten she changed her residence to Amarna. She is represented with the family of her son,⁹⁵ who certainly asked her advice in political matters, as the letter of Tušratta demonstrates.

As mentioned above, Nefertiti was responsible for the upbringing of her daughters until they came of age. Her and her husband's love for their children is depicted in family scenes on many monuments from Amarna, the daughters also accompanying them at state events.⁹⁶ The grief overwhelming the parents at the death of their second daughter, Meketaten, is expressed in the royal tomb at Amarna (**Figure 14.3**).⁹⁷

List of abbreviations

ÄA:	Ägyptologische Abhandlungen, Wiesbaden.
ÄF:	Ägyptologische Forschungen.
BD:	Allen, Th. G., <i>The Book of the Dead or Going Forth by Day</i> , The Oriental Institute of the University of

	Chicago, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 37, Chicago 1974.
BIFAO:	Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, Le Caire.
BIOR:	Bibliotheca Orientalia, Bruxelles.
CT:	Faulkner, R. O., <i>The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts I-II</i> , Warminster 1973 & 1977.
JEA:	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, London.
LÄ:	Lexikon der Ägyptologie I–IV, ed. Eberhard Otto and Wolfgang Helck, 1975–1989.
OBO:	Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis.
PFAO:	Publications de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, Le Caire.
PM:	Porter, B., Moss, R. L. B., <i>Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs and Paintings I–VII</i> , Oxford 1973–1979.
PT:	Faulkner, R. O. 1968, <i>The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts</i> , Oxford.
TT:	Theban Tomb.
Urk. IV:	Sethe, K, 1927, <i>Urkunden der 18. Dynastie</i> , 2nd ed., Berlin translated by W. Helck, 1956, <i>Urkunden der 18. Dynastie</i> . Heft 18, Berlin.
ZÄS:	Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde, Berlin.

Papyri

Ankhsheshonqi:	Lichtheim, 1980: 159ff.
pAni:	Lichtheim, M. 1976, <i>Ancient Egyptian Literature II</i> , The New Kingdom, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 135ff.
pChester Beatty:	Gardiner, A. H., <i>Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum</i> , London 1935.
pJumilhac XII, 2:	Vandier, J., <i>Le Papyrus Jumilhac</i> , Paris 1961.

pLansing:	Lichtheim, M. 1980, <i>Ancient Egyptian Literature II</i> , The Late Period, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 168ff.
pLeiden 350 IV:	Gardiner, A. H., Hymns to Amon from a Leiden Papyrus, <i>ZÄS</i> 42, 1905, 32–42.
pLouvre 3230 b:	Peet T. E., Two Eighteenth Dynasty Letters. Papyrus Louvre 3230, <i>JEA</i> 12, 1926, 71–72.
pWestcar:	Erman A. 1890, <i>Die Märchen des Papyrus Westcar</i> , Berlin.

Notes

- 1 Feucht 2004: 33–53; Feucht 1995: 93–96.
- 2 Schott 1950: 82 no. 23: In the chapels of Amenirdas, Shepnewepet and Nitokris, the god's wife, pray that Hathor will not make the women barren and the men impotent.
- 3 Feucht 1995: 96.
- 4 Sauneron 1960: 20–23.
- 5 Sandmann 1938: 10ff.; Diodor I, 77, 7.
- 6 Feucht 2004: 38–40.
- 7 Vandier 1961: 124; Yoyotte 1962: 142.
- 8 Feucht 1995: 166–173.
- 9 Teeter 2003: 37.
- 10 Feucht 1995: 166–173; Budin 2011: 117–135 discusses all the theories about these figurines.
- 11 Cf. Grapow 1958: 277.
- 12 Sandman 1938: 94: 10f.; Assmann 1999: 92, p. 218, Feucht 1995: 43.
- 13 Sauneron 1962: 104 and 164 (§16). Cf. Feucht 2004: 43.
- 14 Feucht 1995: 124–131; Feucht 2004: 45, note 71–72.
- 15 Westendorf 1977: 459–462, 1984: 757.
- 16 Sauneron 1962: 209.
- 17 Grapow 1958: 275; Feucht 2004: 44.
- 18 Ghalioungui *et al.* 1963: 241 *sqq.*
- 19 Feucht 1995: 97–98. Cf. Germer 1979: 143 *sqq.*, 130 no. 5, 2; 152 no.5, 7; 163 no. 5, 22, 3; 265 no. 3. Grapow 1958: 273–276.
- 20 Strouhal 1992: 11–19. Dunand 2004: 13–32 (Graeco-Roman Period).
- 21 Feucht 1995: 128–130.
- 22 Westendorf 1966: 144–154.
- 23 Altenmüller 1965.
- 24 Bulté, 1991; Janssen and Janssen 2007: 4, 7, 11, fig. 6 a–b; Robins 1993: 63 fig. 19; 66 fig. 21.

- 25 Brunner-Traut 1970; Robins 1993: 66, fig. 20; Spieser 2004: 55–66.
- 26 Cf. the 13th-Dynasty birthing brick found at Abydos: Wegner 2002: figs. 3–4; Budin 2011: 100.
- 27 In pWestcar, recording the birth of the three first kings of the 5th Dynasty, it is Isis standing before and Nephthys behind Rudjedet, while Heket hastened the birth (Lichtheim 1975: 220–221).
- 28 Schäfer 1899: 72–74.
- 29 Brunner-Traut 1955: 11 *sqq.*; Kemp 1979: 52.
- 30 Staehelin 1976: 136–139.
- 31 Raven 2014: 203ff.
- 32 Posener 1970: 204–205. In pLeiden 350, IV, 10 Amun is said to have no mother to give him his name, while according to pChester Beatty XI rto 2, 4 the god says “my father and my mother gave me my name.”
- 33 Posener 1970: 204–205. Feucht 1995: 107–112.
- 34 PM III, I: 198, CG 7530–7540 (9).
- 35 PM III, I: 188, G7140 (2).
- 36 PM III, 2, I: 535ff. and 525ff.
- 37 Redford 1976, 83.
- 38 Feucht 1995: 449–467.
- 39 Stefanovic 2011, 15ff.
- 40 Feucht 1995: 467. Newberry 1893: 58.
- 41 Lichtheim 1976: 141; Quack 1994: 111.
- 42 Babylonian contracts with nurses were usually for two or three years. The same time was common in ancient Greece. The Sioux Indians nursed their children for 2–5 years or longer (Feucht 1998: 149, notes 740 and 743).
- 43 Leca 1971: 342.
- 44 Budin 2011: 90–106; Feucht 1995: 150–173; Romano 1992: 131–143.
- 45 Spieser 2004: 59 figs. 5–6; Budin 2011: 142–147.
- 46 Feucht 1995: 153–154.
- 47 Stefanovic 2011: 20.
- 48 Newberry 1893: pl. XXXV.
- 49 Tylor and Griffith 1895: pl. 12.
- 50 Manniche 1988: 51, pl. 4 fig. 8.
- 51 Roehrig 1990.
- 52 Roehrig 1990: 39–46. Ratié 1979.
- 53 Feucht 1995: 300–304.
- 54 Roehrig 1990: 166–171. Pehsuker (TT 88) too was a lieutenant of the king, his wife Neith a “chief royal nurse, governess of the god.” The governor of the southern cities, Sennefer (TT 96), was married to two royal nurses (Urk. IV 1421, 1433, and 1434). The first priest of Amun, Menkheperreseneb (TT86), born by the sister of the king’s nurse, had already been “chose[n] by the king (Thutmoses III) in his palace” (Urk. IV, 927). Sebekhotep’s (TT 63) wife, Meryt, was the nurse of the king’s (Thutmoses IV) daughter, Tia’a. Cf. Bryan 1979: 117–123 and Roehrig 1990.
- 55 Porter-Moss: 192 (16). Roehrig 1996: 122–135.

- 56 Roehrig 1996: 17, note 25.
- 57 Roehrig 1996: 262–267. Davies 1908: pl. 29.
- 58 Roehrig 1996: 122, Kenamun was foster-brother of Amenhotep II; and 162, Mutnofret, daughter of Senetnai, was foster-sister of the same king. Cf. Roehrig 1996: 308–314.
- 59 Tylor and Griffith 1895, pl. VI.
- 60 Roehrig 1996: 200–207 and 207–216.
- 61 Roehrig 1996: 64–78; Dorman 1988.
- 62 Feucht 1995: 151 *sq.* with figs. 4, 5, 6; 315–352 and 358–362 with figs. 15 18, 25, 26. Budin 2011: 101 *sqq.*
- 63 Redford 1976, 83.
- 64 Brunner-Traut 1963: 214.
- 65 Brunner 1937: 15 (37).
- 66 Lüddeckens 1960: 276–286.
- 67 Feucht 1995: 340–341 with note 1703, and 206–208. pLouvre 3230 b (Peet: *JEA* 12, 1926: 71–72).
- 68 Tichener 1922: 20–28. Lüddeckens 1960: 246, with note 3.
- 69 Feucht 1995: 179–184. Johnson 1996: 177–184.
- 70 Goedicke 1966: 66–67.
- 71 Parkinson 1991: 36.
- 72 cerný 1945: 29 *sqq.*
- 73 Feucht 1995: 179–181.
- 74 pChester Beatty I, 2 and 6. Lichtheim 1976: 183 and 184.
- 75 Helck 1979: 141.
- 76 Feucht 1995: 86–92.
- 77 Davies 1929.
- 78 Parkinson 1991: 38.
- 79 James 1962: 32; Parkinson 1991: 105 *sq.* (34b)
- 80 Roth 2001: 9 *sqq.*, and 331 *sqq.* chapter XI.
- 81 Baud 1996: 51–68.
- 82 Troy 1986: 192 (CI/I). Other variations cf. Roth 2001: 255 *sqq.*
- 83 Budin 2011: 54–55. The vulture, *mwt*, was also a symbol of maternity in ancient Egypt.
- 84 Vandersleyen: LÄ I, 99 *sq.*, s.v. Ahmose.
- 85 Vandersleyen: LÄ VI, 458 *sq.*, s.v. Tettischeri.
- 86 Bissing 1900.
- 87 Gitton: LÄ I, 102–109, s.v. Ahmose Nofretere.
- 88 Seipel: LÄ I, 99, s.v. Ahhotep II.
- 89 LD III Bl. 62c; Urk. IV 1368.
- 90 Brunner 1964: Tf. 4, 7, 8, 9.
- 91 Brunner 1964: Text II Lb, IV La.
- 92 In TT 47, TT 192 (7), TT 277 (7).
- 93 Moran 1987: 174–179, EA 27.
- 94 Cf. the title of Mosi (TT 254) “scribe of the treasury and custodian of the estate

of Tiya in the estate of Amun.”

95 Aldred 1968: pl. 103.

96 Freed *et al.* 1999: figs. 64, 69, 70, 81, 82, 113–114, 131; Capel and Markoe 1996, no. 46.

97 Freed *et al.* 1999, fig. 17.

References

- Aldred, C. (1968) *Akhenaten, Pharaoh of Egypt – A New Study*. London: Thames & Hudson Ltd.
- Altenmüller, H. (1965) *Die Apotropaia und die Götter Mittelägyptens: Eine Typologische und Religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung der Sogenannten Zaubermesser des Mittleren Reichs*. Unpublished dissertation. Munich, Germany.
- Assmann, J. (1999) *Ägyptische Hymnen und Gebete*. Fribourg, Switzerland: Universitätsverlag and Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Baud, M. (1996) Les formes du titre de mère royale à l’Ancien Empire. *BIFAO* 96: 51–68.
- Bissing, F. W. (1900) *Ein Thebanischer Grabfund aus dem Anfang des Neuen Reiches*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Brunner, H. (1937) Texte aus den Gräbern der Gaufürsten von Siut. *ÄF* 5.
- Brunner, H. (1964) Die Geburt des Gottkönigs. *Ägyptologische Abhandlungen* 10. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag.
- Brunner-Traut, E. (1955) Wochenlaube. *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung* 3: 11–30. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Brunner-Traut, E. (1963) *Altägyptische Märchen*. Düsseldorf and Cologne, Germany: Eugen Diederichs Verlag.
- Brunner-Traut, E. (1970) Gravidenflaschen. Das Salben des Mutterleibes. In A. Kuschke and E. Kutsch (eds) *Festschrift für Kurt Galling, Archäologie und altes Testament*. Tübingen, Germany: J. C. B. Mohr, pp. 35–48.
- Bryan, B. M. (1979) The title ‘foster brother of the King’. *JSSEA* 9: 117–123.
- Budin, S. L. (2011) *Images of Women and Child from the Bronze Age*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bulté, J. (1991) *Talismans égyptiens d’heureuse maternité*. Paris: Editions du centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.
- Capel, A. C. and Markoe, G. (eds) (1996) *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven*. New York: Hudson Hill Press.

- cerný, J. (1945) The will of Naunakhte and related documents. *JEA* 31: 29ff.
- Davies, N. de G. (1908) *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna* 6. London: EES.
- Davies, N. de G. (1929) *The Tomb of Antefoker, Vizir of Sesostri I, and his wife Senet* (No. 60). London: EES.
- Dorman, P. F. (1988) *The Monuments of Senenmut*. New York: Kegan Paul International.
- Dunand, F. (2004) Les enfants et la mort. In Dasen, V. (ed.) *Naissance et petite enfance dans l'Antiquité*. Fribourg, Switzerland and Göttingen, Germany: OBO 203, pp. 13–32.
- Feucht, E. (1995) *Das Kind im alten Ägypten*. Frankfurt, Germany and New York: Campus Verlag.
- Feucht, E. (1998) Familie II. Ägypten. In H. Cancik and H. Schneider (eds) *Der Neue Pauly, Enzyklopädie der Antike* 4. Stuttgart, Germany, pp. 406–407.
- Feucht, E. (2004) Der Weg ins Leben. In V. Dasen (ed.) *Naissance et Petite Enfance dans l'Antiquité*. Fribourg, Switzerland and Göttingen, Germany: OBO 203, pp. 33–53.
- Freed, R., Markowitz, Y. J. and D'Auria, S. H. (1999) *Pharaohs of the Sun*. Boston, MA, New York and London: Bulfinch Press/Little, Brown and Company.
- Germer, R. (1979) *Untersuchungen zu Arzneimitteln im Alten Ägypten*. Unpublished dissertation. Hamburg, Germany.
- Ghalioungui, P., Khalil, S. and Ammar, A. R. (1963) On an Ancient Egyptian method of diagnosing pregnancy and diagnosing foetal sex. *Medical History* 7: 241 sqq.
- Goedicke, H. (1966) Die Laufbahn des Mtn. *MDAIK* 21. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag.
- Grapow, H. (1958) *Grundriß der Medizin der Alten Ägypter* V. Berlin: Übersetzung Medizinischer Texte Akademie Verlag.
- Helck, W. (1979) *Die Lehre des Dw3-Htj II*, Kleine Ägyptische Texte. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag.
- James, T. G. H. (1962) *The Hekanakhte Papers and Other Early Middle Kingdom Documents*. Publications of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Egyptian Expedition XIX. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Janssen, M. R. and Janssen, J. J. (2007) *Growing Up and Getting Old in Ancient Egypt*. London: Golden House Publications.
- Johnson, J. H. (1996) The legal status of women in Ancient Egypt. In A. C. Capel and G. Markoe (eds) *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven*. New York: Hudson Hill Press.
- Kemp, B. J. (1979) Wall paintings from the workmen's village at El-

- Amarna. *JEA* 65: 47–56.
- Leca, P. A. (1971) *La Médecine Égyptienne*. Paris: Les Editions Roger Dacosts.
- Lichtheim, M. (1975) *Ancient Egyptian Literature I*, The Old and Middle Kingdom. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Lichtheim, M. (1976) *Ancient Egyptian Literature II*, The New Kingdom. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Lichtheim, M. (1980) *Ancient Egyptian Literature III*, The Late Period. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Lüddeckens, E. (1960) Demotische Eheverträge. *ÄA* 1. Wiesbaden, Germany.
- Manniche, L. (1988) *Lost Tombs*. New York: Kegan Paul International.
- Moran, W. L. (1987) *Les Lettres d'el Amarna, Littérature Ancienne du Proche-Orient* 13. Paris: Les Editions de cerf.
- Newberry, P. E. (1893) *Beni Hasan I*. Archaeological Survey of Egypt. London.
- Parkinson, R. B. (1991) *Voices from Ancient Egypt*. London: British Museum Press.
- Posener, G. (1970) Sur l'attribution d'un nom à un enfant. *Revue d'Égyptologie* 22: 204–205.
- Quack, J. F. (1994) *Die Lehren des Ani. Ein Neuägyptischer Weisheitstext in Seinem Kulturellen Umfeld*. Fribourg, Switzerland and Göttingen, Germany: OBO 141.
- Ratié, S. (1979) *La Reine Hatchepsut, Sources et Problèmes*, *Orientalia Monspeliensia I*. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill.
- Raven, M. (2014) *Women's Beds from Deir el-Medina*, *Egyptologische Uitgaven XXVIII*. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill.
- Redford, D. B. (1976) *The Akenaton Temple Project I*. Warminster, UK: Aris and Phillips.
- Robins, G. (1993) *Women in Ancient Egypt*. London: British Museum Press.
- Roehrig, C. H. (1990) *The Eighteenth Dynasty Titles Royal Nurse (mn't nswt), Royal Tutor (mn' nswt) and the Foster Brother/Sister of the Lord of the Two Lands (sn/snt mn' n nb t3wy)*. Unpublished dissertation, Ann Arbor, MI.
- Roehrig, C. H. (1996) Women's work: Some occupations of nonroyal women depicted in Ancient Egyptian art. In A. C. Capel and G. Markoe (eds) *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven*. New York: Hudson Hill Press.
- Romano, J. F. (1992) A statuette of a royal mother and child in the Brooklyn Museum. *MDAIK* 48: 132–143.

- Roth, S. (2001) Die Königsmutter des Alten Ägypten von der Frühzeit bis zum Ende der 12. Dynastie. *Ägypten und Altes Testament* 46. Wiesbaden, Germany.
- Sandmann, M. (1938) *Texts from the Time of Akenaten*. Brussels, Belgium: Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca VIII.
- Sauneron, S. (1960) Le germe dans les os. *BIFAO* 60: 19–27.
- Sauneron, S. (1962) *Esna V. Les Fêtes Religieuses d'Esna aux Dernier Siècle du Paganisme*. PIFAQ, Cairo.
- Schäfer, H. (1899) *Die Wiedereinrichtung einer Ärzteschule in Sais unter König Darius I.* ZÄS 37: 72–74.
- Schott, S. (1950) *Altaegyptische Liebeslieder*. Zürich, Switzerland: Artemis Verlag.
- Spieser, K. (2004) Femmes et divinités enceintes dans l'Égypte du Nouvel Empire. In V. Dasen (ed.) *Naissance et Petite Enfance dans l'Antiquité*. Fribourg, Switzerland and Göttingen, Germany: OBO 203, pp. 55–70.
- Teeter, E. (2003) *Egypt: Treasures from the Collection of the Oriental Institute: University of Chicago*. Oriental Institute Museum Publications 23. Chicago, IL: Chicago Press.
- Troy, L. (1986) *Patterns of Queenship in Ancient Egyptian Myth and History*. Uppsala, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis.
- Stahelin, E. (1976) Bindung und Entbindung. ZÄS 96: 125–139.
- Stefanovic, D. (2011) When are children called her “children”? *Chronique d'Égypte* 86: 15ff.
- Strouhal, E. (1992) *Life in Ancient Egypt*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Tichener, M. S. (1922) *Guardianship of Women in Egypt During the Ptolemaic and Roman Eras*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Studies in Language and Literature 15, pp. 20–28.
- Tylor, J. J. and Griffith, F. L. (1895) *The Tomb of Paheri*, London.
- Wegner, J. (2002) A decorated birth-brick from South Abydos. *Egyptian Archaeology* 21.
- Westendorf, W. (1966) Beiträge aus und zu den medizinischen Texten. ZÄS 92: 144–154.
- Westendorf, W. (1977) Geburt. LÄ I: 145–462.
- Westendorf, W. (1984) Schwangerschaft. LÄ V: 757.
- Yoyotte, J. (1962) Les os et la semence masculine. A propos d'une théorie physiologique égyptienne. *BIFAO* 61: 142.

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE RELIGIOUS HIERARCHY OF ANCIENT EGYPT

Suzanne Onstine

No woman is dedicated to the service of any god or goddess; men are dedicated to all deities male or female.

(Herodotus, ii, §35.4; translation Godley 1920)

Ancient Egypt has always seemed a very pious place, with Pharaoh himself positioned as both divine and a high priest of all the gods who delegated authority to a vast hierarchy of religious specialists. Those specialists took care of the daily rituals of the gods and the running of temple business. Temples and the extensive funerary rites that the Egyptians favored are two of the most recognizable aspects of ancient Egypt, and a considerable amount of scholarship has gone into explaining the religious beliefs of the ancient Egyptians as well as the role of the men who populated the aforementioned hierarchy.¹ As Herodotus' quote indicates, priesthood was primarily a male occupation. The role of men in this world is hard to miss. Priesthood was a common vocation and priests were depicted on temple walls performing their duties and enjoying a special proximity to the gods to which normal people were not privy. Women's participation in the religious life of ancient Egypt is an aspect that has historically been overlooked and undervalued. Thankfully, this is changing and several works have appeared that attempt to address the role of women in the religious hierarchy.² From these works we can see that women in priestly roles are far less common than men, but not at all insignificant.

Defining priesthood

For the Egyptians, the role of priests and priestesses was to serve the deities, usually by ministering to them in a specific deity's temple, which was considered the deity's home. They were cultic specialists who likely had a special status since they were allowed to be close to the image of the deity in the performance of rituals. Although there is no specific ancient Egyptian term for "priest" as an umbrella category, we know that there were many specialists who served the gods, and therefore could qualify to be included in this western category of definition "priesthood." It is clear that the Egyptians understood the priesthood to consist of a variety of different functionaries. Chaeremon, a Roman era writer and priest who lived around 40 CE, described the priesthood as divided into head priests, priests in charge of sacred vestments, sacred scribes, shrine bearers, and others. He also claimed that the priests sang hymns to the gods three or four times a day, morning, noon, and sunset (Van der Horst 1982: 69). This gives us some idea of what the duties of the priests were. Priests did not serve a congregation of worshipers, neither did they enforce or teach a specific moral code associated with the religion. Chaeremon's characterization of the priesthood is consistent with respect to what was depicted in the earlier pharaonic period as the elements necessary for taking care of the deities and their homes. Images of priests offering food, libations, clothing, incense, and music in the daily rites for the upkeep of the gods are common on pharaonic temple walls. The scenes mainly feature men in charge of these tasks, but women were sometimes included at the head of groups making daily offerings to the gods in their role as musician priestesses.

One possible reason there were more priests than priestesses is that there were additional administrative duties often associated with priesthood. The temples served many functions, including economic ones, and required scribes, accountants, and overseers of various departments within the temple (such as granaries, storehouses, or livestock). Over time the priesthood acquired a bureaucratic nature and an administrative hierarchy. A phyle system (Egyptian *sAw*) organized both male and female priests into groups or cohorts that served in a specific position episodically, working one month in four, then rotating out of active duty (Roth 1991). The Egyptians did not recognize a specific divide between religious and non-religious modes of behavior. In fact, they did not have a word for the concept of religion. Therefore, it was natural to concentrate power in the hands of stable institutions like the temples, and to award those administrators with priestly titles. Traditionally, women did not hold administrative offices, although exceptions exist. The professionalization of priestly administrators is likely one factor in the

array of reasons women were not equal partners in caring for the gods. Women were never completely excluded from religious roles, however. Priestly titles and duties evolved over time, but the most enduring aspect of the participation in the cult was an association with ritual music.

Women in the temples

There were several women's titles that can be included under this rubric of "priesthood." The most ubiquitous title for priests in general was *hem netjer* (Hm nTr or servant of the god). The feminized form of the title, *hemet netjer* (Hmt nTr), was the most popular title for women in the Old and Middle Kingdoms, especially in the cult of Hathor of Cusae in middle Egypt.³ Women who held the title seem to have been of elite status as they also often held other high-ranking titles, such as "royal ornament" or were married to high-ranking men. The cult of Hathor of Cusae was one of the most economically powerful institutions of the late Old Kingdom and the large number of women who participated in the cult can be viewed both as a sign of their individual piety and of their political savvy. This is a pattern also observed for the chantresses of Amun in the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period. During those eras, the cult of Amun was the preeminent institution, and "chantress of Amun" was the most common title held by women in those eras.

Other titles, like chantresses (*Smyt*), singers (*Hsy*t), and sistrum players (*IHy*t or *smyt*), were largely the realm of women, although there were male chanters, for example. Chanters were extremely rare, however, compared to the large numbers of women who were involved in temple music.⁴ Chaeremon's statement that priests sang hymns to the gods three to four times a day certainly can be borne out by depictions of musical specialists participating in various kinds of rites.

Women, music, and the gods

Observe the feast of your god . . . song, dance and incense are his foods.

(The Instructions of Any, 3.3–10; Lichtheim 1976: 136)

Music was an essential part of caring for the gods. It was used to appease the gods, and musicians are frequently depicted in scenes of temple rituals, religious processions, and at funerals. As previously noted, Chaeremon stated that priests sang hymns as part of the daily

rituals. Different kinds of ritual performers were attached to temples as an important part of the temple personnel. In Tutankhamun's Restoration Stela he specifically mentions consecrating chantresses for the reopening of temples, and that they should be paid out of the royal treasury (Urk. IV 2030.6–8). Without musicians, the liturgy was not complete.

We can trace the association of music with priestesses to the importance of the cult of Hathor in the Old and Middle Kingdoms. *Hemet netjer* priestesses served in the cults of a variety of deities, but by the end of the Old Kingdom, the cult of Hathor was the most popular (Galvin 1981). Hathor was the goddess of music and dance, and, by the Middle Kingdom, musical instruments called the *sistrum* (a hand held rattle) and *menat* (a heavy beaded necklace, shaken to create rustling noises) were regarded as her sacred emblems and were used in her worship. The use of these instruments invoked the goddess and conferred on the ritual participants the blessing of the goddess. The use of the *sistrum* and *menat* was widespread by the New Kingdom and transcended their use as a strictly Hathoric cult implement. They were used by women who served in many cults, not just Hathor's. In funerary contexts they were depicted in the hands of women who were not named as priestesses at all, but nevertheless wanted to invoke the favor of the goddess. The instruments retained the aura of divinity, but were no longer restricted to strictly Hathoric contexts. It is probably the early association of the priestesses of Hathor with music making in the cult of Hathor that evolved into the role of the musician priestess by the New Kingdom.

It is significant to note that the *hemet netjer* title almost completely disappears after the Middle Kingdom. The decline of the title's usage after that can be attributed to many factors, not the least of which was declining central authority in the late 12th to early 13th Dynasties. Senusert III's governmental reforms may also have played a role. The reforms must have unseated some of the wealthy elite families, including the women, who had traditionally occupied the more important priestly positions. What we see in the New Kingdom and later, in the absence of the *hemet netjer* position, is a specific shift toward defining women's cultic roles as specifically musical, with titles like chantress, singer, and sistrum player. Rubrics for scenes that include groups of unnamed female performers may also include references to a musical troupe (xnr), or a choir (Sspt dxn).

From the 18th Dynasty until the 22nd Dynasty, the title chantress (Smayt)⁵ became the most popular religious title for women, replacing the *hemet netjer* title of the Old and Middle Kingdoms. Chantresses of

Amun were the most common priestesses, because Amun had been elevated to a state god during the early 18th Dynasty, and his cult was widespread and powerful. Chantresses could, however, serve many deities and institutions. The title chantress was very rarely used in the late Middle Kingdom, but during the reign of Hatshepsut in the middle of the 18th Dynasty many elite women began to use it, recording the title on their monuments and in the tombs of the Theban necropolis (Onstine 2005: 87–97). By the reign of Ramesses II, the title was held by women of middle-class status as well. This popularity continued into the Third Intermediate Period, particularly in the Theban area. The title chantress of Amun was so ubiquitous in Thebes that it has been noted nearly every woman in Thebes held the title (Blackman 1921: 9; Niwinski 1989: 79). While that is exaggerated, it does reflect a definite increase in the number of women who wanted to affiliate themselves with the cult of Amun. Given the power of the Amun priesthood in the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period, it is not surprising and follows the general trend of women being associated with the most powerful and popular cults of their eras.

Singers (*Hsy**t*) were also linked to various temples and the palace, but were more commonly associated with the goddess Mut at Karnak in Thebes during the New Kingdom. In the Third Intermediate Period, a few Theban women held the titles chantress of Amun, singer of Mut, and nurse of Khonsu, thereby associating themselves with the entire Theban triad. Singers of the interior of the temple of Amun (*Hsy**t nt Xnw n Imn*) were also known from the 22nd to 26th Dynasties, although not as common, and many probably served in the hierarchy attached to the God's Wives of Amun (Teeter and Johnson 2009: 17). At this particular time, the office of the God's Wife was especially powerful and so we can again make the connection between the way in which women held religious titles and the political power a particular cult wielded.

The use of female musical titles declined sharply after the 22nd Dynasty. Sistrum players (*IHy**t*) and singers (*Hsy**t*) did not completely disappear. They were not as numerous as in previous eras, but there were still women who recorded these vocations on their monuments. While there were fewer women who claimed such titles, it is clear there were still groups of chantresses and singers working in temples. The Canopus decree, a Ptolemaic decree that established the funerary cult of Ptolemy III's daughter, Berenice, (among other things) spells out the rites to be performed in her honor. Chantresses should praise the deified princess and offer her jewelry. Singers should sing daily for the soul of the princess (Onstine 2005: 20). The reasons for this shift away from the importance of the title are likely to be found in the

unstable political environment of the Late Period that probably led to changes in temple administration as well as changes in religious practices.

The development of official musical troupes attached to temples happened alongside the use of individual titles, providing a glimpse into the possible venue in which title holders performed. The *xnr*, or musical troupe, and the choir (*Sspt dxn*) are frequently depicted in larger religious gatherings like festivals or funerals. One of the most famous is a block in Hatshepsut's Red Chapel that depicts part of the Opet festival where male and female musicians perform: the women are labeled as the *Khener* troupe of the temple, and the men are labeled as a choir (Lacau and Chevrier 1977: vol. II pl. 9). These groups were, in part, made up of the musician priestesses. Titles associated with the *Khener* are less common than chantresses or singers, but women like Nebet-tawya (Figure 15.1) held multiple titles including "great one of the *Khener* of Mut." A *Khener* troupe could be attached to different deities, but Amun was the most commonly named god in titles. The title great one of the *Khener* of Amun Re King of the Gods (wrt *xnrt n Imn Re nsw nTrw*) was commonly held by the women of the family of the High Priests of Amun in the Third Intermediate Period.

The daily rites in the temple as well as the festivals could be led by male and female musicians. Temple scenes depicting these rites sometimes include groups of unnamed women clapping and chanting as part of the activities. These groups may be labeled chantresses, or sometimes they bear no inscription. A scene at Karnak dating to the reign of Thutmose III, for example, shows chantresses leading a procession of chanters and *wab*-priests to where rites before the god Amun are taking place (Figure 15.2). This puts them in direct proximity with the gods on the same level as the other priests, albeit the lower-ranking priests.

At Luxor temple, an unidentified group of female acrobats and musician priestesses form an important part of Tutankhamun's Opet festival reliefs, leading the parade into the temple.⁶ The clapping chantresses are depicted crossing the gateway, implying that they are at least special enough to enter the temple, even if they are not high-ranking clergy members. Festivals provided an important opportunity for women to participate. These festivals would have required large numbers of musician priestesses at the head of processions. This situation probably allowed some women to express their religious devotion in an episodic fashion, rather than serving a month or more at a time in the phyle system.



Figure 15.1 A woman in the tomb of Roy (TT 255) showing her titles: His sister, his beloved, mistress of the house, chantress of Amun, great one of the musical *Khener* troupe of Mut, great Singer of Hathor, (Nebet)-tawyai, true of voice. (Author's photo.)

Royal women also participated as chantresses in such processions. The women of Ramesses III's family are depicted on the exterior of the temple of Ramesses III in the first court at Karnak celebrating the Opet festival (PM II, 34 (121)). This temple may have been the starting point for the procession and the royal women accompanied it to the river's edge with chanting.



Figure 15.2 A choir of chantresses stands at the head of a procession made up of male chanters, *wab*-priests, and other offering bearers. (Author's photo.)

Scenes of musicians in religious contexts continued to be popular into the Ptolemaic and Roman eras. Several temples dating to this time period have reliefs that include music in gateways or the forecourts of temples, recalling the Opet procession of Tutankhamun above. One such example at Medamud shows two musicians—a male harpist and a female drummer. The rubric says, “pleasing the god with harp playing” (Figure 15.3). Similar scenes of musicians are found in the birth temples, or *mammis*,⁷ of Dendera and Edfu and at the Mut temple at Karnak.⁸ Clearly, the intent of the music—to please the gods—remained the same throughout time.

Royal women

Royal women formed a necessary complement to the king as high priest. The queen's role was not as visible or seemingly as central to religion, as she was not often the focus of monumental temple inscriptions. The role of the queen, however, included varying religious titles and epithets that demonstrated its importance. Lana Troy (1986) has made convincing arguments showing that the queen

existed as part of a mythological framework, and that along with the king the royal couple embodied a mythic prototype that expressed the duality of creation. This special status, while not specifically marked as “priestess,” is probably the ideological backdrop for the development of the highest feminine priestly title, the God’s Wife of Amun in the 18th Dynasty.

The God’s Wife of Amun title was established and held by royal women of the New Kingdom starting with Ahmose-Nefertari, and continued to be in use until the end of the 26th Dynasty. The role was not uniformly used by royal women between the 18th and 26th Dynasties, however. During the New Kingdom it was a position initially held by the queen or a princess. In the 21st Dynasty, women of the High Priest of Amun’s family occupied the role, but thereafter, princesses were again installed by adoption.

The center of power for the God’s Wives was in the great temple of Amun at Karnak in Thebes.⁹ The title does not refer to a belief in an actual union between woman and god, but rather a ritual role played by the holder of the title, and created a powerful adjunct to the High Priest of Amun at Thebes. During the Third Intermediate Period, however, the title took on even more importance as the priesthood of Amun gained near autonomous power over the southern region of Egypt. The priesthood had amassed a great deal of power and wealth through the patronage of the kings of the New Kingdom. The Nubian and Saite pharaohs of the 25th and 26th Dynasties would come to view this position as a valuable adjunct to the throne. These pharaohs installed their daughters in the position at Thebes while they ruled from capital cities in the north, keeping a royal family presence in the south, and bonding the old power structure to the new regimes (see also Phillips, this volume). The office was discontinued by the Persians when they took over Egypt in the sixth century BCE and it was never resurrected.



Figure 15.3 Musicians playing in the gateway of the first pylon at Medamud temple. (Author's photo.)

The hierarchy of functionaries attached to the Gods' Wives of Amun included female musicians. From the 22nd to the 26th Dynasty, the title "singer in the interior of the temple of Amun" was associated with the office of the God's Wives of Amun. Perhaps they were her personal retainers in the cult (Teeter and Johnson 2009: 17). Papyrus Abbott (a.k.a. the tomb robberies papyrus) also mentions that four tombs of "chantresses of the domain of the Divine Adoratrice of Amun Re king of the gods" were inspected during the proceedings to determine if royal tombs had been robbed. No specific woman has been identified bearing that title, so it is difficult to interpret how they would have fitted into the overall hierarchy.

Problems stemming from historical biases

There are a few problems that tend to plague the study of women in religious roles. The first is an unfortunate tendency to view women's titles as honorific, or at the very least less than serious vocations, with little responsibility. General articles on priesthood may echo this sentiment without evidence, relying instead on the notion that if a title is popular it must not be a serious job (Spencer 2010: 258). Nobody would argue that a male title, like *hem netjer*, although extremely well attested, meant little because it was very common.

Other authors, such as Niwinski (1989: 79–89), argue that the chantresses in the 21st Dynasty, for example, should not be regarded as priestesses at all, because they are extremely common and their participation is episodic rather than professional. Neither of these arguments is convincing; it is not true that *everybody* was a priest or priestess of Amun during the 21st Dynasty, as he emphasizes, neither does episodic participation render the job non-priestly. After all, the episodic nature of priestly participation is a well known feature of priestly roles in general. Priests and priestesses were organized into phyles, where clergy served on a part-time basis instead of all year round (Roth 1991). For the twenty dynasties prior to the 21st, there is never a suggestion that this lessens the vocation of a priest. Authors such as Quirke start with the premise that elite women would have had no duties associated with their title, because of their economic status (Quirke 1999: 229), whereas the same is not true for elite men. So even while acknowledging that women have priestly titles, and there is evidence for women being paid for musical services in the temple,¹⁰ he still goes on to explain away the nature of women's participation as "less intimate" and probably only carried out by women of lesser status (Quirke 1999: 229). There is no clear evidence for why we should doubt the participation of any title holders in daily rites or festivals except for preconceptions about what women and different classes of women do.

A second issue concerns lingering speculations on the sexuality of priestesses. The notion of the celibate priestess is a recurring assumption (for example Yoyotte 1961: 43–52; Donker van Heel 2014: 34). The supposed celibacy of the God's Wives of Amun, the most elite of the priestesses, is a continuing discussion. While some point out that there is no real evidence to support the celibacy of the God's Wives, or that it is impossible to know for sure either way (Teeter 1999; Ayad 2009), one continues to find the notion repeated with respect to the Late Period title holders (e.g. Doxey 2001: 73; Donker van Heel 2014: 34). Because the royal woman chosen to be the God's Wife often outlived the Pharaoh under whom she was installed, her successor had to be chosen from the women of the next ruling family which was sometimes not her own. The easiest way to ensure a peaceful succession was for the sitting God's Wife to adopt an heiress while alive. The heiress was the daughter of a High Priest of Amun or of the current king.

The most famous piece of evidence, the Nitocris Adoption Stela (Caminos 1964: 71–101) demonstrates why this was an issue. In it, Psamtik I, founder of the 26th Dynasty, gives his daughter, Nitocris, to the reigning God's Wife, Amenirdis II, a Nubian princess of the 25th

Dynasty. The adoption of Nitocris by the previous dynasty's God's Wife ensures a smooth succession of the office in a period that was not so peaceful. During the troubled dynasties of the Third Intermediate Period and Late Period, this practice would have been an effective way of passing on the title and the property belonging to the God's Wife's estate to the family of the next king, whoever that may be. The emphasis in this inscription is on the rights and entitlements of the office, and on the gifts Nitocris is bringing to Thebes. There is no need to suggest that a celibate and therefore childless priestess was necessary to explain the issue of adoption.

The opposite is also true in that some authors have seen musician priestesses like the chantresses and singers as prostitutes or concubines (Naguib 1990: 236). For the musicians who are specifically attached to temples or institutions, there is no evidence of this (Onstine 2005: 9). The one woman labeled as a singer of Hathor on the Turin Erotic Papyrus (Omlin 1973: 70 recto 19) is not enough evidence to classify a whole group as prostitutes. Presumably, *hemet netjer* and musician priestesses could enjoy normal family lives and sexual activities as most of them known from monuments were married and were depicted with their husbands and families.

A third problem is the assumption that titles are interchangeable;¹¹ that a chantress, a singer, and a sistrum player do the same thing so they can all be lumped together. This is demonstrably false. Not only were there very specific titles that meant different activities but they were found in different contexts (Onstine 2005: 9–10). Women could hold several musical titles throughout their lives. If they were actually interchangeable, however, why would a woman specify each one, and why was there no general term for “temple musician” instead of several different terms for specific activities? Whether they held these titles concurrently or in succession is unknown. The tendency to list all of them together on monuments complicates our ability to fully understand how a woman negotiated these varied duties or progressed through a priestly hierarchy.

Conclusions

The nature of women's participation in the religious hierarchy of ancient Egypt was strongly associated with music. This is demonstrated through their use of musical titles and their depictions holding *sistra* and *menat* necklaces or clapping in the performance of their duties. The importance of music for the cult of Hathor may have influenced this development early on. Music became an integral part

of cult rituals, both private and public, and provided women with an opportunity to participate at many levels of the hierarchy. Class status was surely a significant factor in determining which titles women held. The evidence supporting their actual participation in the cult ranges from unnamed groups of chantresses up to named wives and daughters of the king depicted in action, performing the cultic rites, and celebrating the gods. There should be no doubt that women's participation in these rites was viewed by the ancient Egyptians as an important and normal facet of religious life.

Notes

- 1 Cf. Sauneron 1960; Helck 1982; Pernigotti 1997; Doxey 2001. Of an entire book dedicated to priests and the priesthood, Sauneron 1960 gives only three pages of attention to the female personnel (pp. 67–69).
- 2 Blackman's work was one of the earliest comprehensive studies of women with religious titles (1921: 8–30). See also Fischer 1982; [chapter 8](#) of Robins 1993; Onstine 2005; Teeter and Johnson (eds) 2009.
- 3 Galvin 1981, 1984; Gillam 1995.
- 4 There are many anonymous groups of men labeled as chanters and singers in temple reliefs, but one rarely encounters a specific man who holds a title “chanter of [a god].” For a more complete discussion of male chanters, see Onstine 2005: 78–81.
- 5 Onstine 2005.
- 6 PM II, 314 [77–86].
- 7 A mammisi is a smaller temple within a larger complex dedicated to the birth of the god to whom the temple is dedicated. The mammisi was common in Greco-Roman Egyptian temple complexes.
- 8 This is not a comprehensive list of such scenes and is a topic I am currently researching.
- 9 Cf. Ayad 2009.
- 10 The Tutankhamun Restoration Stela offers the clearest evidence for the payment of chanters and chantresses in temple service (Urk. IV 2030.6–.8). Papyrus UC 32191 also may indicate a roster of payment to temple singers and dancers. Neither source includes any details as to their salary or how they were paid for their service, see <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums-static/digitalegypt/lahun/festivallistmk.html>, accessed 21 May 2015.
- 11 Quirke says as much (1999: 229) and Naguib's evidence for prostitution is clearly mixing up chantresses and singers as the same thing (1990: 236, n. 239a/b). See also Onstine for a discussion of this issue (2005: 9).

References

Ayad, M. (2009) *God's Wife, God's Servant: The God's Wife of Amun*. London: Routledge.

- Blackman, A. (1921) On the position of women in the Ancient Egyptian hierarchy. *JEA* 7(1/2): 8–30.
- Caminos, R. (1964) The Nitocris adoption stela. *JEA* 50: 71–101.
- Donker van Heel, K. (2014) *Mrs. Tsenhor: A Female Entrepreneur in Ancient Egypt*. Cairo, Egypt: American University in Cairo Press.
- Doxey, D. (2001) Priesthood. In D. Redford (ed.) *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. Oxford, UK: University Press, pp. 68–73.
- Fischer, H. (1982) Priesterin. In W. Helck and E. Otto (eds) *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*. Vol. 4. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, pp. 1100–1105.
- Galvin, M. (1981) *Priests and Priestesses of Hathor in the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period*. PhD dissertation, Brandeis University.
- Galvin, M. (1984) The hereditary status of the titles of the cult of Hathor. *JEA* 70: 42–49.
- Gillam, R. (1995) Priestesses of Hathor: Their function, decline and disappearance. *JARce* 32: 211–237.
- Godley, A. (1920) *Herodotus, with an English Translation*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Available at <http://data.perseus.org/citations/urn:cts:greekLit:tlg0016.tlg001.perseus-eng1:2.35.4> Accessed 5 May 2015.
- Helck, W. (1982) Priester. In *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*. Vol. 4. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag, pp. 1084–1097.
- Lacau, P. and Chevrier, H. (1977) *Une Chapelle d'Hatshepsout à Karnak*. 2 vols. Cairo, Egypt: IFAO.
- Lichtheim, M. (1976) *Ancient Egyptian Literature*. Vol. II: *The New Kingdom*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Naguib, S.-A. (1990) *Le Clergé Féminin d'Amon Thébain à la 21e Dynastie*. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters.
- Niwinski, A. (1989) Some remarks on rank and titles of women in the twenty-first dynasty Theban “State of Amun.” *DE* 14: 79–89.
- Omlin, J. (1973) *Der Papyrus 55001 und seine Satirisch-erotischen Zeichnungen und Inschriften*. Turin, Italy: Edizioni d'arte fratelli Pozzo.
- Onstine, S. (2005) *The Role of the Chantress in Ancient Egypt*. Oxford, UK: Archaeopress.
- Pernigotti, S. (1997) Priests. In S. Donadoni (ed.) *The Egyptians*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, pp. 121–150.
- Porter, B. and Moss, R. (1960) *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings*. Vol. II: *Theban Temples*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press (abbreviated in text as PM II).

- Quirke, S. (1999) Women in Ancient Egypt: Temple titles and funerary papyri. In A. Leahy and J. Tait (eds) *Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honour of H. S. Smith*. London: Egypt Exploration Society Occasional Publication 13, pp. 227–235.
- Robins, G. (1993) *Women in Ancient Egypt*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Roth, A. (1991) *Egyptian Phyles in the Old Kingdom: The Evolution of a System of Social Organization*. Chicago, IL: Oriental Institute.
- Sauneron, S. (1960) *The Priests of Ancient Egypt*. New York and London: Grove Press.
- Sethe, K. and Helck, W. (1906–1958) *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie. Urkunden des ägyptische Altertums, IV*. Leipzig, Germany: J. C. Hinrichs'sche (abbreviated in text as Urk. IV).
- Spencer, N. (2010) [Chapter 14](#). Priests and temples: Pharaonic. In A. Lloyd (ed.) *A Companion to Ancient Egypt*. London: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Teeter, E. (1999) celibacy and adoption among god's wives of Amun and singers in the Temple of Amun: A re-examination of the evidence. In E. Teeter and J. Larson (eds) *Gold of Praise: Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honor of Edward F. Wente*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago, Oriental Institute, pp. 405–414
- Teeter, E. and Johnson, J. (2009) *The Life of Meresamun: A Temple Singer in Ancient Egypt*. Chicago, IL: Oriental Institute Museum Publications
- Troy, L. (1986) *Patterns of Queenship in Ancient Egyptian Myth and History*. Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala University.
- Van der Horst, P. (1982) The way of life of the Egyptian priests according to Chaeremon. In M. Heerma van Voss (ed.) *Studies in Egyptian Religion Dedicated to Professor Jan Zandee*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 61–71.
- Yoyotte, J. (1961) Les Vierges consacrées d'Amon thébain. *CRAIBL*, pp. 43–52.

LIVING AND WORKING IN A NEW KINGDOM ‘HAREM TOWN’

Jan Picton

Marvel brought to his majesty (life, prosperity, health): The daughter of the ruler of Naharina, Shutarna, (princess) Gilukhipa. Persons in her harim: 317 women.

(Breasted 1906: 184)

EA 68507, British Museum, one of the ‘marriage scarabs’ of Amenhotep III

This chapter attempts to examine the role of the Gurob ‘harem town’ of Mi-wer and the people who lived within it, devoid of prurient orientalisising associations.

Gurob discovery

‘[S]ome beads and ornaments were brought to me from this place; I soon went to see it, and found that it was an early site unmixed with any later remains’ (Petrie 1892: 128). ‘This place’ was Medinet al Ghurab – Gurob – in the Faiyum oasis, 60 miles southwest of Cairo (Figure 16.1).

Gurob presents a case study of an integrated royal town incorporating walled elite residential quarters, a supporting non-elite settlement and industrial community, with both archaeological and textual evidence for the socio-economic infrastructure that maintained the settlement. Since 2005, over ten field seasons, (six of survey and surface collections, two of excavation, two study seasons), the Gurob Harem Palace Project (GHPP)¹ has attempted to contextualise over a century of work at the site, and has helped to establish its identity as a New Kingdom ‘*harim* town’ called Mi-Wer or Shé, as proposed by Kemp (1978).

Gurob should have been as fruitful in information about a regional

palace-town as Lahun was for a 12th-Dynasty pyramid town, or Amarna as the capital of Akhenaten. However, Petrie's work at the site was begun prematurely to prevent dealers treasure hunting while he was working at Lahun. The work was unsupervised, was not mapped and was poorly recorded due, in part, to an intractable assistant (Serpico 2008: 20–21). After the end of the season, local farmers stripped the site of mud-brick for fertiliser, stone for building and any antiquities they could find, and the dealers moved in. The number of objects appearing on the market in Cairo showed that Petrie's fears for the site were well-founded (Chassinat 1901; Quibell 1902; Borchardt 1911). A photograph in the Petrie Museum archive shows the devastation of the featureless wasteland liberally strewn with skeletal human remains, textiles and potsherds that Brunton and Engelbach noted when they started work in 1920 (Brunton and Engelbach 1927: 3; Serpico 2008: 25 and Serpico 2008: 45, PMAN 1011 archive photograph).

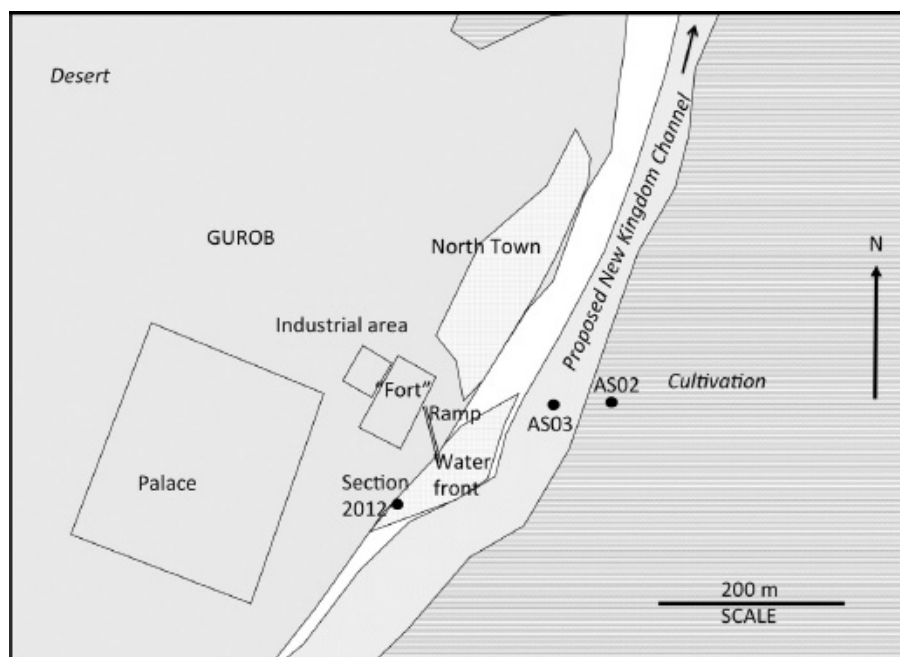


Figure 16.1 Plan of the Gurob New Kingdom town showing the recently identified quayside and channel. (© Gurob Harem Palace Project.)

A stamped brick in the enclosure wall and an inscribed temple lintel confirm Thutmose III as the founder of a royal enclosure, elite

buildings and associated Amun temple as part of an expansion and development of the royal estates in the Faiyum. The temple's later Ramesside use as a shrine to Thutmose is confirmed by the number of commemorative stelae of administrators of the settlement whose titles in relation to the royal foundation – *ipt nswt* – are stated, further confirming the continued presence of the royal establishment during the reign of Ramesses II. Valentina Gasperini has suggested that the purpose of the town and administrative centre was to control the distribution of imported Mycenaean and Cypriot goods, including opiates (Gasperini 2014a, 2014b). Gurob has usually been regarded as a backwater in the Faiyum, but the presence of a functional harbour, mentioned in the Wilbour Papyrus (Yoyotte 2012: 137–144), and perhaps identified on the ground during the 2012 GHPP season (Shaw 2012: 30; 2013: 53), suggests that Gurob could have been a key 'landing stage of pharaoh' during the New Kingdom as he travelled the river performing administrative and ritual duties.

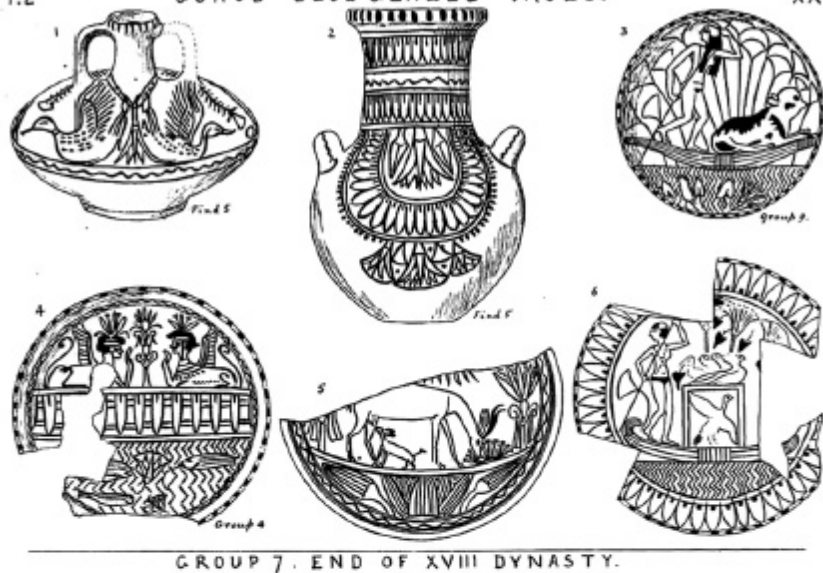


Figure 16.2 Palace quality faience bowls and ceramics from Gurob (Petrie 1891, pl. XX).

Gurob appears to have been a residence for women associated with the royal court, an administrative and production centre of the 18th and 19th Dynasties, perhaps controlling the distribution of imported goods, and that specialised in producing fine royal linen, using both Egyptian and imported women as the workforce. If the palace was not fully in the Amarna or Malqata style in terms of size and lavish decoration, we can say that there were some elements of royal architecture, and that the occupants owned elite objects with royal

associations and enjoyed the use of high-status ‘palace ware’ – blue decorated faience drinking bowls (Figure 16.2) – judging by the intact vessels found in excavation and the frequent recovery of fragments during the GHPP field seasons. So we can indeed talk about real women and real lives.

The *ipt nswt*

Several phrases associated with Gurob have been traditionally identified as ‘harem’, *ipt nswt*, *p3 ḥnty* or *pr ḥnr* and all appear on votive stelae, texts, and in funerary contexts. Barry Kemp (1978: 131) lists the administrative titles of officials associating them with the harem as overseers, scribes, servants ‘of the *harim*’, and in one instance as ‘overseer of the maidens of the *harim*’.

It would be better for our attempt to understand the subtleties and realities of how the New Kingdom administration dealt with the plethora of women thrust over Egypt’s border, if the first translator had picked a random word, real or invented, which might have elicited a more intelligent assessment of their place in society than the culturally loaded term ‘harem’. We must question why this term continues to be used as the meaning of *ipt nswt* when there have been so many arguments against it: Gardiner identifies it as the ‘king’s royal apartments’ (1948: 91), Nord as ‘private apartments of the palace’ (1975: 145) and variations thereafter. Lorton discusses its first use, ‘Particularly striking is the lack of any conclusive support for the translation of *ipt nswt* as “royal harem”’. Since Deveria’s suggestion that *ipt* means ‘gynaeceum’, as recorded by Pierret in his *Vocabulaire Hieroglyphique* 18 in 1875, the expression *ipt nswt* has been universally regarded as meaning ‘royal harem’ (Lorton 1974: 98).

He argued forcefully for the interpretation of the term as meaning a royal counting house, a store-room of the king’s valuables, but it seems that the all-inclusive identifier of ‘harem’ continues to be used as a convenient identifier. However, it should be noted from our opening quotation that women, too, could have ‘harems’ if that is how the term *ipt nswt* is translated.

The term *p3 ḥnty*, most frequently used in Gurob inscriptions, is also translated as ‘harem’. The most usual spelling of *p3 ḥnty* indicates a building and the people within it; the term is regarded as a later version of *ḥnrt*, so Nord’s assertion therefore that *ḥnrt* is a musical troupe associated with palace and temple rituals (Nord 1975: 143) seems entirely justified (the role of the *ḥnr* is discussed later). Petrie

described Anen-tursha, identified from his coffin inscription, as ‘a high official, the manager of the palace (or pa-khent)’ (p3 ḥnt) (Petrie 1890: 40, pl. XIX).

One important datum in the definition of the *ipt nswt* comes from an inscription in the tomb of Huy at Thebes which identifies him as ‘overseer of the *ipt nswt*, overseer of the treasury, steward of the household of the great royal wife, Teye’ (Lorton 1974: 101). The queen would have had her own state apartments, housing her daughters, children of the *k3p* and her personal court in a safe, secure part of the royal palace quarters. The *k3p* refers to the inner palace where royal children and children of vassal kings (royal hostages for good behaviour) were raised in security among the royal family (Quirke 2004: 26–27).

Gae Callendar’s preference in seeing the *ipt nswt* in Gurob as living quarters for a large group of women belonging to the royal household (1994: 19–20), fits well within this framework. As such, it can be associated with Peter Lacovara’s discussion of palace types in which Gurob does not fit his analysis of standard residential/ceremonial/symbolic palace categories, but is assigned to ‘other palatial structures’ (Lacovara 1997: 300). Textual and archaeological evidence suggest Gurob was occupied by productive textile workshops staffed partly by foreigners and other offices associated with the administration of the royal estate.

The trade in women

Let us consider the Mitanni princess, Giluḥepa, and the 317 women in her retinue mentioned in the opening quotation of this chapter. In addition to this northern princess, Amenhotep III later married Giluḥepa’s niece, Taduḥepa, plus at least two daughters of Babylonian kings and a Syrian royal daughter; presumably all came with retinues. Marriages like these created diplomatic loyalties and stimulated a gift exchange of high value and symbolic importance (Moran 1992: xxv and note 63). Egypt boasted of never sending an Egyptian princess outside Egypt (EA4), but this displayed ignorance of long-standing networks of diplomacy and game-playing in the ancient near east. ‘Where Egypt regularly received princesses in marriage as a sign of sovereignty, the other players regularly give princesses in marriage as an expression of sovereignty’ (Meier 2000: 171). Thus the Egyptian kings saw the acquisition of these foreign women as demonstrating their authority over the empire and as a potent symbol to their own people.

During his long career, Amenhotep III also took into his *ipt nswt* the daughters of his court elite, but, as a local matter, we have no record of it. What we do have in the Amarna letters, covering from about year 30 of Amenhotep to perhaps the first years of Tutankhamun (Moran 1992: xxxiv) is a flavour of the use of women as diplomatic gift exchange and as pledges of allegiance. ‘If you really desire my daughter, (how) should I not give her to you?’ from the king of Arzawa (EA31, Moran 1992: 103); ‘I herewith . . . [send on] 10 women’ (EA64, Moran 1992: 135); and from the king to a vassal, ‘Prepare your daughter for the king, your lord, and prepare the contributions’ (EA99, Moran 1992: 171). Perhaps the letter that most clearly states the commercial nature of some of these transactions is EA369 from king Amenhotep III to Milkilu, the ruler of Gezer, wherein the pharaoh sends a request for 40 female cupbearers, each worth 40 shekels (see Ebeling, this volume).

In trying to establish the human story of the women of Gurob, we should always remember that these women – some probably little more than children – were sent hundreds if not thousands of miles away from everything they knew, never to see their families again. If they were lucky, their father or brother might send a gift or a letter enquiring after their health, or they might not. They may be among the people sent for training to Gurob, never setting eyes on the king.

The women of Gurob

So who are the women of Gurob in the 18th Dynasty and what are they doing? One person it is tempting to place there is Queen Tiye. However, the presence of the famous small head (see below) does not guarantee the presence of the queen. Kemp (1976: 96) certainly accepts the ongoing presence of a royal palace continuing in use, ‘bearing in mind that the harim-palace at Medinet el-Ghurab was in use during Akhenaten’s reign and could thus have housed some of the female complement’. Kemp even suggests (tongue in cheek?) that Nefertiti may have been buried at Gurob (2013).

Royal

During the 18th-Dynasty reigns of Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten, the material culture of Gurob displays objects of conspicuous value or status: in the Petrie Museum, a silver ring of Amenhotep III (UC12320), a faience lily with the name of Queen Tiye in a cartouche (UC12431), a silver ring of Akhenaten (UC12429), a

gold scarab (UC7866), a cubit measure inscribed with the names of Tutankhamun and his consort Ankhesenamun, a travertine vase (UC16021) similarly inscribed, and other material. These may have been royal gifts, but the quality might also suggest royal ownership.

The most famous object from Gurob is the iconic small dark-wood head of Queen Tiye now in the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, Staatliche Museum zu Berlin (21.834/17852). When Borchardt bought the head in Cairo and traced its origin to Gurob, he also excavated other objects naming the Amarna royal family including an offering table dedicated by Tiye to her deceased husband. Borchardt was the first to suggest that the site was a palace (1911); we cannot automatically assume a royal presence, but there is further evidence.

Such evidence for another royal presence at Gurob is also found in the Petrie Museum: UC32782 and UC32783 are two fragmentary copies of a letter to Amenhotep IV from Ipy, his estate manager at Memphis, dated very shortly before the foundation of Akhetaten (Amarna). Petrie's journal for 1–6 April 1889 (Griffith Institute archive) notes that 'two small much rotted papyri' came from Gurob, but with no further details (S. Quirke, pers. comm.). Griffith believed that Ipy was writing from Gurob (1898: 91) although Murnane adds a question mark (1995: 50). Wente (1980) believed that Ipy was writing to the king at Gurob. This is the more logical assumption if we accept the presence of a royal palace at Gurob, and it would explain the presence of Queen Tiye, mother of Akhenaten, and members of the royal court.

In the 19th Dynasty, the only royal presence we can call on derives from a papyrus referring to linen being delivered to one of Ramesses II's queens, Maahorneferure (UC32795), and naming Meh, the king's scribe of the *pr ḥnyt*, the palace institution at Gurob. 'Behold, the great chief of Kheta comes, bringing his eldest daughter, bearing much tribute' (Breasted 1906: 184; §415–426) refers to a treaty with the Hittite king in which he delivers his daughter 2,000 km to Egypt, where her unknown Hittite name is promptly changed to the Egyptian Maahorneferure.

The Gurob statuettes: a wooden elite

There is a small group of wooden statuettes of women dating to the end of the reign of Amenhotep III or the first years of Akhenaten which appeared on the Cairo antiquities market and triggered the

interest of Émile Chassinat who tracked them to their source and questioned the illicit diggers at Gurob. They were published by Chassinat (1901) who believed that the six came from the same tomb, although this has been challenged. The figures were not all carved by the same hand, or in the same style, suggesting they were not carved at the same time. We also have two figures from Petrie's excavations – definitely from tombs – dating to the later 18th/early 19th Dynasty (Petrie 1890: 38). It may be that the presence of these statuettes replaced the representation of women on tomb walls in an area of poor limestone and probably a majority of undecorated tomb chapels. These statuettes may be a three dimensional guarantor of a male 'good afterlife'.

These wooden figures represent elite women, but of course we can not say if they were members of the court or were the wives and daughters of elite officials, or perhaps both. Alternatively, given the nature of the figurines, it has been suggested that the Chassinat figures come from a shared cult deposit, perhaps of Amenhotep III (Arnold 1996: 141).

What is wonderful is that we can name some of these women.

Tuty

15.7cm tall. Bought on the Cairo antiquities market, Chassinat (1901) traced the provenance to Gurob; now in the Brooklyn Museum, Accession Number: 54.187.

Lady Tuty's sculpture is a finely carved example of a late 18th-Dynasty statuette wearing a figure-hugging fringed dress. She wears large gilded earrings and a gilded perfume cone on her heavy wig; gilding on her feet suggests sandals. There were once objects held in both hands, but these are lost. The inscription on the statuette reads: 'An offering which the king gives to Mut, mistress of the sky, sovereign of the gods, so that she might grant life, prosperity, health, perceptiveness, favours and affection for Tuty's *ka*' (Yoyotte 2008: 269, cat. 73). It is unfortunate that few of the statuettes have an inscription, as this inscription presents us with some intriguing possibilities to which we will return.

Included in the objects offered for sale by the thieves was a shabti naming Tuty with a standard funerary formula. This led to the identification of the collective 'tomb' as that of Tuty. Included in the associated objects were cosmetic items naming Amenhotep III and IV and Queen Tiye, 'mother of the god'.

Mi

26cm tall. Found with Tuty, Brooklyn Museum, accession number 47.120.3.

The singer, Mi, wears an elaborate wig and golden earrings. Carved in the early-Amarna style, the figure shows the drooping breasts and fuller belly of an older woman beneath the fine pleated linen dress. The right hand is broken, so any token of office is lost. Inscription: 'The love of Werethekau, mistress of the palace, shall belong to the *ka* of the singer Mi' (Kozloff and Bryan 1992: 259).

Maya

35.5cm tall. Found with Tuty. Private collection.

The sculpted figure of Lady Maya wears a finely pleated costume, wig, earrings, gilded perfume cone, gilded headband and broad collar. Her bent left arm holds a broken sistrum indicative of involvement in musical performance; the object in her right hand is lost. The inscription on the base identifies her as a singer of Amun (Yoyotte 2008: 87; fig. 26).

Nebetia

18.3cm tall. Found with Tuty. Private collection.

One of the most finely carved and unusual of the Gurob statuettes, Nebetia is shown as a naked, post-adolescent female. The inscription identifies only 'Nebetia'. This is a rare depiction of a naked mature elite female. She wears the round wig and sidelock held by a gold clip otherwise seen only on the (clothed) Amarna princess in the Louvre Museum (E 14715) (Fay 2004: 44). Her right hand hangs at her side, palm open; her left is held forward, but the object she held is missing (Yoyotte 2008: 87; fig 28).

Name lost

13.5cm fragmentary, c.18cm complete.

Recently identified as Chassinat's missing fragmentary statue from Gurob, found with Tuty, now in the Kelekian Collection (Kelekian 2006). Naked figure of a post-adolescent female, with the same hairstyle as Nebetia, sidelock falls behind her shoulder, fastened with

a clip. Both lower arms and hands missing. Lower legs and base missing, no inscription (Yoyotte 2008: 87; fig 29).

Tiya

24cm tall. Found with Tutu. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund 1941, 41.2.10 (Yoyotte 2008: 87; fig 30).

Tiya wears a finely cut heavy wig with a distinctive triple braid at the back, no earrings and a pleated shawl dress. Her necklace is made of semi-precious stones. Anything held in the left hand is now lost. The right hand hangs at her side. Inscription: Mistress of the household, Tiya.

Tama

13.5cm tall. Egyptian Museum Cairo, JE 35057.

Tama wears the same round wig and sidelock held by a clip as Nebetia, with the same finely cut face. She also wears strings of beads of gold and faience. The way the legs are not separated suggests a sheer garment, but she may be naked and the separation of the legs not complete. Found by Daninos Pasha at Gurob in 1900, published by Quibell 1902 who traced and recorded the personal objects found with the statuette naming Amenhotep III and Queen Tiye (Yoyotte 2008: 88; kohl pot, cat 74).

Resi (Figure 16.3, right)

33cm tall. Egyptian Museum Cairo JE 28748. Found at Gurob by Petrie, Tomb 22.

Resi wears a heavy finely carved wig with the distinctive triple braid at the back, a gilded headband and broad collar, and the lily she holds in her left hand is also gilded, the eyes are inlaid glass. She wears a fine chevron-pleated dress. Her right hand hangs at her side, palm open. 'The work is exquisite . . . It represents Res, the daughter of Amenemapt' (Petrie 1890: 39). She was found lying on the breast of the body identified by Petrie as her father. The tomb may be Ramesside, but the style of this figure is very similar to the other statuettes, in quality and in execution. Petrie dated tombs 20–25 as late 18th Dynasty or early 19th Dynasty. The coffin of Amenemapt 'dropped to dust' (ibid.) but Petrie 'traced the title ". . . of the temple of Amen, Amenemapt", proving that it was the same inscription as I

found on the base of the statuette [of Res]' (Petrie 1890: 39, pl. XXII, 8). The lily held in Resi's hand is symbolic of rebirth and regeneration.

Name lost (Figure 16.3, left)

24.5cm tall. Egyptian Museum Cairo JE 28735. Found at Gurob by Petrie, Tomb 20.

The figure wears a plain sheath dress and heavy wig, and holds a Hathor-headed sistrum in the hand of her bent left arm; the right arm hanging at her side once held an object, now lost. A white painted inscription was heavily worn when found, read by Petrie as a name ending in '... amens' (Petrie 1890: 38). Tomb 20, in a shaft close to the Tomb 22/23 shaft, was for the burial of a man with the Hittite name Sadiamu (or Sadi-amia). Without the name, this burial would have been taken as Egyptian as all the associated objects are clearly Egyptian (ibid. for list).

In the same burial shaft, in Tomb 21, was another foreigner, Anen-tursha, also buried in the Egyptian style. These burials demonstrate the ease with which foreigners could be absorbed into the Egyptian administration, 'Egyptianness was not a matter of birth but of outward appearance' (Kemp 1997: 128). Shabtis in Tomb 21 also identify a 'mistress of the house, Ta-kema-ti', but there was no statuette. As the coffins in this part of the burial were described as 'too much broken to remove', it is possible any wooden statuette did not survive. There were probably more statuettes in other Gurob burials, but they either were destroyed by white ants or rot or, given the evidence of history, may indeed be in various museum collections without provenance.



Figure 16.3 Lady Resi (right) and the unnamed singer of Amun (left). (Photographed on site by Flinders Petrie. Archive photograph (cropped) Petrie MSS. 5.8.36 courtesy of Griffith Institute, University of Oxford.)

One other puzzle exists from this group of tombs, and that is the presence of two women with blonde/light brown hair, one covered by a heavy black wig. Petrie accepted them as evidence of foreign women at Gurob and his reasoning was convincing (Petrie 1890: 41). Taken with the extensive evidence of personal possessions of exotic origin, the presence of a number of foreigners at Gurob can not be denied. It is unfortunate that Gurob does not have decorated tombs which may more clearly have indicated the presence of dancers of non-Egyptian origin so familiar in 18th-Dynasty tomb scenes (Meyer-Dietrich 2009).

J. D. Cooney (1956: 9) suggested a Theban origin for the Gurob figures, but the woodcarving of the Faiyum can be of outstanding quality. Kozloff refers to the strength of the northern woodcarving tradition (Kozloff and Bryan 1992: 340) and to the quality of the statuettes of Gurob and the carved wooden cosmetic spoons of Sedment nearby, suggesting ‘a local workshop catering to a particularly choosy clientele’ (Kozloff and Bryan 1992: 354).

Cultic roles and equipment

Biri Fay has suggested that Nebetia (and by extension, also the Kelekian figure, and perhaps Tama) is shown naked despite being a high-status female past puberty, because she is still unmarried. She also suggests that the rare name, Nebetia, may be foreign (Fay 2004: 44). Alternatively, there have been a number of studies recently examining the roles of women which may address some of the points raised by the depiction of the women above. We can certainly say that where we have titles for these figures – or cult objects in their hands – there are a number of elements linking them to cultic roles within the palace, the temple of Amun and the local shrines.

The *nfrt* were ‘the beauties’ of Hathor, girls dedicated to the goddess as musicians and dancers who were usually depicted naked, or with a simple girdle at the waist (Kozloff and Bryan: 354). As post-pubescent females, Nebetia and the Kelekian figure were probably too mature for this role, but they may possibly have been members of the *hnr*, the musical troupe of singers and dancers dedicated to a shrine, temple or palace.

The sistrum is a musical instrument which, when shaken, produces a susurrant sound assumed to mimic the sound of wind in the marshes, the sacred environment of Hathor. Mature women shown holding a sistrum are usually identified as singers of Amun and are often shown also holding a *menat* necklace, multiple strands of faience beads on a counterweight (the *menat*) which also produce a rattling sound. Their role is to arouse and sexually stimulate the god in his shrine. The loss of some of the objects held in the hands of our female figures is therefore particularly frustrating, as we might have been able to more closely identify their roles.

Werethekau, mentioned in the inscription of Lady Mi, is a goddess whose name means ‘great of magic’. She is an unusual choice of deity for a figurine dedication, especially with the extension ‘mistress of the palace’, an epithet that suggests the presence of a shrine to the goddess, appropriate for her role as a protector of the king in his palace (Mekawy Ouda 2015). ‘Werethekau, lady of the [palace], lady of heaven, mistress of all the lands’ is found on a door-jamb from Aniba (Mekawy Ouda 2013: 3). UC16639 is a fragment of a door-jamb naming Werethekau with an unknown provenance, possibly in the Faiyum, so can we propose from a shrine at Gurob? The figurine dedication certainly suggests a cultic role in a shrine of Werethekau.

It is reasonable to suppose that our collection of singers, musicians,

dancers and dedicants played an active role in rituals performed in the temple/local shrines as well as secular musical performances within the palace (see Onstine, this volume). Ellen Morris, looking at music and performance, notes that the *nfrt* not only ‘danced for Hathor but also *as* her, channelling the goddess in cultic performance through the principles of embodiment’ (2011: 86). Whether they joined in the bawdy songs of the festival of drunkenness, or participated in sexual encounters with banqueters, we will never know (Bryan 2014: 119, fig. 6.32). It certainly did happen, as shown in a Dynasty 20 text confirming the conception of Kenherkhepeshef in the court of the Hathor chapel at Deir el-Bahri (Bryan 2014: 104). We know from Herodotus’ description of the rituals associated with the cult of Bastet at Bubastis where women bared their backsides that this festival also included drunkenness as part of the ritual celebration.

Commoners

Twenty-eight female names are mentioned in Ramesside documents from Gurob, twenty-six in one document. It should be noted that their presence is largely identified as part of a familial chain, ‘mother of’, ‘daughter of’. Ten are given the title ‘*ankh n niwt*’, translated as ‘citizeness’, another odd choice of translation – perhaps equating to a free-woman? (Klintberg 2011: 30, Appendix B). The last papyrus of note relates to an unnamed woman who boasts of training foreigners in an unspecified task.

What women do

The tomb of Rekhmire in Thebes (TT100) gives us one of the best pictures of life and administration at the court of Thutmose III and shows men, women and children of Syro-Palestine and Nubia coming into Egypt as campaign-booty. They are inspected and allocated to workshops and roles on the royal and temple estates (Panagiotopoulos 2006: 383). Unskilled workers are employed as brick-makers, in the fields and marshes and as herdsmen. Presumably, those more skilled are placed in specialist occupations in the weaving workshops, the stables and the vineyards. Women worked in the fields and became house-servants, weavers and nurses. Those with beauty or musical talent could become entertainers either in the service of the gods or in a private capacity. Presumably, elite women faced a different future, but perhaps only in scale.

Within the household or palace, women performed the traditional

domestic duties as servants, baking, brewing, etc., but, within Gurob, these would not have been elite women whose employment opportunities were more limited. We talk about Gurob as a centre for textile production, but we do not know how this was organised. Petrie records quantities of textiles discovered in the tombs, including some of exceptional fineness (1890: 34–35), the ‘royal linen’ of international repute, but in addition there was coarse cloth, basketry and rope of flax, rush and fibre. Other potential roles for women included musicians and dancers, wise-women (midwives and shamans), nurses, tutors, mourners and roles in cultic activity. Perhaps some of the women of the town also took their place at the harbour-side market trading domestic produce, as illustrated in the tombs of Kenamun and of Ipy at Thebes (TT 162 and TT 217).

Textiles

When we discuss the role of women at Gurob, the major one is always as part of the textile industry for the production of royal linens. Dorothea Arnold (1996: 24) refers to fine Egyptian linens being the wonder of the ancient world, but then assumes that the artist routinely exaggerates the diaphanous nature of the textile. Examples from Gurob show that at its best Egyptian linen could be very fine indeed, as demonstrated by examples in the Petrie Museum and from current excavations at the site.

Textual evidence comes from papyri now in the Petrie Museum and there are a number of other records usually referred to as textile accounts of the Gurob palace institution (Petrie Museum UC32784, UC 32785, UC32794, UC32795). Sir Alan Gardiner offered the most complete translation of the letter dated Year 2 of Seti II (R.A.D. 14–15) (1953: 146).

[w]hich I have done, they being exactly like those that were made for [Re]. I will cause myself to be boasted about on account of them, I will not allow fault to be found with me. Excellent it is that my Lord has caused people to be brought to me for their teaching and their instruction how to do this great work . . . they being foreigners like those who used to be brought to us in the time of Usimaatre-setepenre [Ramesses II], the great god, thy good father . . . This is a letter for Pharaoh’s information. Year 2, third month of the Inundation season, day 20.

Although this letter does not explicitly state that the great work was textile production, it is generally agreed that the many fragments of papyrus from the same find as the Seti letter (R.A.D. 20–26) leads to the assumption that the letter relates to training people in weaving

skills (Gardiner 1953: 149); for example, (20, 6. 14–15) some garments ‘drawn for the storehouse of this House’ and ‘delivered as gifts’ by the scribe Sety; (21.1–7) speaks of ‘clothes sent to the place where Pharaoh is’; and, of course, the papyrus identifying the presence of queen Maahorneferure at the palace at Gurob (23. 2–6) (Gardiner 1953: 149). Papyrus Gurob Y UC32797 is a record of cloth accounts, including mention of the temple of Ramesses III, making this the latest dated manuscript among the Gurob papyri.

It is assumed that elite women trained and supervised weaving at the palace, and certainly the familiarity with which the writer addresses the king reinforces that assumption. Women from Syria who arrived in Egypt during the Mitanni period introduced new techniques for the use of colour, appliqué and embroidery that was in great demand (e.g. Tutankhamun’s embroidered tunics in the Egyptian museum, beaded tunics, braided edges, etc.) (Vogelsang-Eastwood 1999: 80–84).

Archaeological evidence for textile production lies in the quantity of spinning and weaving equipment found at the site by the early excavators and still being found by the GHPP, including spindle-whorls, spinning bowls, loom equipment, etc. In 2012 the GHPP recovered three sacks of textile fragments from recently looted tombs at the site which are the subject of current study.

Land tenure

In Papyrus Wilbour we see a list of landowners for Middle Egypt (including ‘Mi-wer’/Gurob) which include the title of ‘lady’ as an occupation. More than 131 female landholders are listed (Allam 1989: 129). Two women are identified as tilling plots on behalf of two scribes (ibid.), in the same way as men. Some women jointly hold land with other family members. The difficulty of establishing the range of occupations within these households, not to mention what occupies the ‘ladies’, is obvious. It can be equally difficult to reconcile textual records and archaeological evidence for trades and occupations (Shaw 2004: 24), and this is complicated by conditions for survival of objects in the archaeological record, and the accuracy of recognising and recording them by the excavator.

We have no precise records of landholdings at Gurob, but we can say that women in the period were at liberty to buy and sell land and buildings, bond-servants and goods, and to commission tombs on their own behalf or for a relative (Allam 1989: 133–134; Johnson 1996).

Female landholders in P. Wilbour may give us hope of the real equality always claimed for women in ancient Egypt, but the small percentage of female to male owners – approximately 8 to 12 per cent (Allam 1989: 135) reinforces Egypt as a male-dominated society. Moreover, social rules of decorum may have limited their ability to exercise their legal rights.

Conclusion

Gurob may indeed have housed royal and elite women, but this chapter has attempted to challenge the idea of Gurob as a traditional Ottoman-style harem, or even as an Egyptian harem. In identifying named women, it is clear that their roles appear to lie in family relationships and/or in cultic roles within temple, shrine and palace. As Kemp says, there was certainly room for Giluḥepa and her entourage at the Gurob palace, we are just unable to prove it.

Note

- 1 For pdfs of the annual reports to the Ministry of Antiquities, and for a full bibliography for the site, please refer to the website: www.gurob.org.uk. For a discussion on the background to Gurob and the objects in the Petrie Museum, see Digital Egypt for Universities: www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk and www.ucl.ac.uk/museums/petrie/.

References

- Allam, S. (1989) Women as owners of immovables. In B. S. Lesko (ed.) *Women's Earliest Records: From Ancient Egypt and Western Asia*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, pp. 123–135.
- Arnold, D. (1996) *The Royal Women of Amarna: Images of Beauty from Ancient Egypt*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Borchardt, L. (1911) *Der Porträtkopf der Königin Teje im Besitz von Dr. James Simon in Berlin*. Leipzig, Germany: J. C. Hinrichs.
- Breasted, J. H. (1906) *Ancient Records of Egypt, Volume Three, The Nineteenth Dynasty*. Chicago, IL: University Press.
- Brunton, G. and Engelbach, R. (1927) *Gurob*. London: BSAE.
- Bryan, B. M. (2014) Hatshepsut and cultic revelries in the new kingdom. In J. M. Galán, B. M. Bryan and P. F. Dorman (eds) *Innovation and Creativity in the Reign of Hatshepsut*. SAOC 69. Chicago, IL: Oriental Institute, pp. 93–123.
- Callendar, G. (1994) The nature of the Egyptian 'Harim': Dynasties 1–

- Chassinat, E. (1901) Une tombe inviolée de la XVIIIe dynastie: découverte aux environs de Médinet El-Gorab dans le Fayoum. *BIFAO* 1: 1–10.
- Cooney, J. D. (1956) *Five Years of Collecting Egyptian Art 1951–1956*. New York: Brooklyn Museum, pp. 7–11, pls 19–23.
- Fay, B. (2004) The wooden statue of Nebetia from Kom Medinet Ghurab. *MDAIK* 60: 41–45, pls 1–6.
- Gardiner, A. H. (1948) *The Wilbour Papyrus III*, translation. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Gardiner, A. H. (1953) The harem at Miwēr. *JNES* 12(3): 145–149.
- Gasparini, V. (2014a) *Trade in Opium from Cyprus to Egypt*. Available at <http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/museums/2014/05/30/pottery-project-guest-blog-trade-in-opium-from-cyprus-to-egypt/#more-34872>.
- Gasparini, V. (2014b) Mycenaean and Cypriot pottery from Gurob in the Manchester Museum collection: A test of trade network theories for the New Kingdom Fayum. *JAERI* 6: 10–22.
- Griffith, F. L. (1898) *Hieratic Papyri from Kahun and Gurob*. London: Quaritch.
- Griffith Institute (2011) http://www.griffith.ox.ac.uk/gri/ppoe_opening_page.html.
- Johnson, J. H. (1996) The legal status of women in ancient Egypt. In A. K. Capel and G. E. Markoe (eds) *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt*. New York: Hudson Hills Press.
- Kelekian, N. B. (2006) The missing wooden statuette from Kom Medinet Ghurab. *GM* 209: 43–51.
- Kemp, B. J. (1976) The window of appearance at El-Amarna, and the basic structure of the city. *JEA* 62: 81–99.
- Kemp, B. J. (1978) The Harim-Palace at Medinet el-Ghurab. *ZÄS* 105: 122–133.
- Kemp, B. J. (1989) *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization*. London: Routledge.
- Kemp, B. J. (1997) Why empires rise. *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 7: 125–131. doi:10.1017/S0959774300001505.
- Kemp, B. J. (2013) Nefertiti, great royal wife and queen of Egypt. *Archaeology Magazine*, Archaeological Institute of America. Available at <http://archaeology.org/issues/100-features/lost-tombs/1087-nefertiti-queen-egypt-amarna-26>.
- Klintberg, A. (2011) *The Harem at Medinet el-Ghurab: The Ramesside Administrative Documents, Terms and Female Titles*. Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala University, Department of Egyptology, unpublished. <http://>

- Kozloff, A. P. and Bryan, B. M. (1992) *Egypt's Dazzling Sun: Amenhotep III and his World*. Cleveland, OH: Cleveland Museum of Art.
- Lacovara, P. (1997) Gurob and the New Kingdom 'Harim' Palace. In J. Phillips (ed.) *Ancient Egypt, the Aegean, and the Near East. Studies in honour of Martha Rhoads Bell*. San Antonio, TX: Van Siclen Books, pp. 297–306.
- Lorton, D. (1974) Review of Reiser, der königliche Harim *JARce* 11: 98–101.
- Meier, S. A. (2000) Diplomacy and international marriages. In R. Cohen and R. Westbrook (eds) *Amarna Diplomacy: The Beginnings of International Relations*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 165–173.
- Mekawy Ouda, A. (2015) The statue of 'the doorkeeper of the palace' PiAy (Louvre E 124). *SAK* 44: 283–295.
- Mekawy Ouda, A. (2013) Who or what is Werethekau 'Great of Magic'? A problematic inscription (UC 16639). *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology, University College London* 23(1): 1–7. doi: <http://doi.org/10.5334/pia.424>.
- Meyer-Dietrich, E. (2009) Dance. In W. Wendrich (ed.) *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles, CA. Available at <http://repositories.cdlib.org/nelc/uee/1134>.
- Moran, W. L. (1992) *The Amarna Letters*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Morris, E. (2011) Paddle dolls and performance. *JARce* 47: 71–103
- Murnane, W. J. (1995) *Texts from the Amarna Period in Egypt*, Atlanta, GA: SBL.
- Nord, D. (1975) Review *Der königliche Harim im alten Ägypten und seine Verwaltung* by Elfriede Reiser. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 34(2): 142–145.
- Panagiotopoulos, D. (2006) Foreigners in Egypt in the time of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III. In E. H. Cline and D. O'Connor (eds) *Thutmose III: A New Biography*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, pp. 370–412.
- Petrie, W. M. F. P. (1890) *Kahun, Gurob and Hawara*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co.
- Petrie, W. M. F. P. (1891) *Illahun, Kahun and Gurob*. London: David Nutt.
- Petrie, W. M. F. P. (1892) *Ten Years Digging in Egypt, 1881–1891*. London: Religious Tract Society.
- Pierret, P. (1875) *Vocabulaire hiéroglyphique comprenant les mots de la langue, les noms géographiques, divins, royaux et historiques, classés*

- alphabétiquement*. Paris: F. Vieweg.
- Quibell, J. E. (1902) A tomb at Hawaret el Gurob. *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte*. T. 2. Cairo, Egypt: Imprimerie de l'Institut Français, pp. 142–143.
- Quirke, S. (2004) *Titles and Bureau of Egypt 1850–1700 B. C.* London: Golden House Productions.
- Serpico, M. T. (2008) Gurob. In J. E. Picton and I. R. Pridden (eds) *Unseen Images: Archive Photographs in the Petrie Museum* I. London: Golden House Publications.
- Shaw, I. (2004) Identity and occupation: How did individuals define themselves and their work in the Egyptian New Kingdom? In J. Bourriau and J. Phillips (eds) *Invention and Innovation: The Social Context of Technological Change*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 12–24.
- Shaw, I. (2012) *Report to the SCA on Archaeological Survey and Excavation Undertaken at Medinet el-Gurob, 27 March–17 April 2012*. Available at www.gurob.org.uk.
- Shaw, I. (2013) The Gurob Harem Palace Project, spring 2012. *JEA* 98: 43–54.
- Vogelsang-Eastwood, G. (1999) *Tutankhamun's Wardrobe: Garments from the Tomb of Tutankhamun*. Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Van Doorn.
- Wente, E. F. (1980) The Gurob letter to Amenhotep IV. *Serapis* 6. Chicago, IL: Oriental Institute.
- Yoyotte, M. (2008) Second wives, concubines and the harem. In C. Ziegler (ed.) *Queens of Egypt from Hetepheres to Cleopatra*. Paris: Somogy Publishers.
- Yoyotte, M. (2012) *Le 'Harem' dans l'Égypte Ancienne. Enquête Philologique, Archéologique et Prosopographique*. Unpublished PhD dissertation. La Sorbonne University, Paris.

WOMEN AT DEIR EL-MEDÎNA

Deborah Sweeney

Background

The village of Deir el-Medîna, home to the expert craftsmen who excavated and decorated the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings and the Valley of the Queens, is a major source for everyday life in Ancient Egypt during the New Kingdom (1550–1070 BCE). The village was built in the desert, near the Valley of the Kings. Its remote situation and dry climate preserved thousands of documents and artifacts from every aspect of village life: houses, tombs, chapels, furniture, grave goods, pottery, work records, receipts, letters, and love poems.¹ These items provide considerable information about the tomb-builders and their families, although only a small proportion of the original material has survived. (Jac J. Janssen² calculates that about 10 percent of the journal of the necropolis texts survived, but other text types may be less well attested.)

The village was built in the late fourteenth to early thirteenth centuries,³ and contains 68 houses, with other houses beyond the village wall.⁴ It was built over an earlier village dating to about 1500.⁵ Most of the information about the New Kingdom village dates to the thirteenth to eleventh centuries; before that point, sources are meagre.⁶ The total population was probably about 450–500 men, women, and children, including servants.⁷

The tomb-builders were amongst Egypt's leading artists. They also used their talents to decorate their own tombs and houses, and make furniture and funerary equipment, both for their families and for sale.⁸ The tomb-builders were relatively well paid, with a varied diet including bread, beer, fish, vegetables (with meat and cakes as an occasional treat).⁹ During the thirteenth century, the villagers flourished. Later, however, they were affected by political tensions. Life became less safe, leading eventually to the abandonment of the

village in the early eleventh century.¹⁰

The village women of Deir el-Medîna lived an unusual life by Egyptian standards. First, their husbands and fathers spent most of the ten-day working week living at or near the Valley of the Kings, and returned home on the weekend. During the week, the village was the realm of women and children, along with men too old to work or on sick leave, relatives not employed in the crew, the doorkeepers, and perhaps some full-time priests. This situation may have made the village women more independent,¹¹ since they would need to budget their supplies according to sporadic wage deliveries and deal with domestic emergencies on their own initiative.

Second, the village was isolated. It was not located near the Nile, like most other Egyptian settlements. Instead, it was near the tomb-builders' workplace, in the desert hills near the Valley of the Kings. Ventura viewed the community as hermetically sealed to prevent the workmen divulging the royal tombs' secrets: contacts with the outside world were restricted and supervised.¹² By contrast, McDowell argues that the workmen could travel more freely.¹³ Nonetheless, the Deir el-Medîna women would have spent most of their time at the village, within their small community. A visit to the nearby temple of Deir el-Bahari would probably have been a special event.

Women's main roles at Deir el-Medîna, as throughout Ancient Egypt, were those of wife, mother, and female head of household. The latter entailed making food (including grinding grain for flour), spinning thread, weaving cloth, and making or trading for other household items. Some of these activities could be shared with or delegated to other women living in the house. Women also increased their incomes by weaving and selling cloth, raising animals, and trading. They might also function as midwives, wet-nurses, mourners, and cultic singers.¹⁴

Women's identity as married women and family members was extremely important. However, they spent much of their time interacting with other villagers, especially other women, as neighbors, friends, and via their work outside home. Ostrakon OIM 13512 offers an intriguing reference to eight women who were going to or from "the place of women, when they were menstruating" when an unknown incident happened.¹⁵ Unfortunately, this is the only reference to the "place of women." What women did there is unknown, but visiting it probably afforded another opportunity for women to network.

We can sketch general outlines of women's lives in this community, but much remains unknown. Almost all documents from the site were written by men; women are rarely mentioned, and almost always from a male viewpoint.¹⁶ Work on the royal tombs, in which the women did not participate directly, generated many of the documents. Sources may also lack crucial information—either because the text is damaged, or because the data were known to the reader(s) but are lost to us. Thus, often a given woman appears in one or two sources, but the rest of her life is unknown.

Gender was, however, only one of many factors affecting people's lives. Even in this small, specialized community, people's social standing, age, ethnic origins, material resources, and personal skills also shaped their experiences and options.¹⁷ The chief workman's wife had different responsibilities and activities from the adolescent daughter of a poorer village family, or a female servant doing housework in the village.¹⁸

Marriage

Marriage in Ancient Egypt was generally monogamous. Probably women married young to maximize their fertility,¹⁹ whereas men may have been somewhat older in order to be able to afford to set up a separate household (although the *Teaching of Ani* (16.1) suggests "Take a wife while you're young so that she may bear your sons for you" (Quack 1994: 284–285)).

Extracts from some Egyptian wisdom texts found at Deir el-Medîna suggest some of men's expectations from their partners. The *Teaching of Ptahḥotep* advises:

If you are successful, establish your household

and love your wife with passion.

Fill her belly, clothe her back!

Ointment is a restorative for her limbs.

Make her happy as long as you exist.

She is a worthy field for her lord.

(*Ptahḥotep* lines 325–330; Žába 1956: 41–42)

Another wisdom text warns: "You should not marry a wife more

powerful than yourself, lest you . . .” (*Prohibitions* A7: Hagen 2005: 128, 143). The *Teaching of Ani* advises men to respect their wives’ authority at home:

Do not control your wife in her house
when you know she is efficient;
Don’t say to her: “Where is it? Bring <it> for us!”
When she has put it just in the right place.
Let your eye observe silently,
so you may recognize her skills.
It is joy when your hand is with her.
There are many who don’t know (this).

(*Ani* 22.3–5; *Quack* 1994: 325–326)

In Egyptian art, married couples were frequently depicted together in family tombs, on votive stelae, as votive statues, etc. A happy marriage with many children was a desirable ideal.

We do not know how people chose their partners, or whether they had any choice in the matter. However, there are no stories or poems from this period about people being unhappily married off by their families, which is probably significant. Love poems attested at the village mention young people falling in love, but needing their mother’s approval to continue or deepen the relationship.

He does not know my desire to embrace him
and that he would write to my mother.

(*P. Chester Beatty I*: 2.2; cf. *P. Chester Beatty I*: 4.3–4; *Mathieu* 1996: pls. 2, 4)

However, it is uncertain whether the behavior represented in love poems describes actual practice, although some scholars argue that the love poems do indeed reflect current perceptions of gender roles and behavior.²⁰

Wedding ceremonies are not attested from Ancient Egypt.²¹ Couples simply set up house together, but sometimes the groom gave gifts to the bride’s family,²² and their families helped the newlyweds with goods and provisions which perhaps formed the bride’s dowry.²³ In *P. Ashmolean* 1945: 97 2.3–4 (KRI VI 237.14–15 (Kitchen 1983)) a

woman named Naunakhte says that she gave her children “everything which one usually does for people like them.” Toivari-Viitala thus argues that this practice was common.²⁴

Married couples were expected to support one another. The crewman Amunpahapy took his wife to court for going away and neglecting him when he was sick, and for purloining and selling the clothing he received from the state as part of his wages. He disinherited her from his property, and the wife had to swear that she would not approach her husband’s house or property in future, under pain of further penalties. The crewman Amunpahapy addresses the local court:

As for me, this illness fell upon me, and I said to my wife (lit. sister), “Make . . . my things,” but she went away to the countryside, and I spent a month dwelling alone. She collected the loincloth that Pharaoh gave me, and she took it away. It was with . . . that she consumed it, whilst I was bedridden.

She isn’t mine; she hasn’t done me any good.

The crew member Amenwa, my son—he did good to me when I was in need . . . His son is my [heir²⁵] . . . As for all my property and tomb, and also all my father’s immovable property . . . also . . . my . . . They will belong to Nekhemmut my [grandson²⁶].” He . . . She took an oath by the lord, saying, “I will not approach the house or . . . the property . . . Amunpahapy either, and if I approach the . . . I will suffer 100 blows of a stick and be deprived of all my father’s property.”

And he made her take an oath by the lord, saying, “I will not approach the draughtsman Amunhotep either.”

(O. Petrie 18; KRI VI 430.9–431.8 (Kitchen 1983))

In another—unfortunately fragmentary—text, a violent husband was taken to court and obliged to swear that he would not repeat his behavior. Here, a man, maybe her father,²⁷ represents the woman.

The workman Amenemope petitioned the local court (names of those present) . . . saying “As for me, my husband . . . He beat <me?>. He beat . . . and I had his mother brought. The . . . He was found to be in the wrong, and one caused . . . and I said to him, ‘If you were . . . before the magistrates . . .’ and he took [an oath by the lord] saying, ‘As Amun endures and as the ruler endures . . .’.”

(O. Nash 5 recto, now O. BM 65938; Demarée 2002: 42, pl. 187)

Unfortunately, the text is so broken that it is unclear whether the offender beat his wife²⁸ or brawled with someone else. McDowell suggests that he may have been attacked by a third party.²⁹

In principle, both sexes were equal before the law. Women might initiate cases, be sued, and be called as witnesses.³⁰ They might also dispose of their own share of the family property on their own initiative.³¹ A woman could sue her husband, or vice versa. However, McDowell has demonstrated that men were much more likely to sue women than women men.³² Furthermore, women only rarely judged cases.³³

Divorce was relatively uncomplicated: the partners took a public oath dissolving their household³⁴ and went their separate ways. Each took away the property they had brought into the marriage. Marriage contracts from later periods indicate that a man took two-thirds, a woman one-third of the property they acquired together whilst married.³⁵ Initially, these figures might seem to reflect women's more limited earning capacity, but Toivari-Viitala has shown that joint household property was shared between husband, wife, and children, each receiving a third. The husband administered the children's property until it was appropriate to transfer it to them.³⁶

Motherhood

For the Egyptians, it was vital to have children to care for one in old age, and give offerings to nourish one's spirit in the afterworld. Child mortality was high in Ancient Egypt.³⁷ Many children did not survive their first year, so women probably gave birth many times to ensure at least some children reached adulthood (see also Feucht, this volume).

No special practices for pregnant women are known, but they may have worn amulets of Bes or Taweret, deities who protected pregnant women and small children.³⁸ Texts from the village occasionally mention the purchase of birth amulets and women's beds which were decorated with figures of Bes.³⁹

Women at Deir el-Medīna probably gave birth at home. Work diaries sometimes mention their husbands taking days off to accompany them. For instance, one absence list mentions "Kasa, when his wife was giving birth: he was absent for three days" (O. CGC 25517 v6-7: KRI IV 388.16-389.1 (Kitchen 1983)). Such absences were unusual, however, and maybe only occurred in emergencies.⁴⁰

Many drawings on ostraca (potsherds or stone fragments) from the village depict a woman holding a baby, sitting on an elaborate bed, decorated with figures of the protective god, Bes, and/or sitting in a booth decorated with convolvulus. The woman is often attended by

one or two girls, sometimes by a whole group of women. Brunner-Traut was the first to suggest that these drawings represent a booth (Figure 17.1) where a woman would spend a period of isolation, resting from giving birth before resuming her household duties.⁴¹ Bringing up the children at home would be mostly the mother's responsibility. Girls would probably help their mother with housework once they were old enough, in order to learn how to run a house.

At Deir el-Medîna, many boys learned to read and write, since it was important to have a pool of literate people from whom the community's leaders could be selected.⁴² This was exceptional for Ancient Egypt, where literacy was limited. Little is known about beginners' education,⁴³ but advanced students were tutored individually.⁴⁴ It is not clear to what extent girls learned to read and write, although McDowell mentions a student exercise that may have been written by a woman.⁴⁵ Some letters sent by, to, and between women are known.⁴⁶ Probably the women actually wrote them, since many notes were generated in circumstances where the message could have been sent by word of mouth. For instance, in O. DeM 132, one woman commissions clothing from another:



Figure 17.1 O DeM 2344. Woman and child in birth booth. (After Vandier d'Abbadie 1937: pl. LI.)

Isis said to her sister Nebuemnu, "In life, prosperity and health! As follows: *Do pay attention and weave this shawl before (the feast of king) Amenhotep*

comes, because I haven't anything to wear (lit. I am stark naked). Make one for my backside (?) because I haven't anything to wear, and . . . bring me."

(KRI III 558.9–13 (Kitchen 1983))

Finding someone to write a note for an illiterate person and then finding someone else to read it to its illiterate recipient would complicate matters unduly.⁴⁷ On the one hand, village women rarely needed to read and write, since they did not hold administrative posts. On the other, literacy was prestigious: probably there were women who relished the intellectual challenge of acquiring this skill.⁴⁸

Care for one's children continued at least until their marriage, when parents would (ideally) help their children set up their new household with gifts of household equipment. In turn, children were expected to support their parents in their old age. A woman named Naunakhte claimed that she had brought up eight children and given them all they needed to set up house (a rare achievement in an age of high infant mortality!). Unfortunately, Naunakhte's dedication was not fully requited: three of her children failed to help her, and a fourth was unreliable. Naunakhte resorted to the local law-court and disinherited them from inheriting her property.

As for me, I am a free person of the land of Pharaoh. I brought up these eight servants of yours, and I gave them household goods—everything which one usually does for people like them. Now look, I have grown old. Now look, they are not looking after me in my turn. As for every one of them who has given me a hand, I will bequeath him my property, (but) as for everyone who has not helped me, I will not bequeath him my property.

(P. Ashmolean 1945.97: 2.1–7; KRI VI 237:13–238.2 (Kitchen 1983))

However, Naunakhte was not entitled to disinherit her disappointing children from her husband's property; he alone had the right to dispose of it.

Generally, aged parents could expect to be supported by their children. "Do not satiate yourself alone when your mother is destitute," warns a wisdom text from the village (Prohibitions A 11; Hagen 2005: 130, 143). Nonetheless, elders probably continued to work as long as they could.⁴⁹

Mistress of the house

As the "mistress of the house" (the traditional title of a female head of household in Ancient Egypt), a woman at Deir el-Medîna would have been responsible for providing for those under her care, keeping the

house tidy and pleasant, and if possible generating extra income. Each household in the village had help from a government-supply servant woman, but since they were available once every three days per house,⁵⁰ they were part-time household help rather than live-in servants.

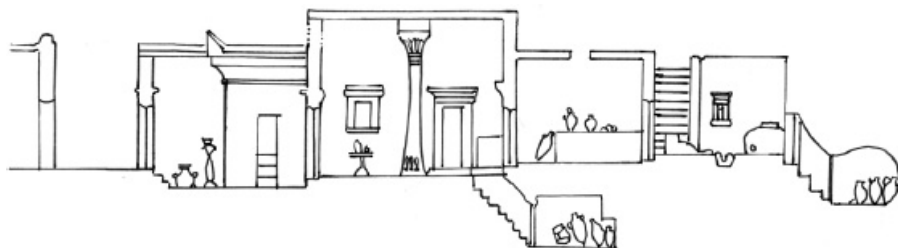


Figure 17.2 Four-room house at Deir el-Medîna. Entrance on left.
(After Bierbrier 1982: 69.)

The houses in Deir el-Medîna varied in size⁵¹ and shape, although most of them had four to five rooms in a row, one leading off the other (*Figure 17.2*).⁵² The main room was usually the second room. It might include a brick divan for sitting, stelae, and offering tables for family prayer. About half the houses had a family altar in the first room.⁵³ The kitchen, with its oven and grindstone, was the last room in the house, and often partially roofed to let the smoke out. Families may have used their roofs for keeping birds, storage, and sleeping during the hot summers.

The workmen's wages were paid mostly in grain (wheat for flour and barley for beer), which was ground into flour as needed. Grinding was a time-consuming business: for four adults to have enough bread to eat, one of them would have to spend about half a day grinding the flour.⁵⁴ Bread was baked in a small, domed oven.⁵⁵ Beer was also made at home, but the men sometimes made a large batch of beer for general consumption at weekends, perhaps for religious celebrations.⁵⁶

Women would also clean their houses, which involved scattering water to keep the dust down, sweeping the mud floor with a reed brush, and shaking out the mats. Clothing also had to be made from scratch, by spinning flax into thread and weaving the threads on a loom. Women also made cloth to increase their family income.⁵⁷

They might earn additional income by keeping animals,⁵⁸ especially geese and pigeons, which could be kept at home on the roof, or engaging in small-scale trading.⁵⁹ Women elsewhere in Ancient Egypt sold items at markets,⁶⁰ but it is uncertain whether people from Deir el-Medîna could go to the market at the Nile, or whether they must send goods via intermediaries. The sums women earned are normally unknown, although P. Turin 1880 v5.13–18 mentions a payment of 30.5 *deben* to a wetnurse (nearly three months' pay for a workman).⁶¹

Religion, burial, and the afterworld

The Deir el-Medîna women had various religious roles; at home, they made offerings and worshipped gods and goddesses whom their family or they personally worshipped. Luiselli argues that women's religious lives had strong connections with fertility and the goddess Hathor,⁶² goddess of love, sexuality, and rejuvenation, but these issues were not the only foci of women's spirituality.⁶³ With their husbands and children, and also in their own right, they donated votive stelae⁶⁴ and other artifacts to deities of their choice. Women appeared less often on stelae than men,⁶⁵ and thus perhaps chose other types of votive donation.⁶⁶ Eyre argues that women's religious practice tended to be more private and less status-oriented than men's.⁶⁷

Nonetheless, women were also active in worship in the village chapels. At this period, there were no priestesses at Deir el-Medîna, but many village women were cultic singers and musicians and accompanied the rites by singing and making music,⁶⁸ shaking a sistrum (a metal rattle with jangling metal disks), or a menat (a necklace with many strands of tiny beads, associated with the worship of Hathor⁶⁹). Their music and singing may have been as important to the ritual as reciting the text correctly (see Onstine, this volume).⁷⁰

Village women also accompanied funerals as mourners, weeping, wailing, with their breasts uncovered and throwing dust over their hair.⁷¹ During the reign of Ramesses II (1279–1212 BCE) the names of several professional mourners are known.⁷²

Women, like men, hoped for a continued existence after death.⁷³ Both sexes would undertake a dangerous and difficult journey through the afterworld to the judgment hall of Osiris, god of the dead, where they would be judged on their lifetime's deeds. If they were judged worthy, they would enjoy eternal life with the gods and with their own families in the Field of Reeds (the Egyptian Paradise).

From the early thirteenth century BCE, women at Deir el-Medīna were buried in their family tombs in the cemetery on the west of the village. By comparing the value of women's burial equipment with their male relatives' grave goods, Meskell demonstrated that women tended to have cheaper, simpler equipment⁷⁴ (which may have diminished their chances for a full afterlife⁷⁵). However, Landgráfová and Navrátilová suggest a different explanation—that women disposed of their property differently from men. Since women mostly owned household items, perhaps they handed them on to their children, as Naunakhte did, rather than being buried with them.⁷⁶ (Perhaps women intended to be free from housework in the afterworld?)

Furthermore, Meskell noticed that people outside the nuclear family buried in family tombs, perhaps distant relations or servants, had much simpler grave goods than the lady of the house. Therefore, family connection and status were also relevant considerations when allotting burial equipment.⁷⁷ However, the slightly earlier cemetery east of the village, dating to about 1400 BCE, showed a completely different picture: the tombs were much poorer than the later family tombs, only one to three people were buried in each tomb, and women's and men's burial goods were much more egalitarian.⁷⁸ I suggest this was because women's income from weaving was a much larger proportion of the income of a poor family. The price of cloth and the hours a woman could spend weaving, however, remained fairly constant, so that as a husband's salary increased, the importance of his wife's contribution to the household income dwindled. However, differences between genders in poorer households were not necessarily expressed via grave goods, since they owned less property and were buried with fewer items.⁷⁹

The isolation, unusual working week, wage structure, and expertise of the Deir el-Medīna craftsmen meant that many aspects of their wives' lives were not necessarily typical of ancient Egyptian women at that time. On the other hand, many aspects of their everyday cooking, cleaning, weaving, and childcare were probably shared by many of their contemporaries.

Notes

- 1 Toivari-Viitala 2011: 2–3.
- 2 Janssen 1992: 85–86.
- 3 Toivari-Viitala 2011: 4.
- 4 Toivari-Viitala 2011: 4.
- 5 Toivari-Viitala 2011: 4.

- 6 Valbelle 1985: 1–26; Haring 2006: 107–109.
- 7 Toivari-Viitala 2001: 4.
- 8 Cooney 2007.
- 9 Janssen 1975: 457, 462–463, 471–481; Valbelle 1985: 153–154. For food at the village in general, see Valbelle 1985: 267–280. For a general survey of the Egyptian diet, see Wilson 1988.
- 10 McDowell 1999: 23.
- 11 Lesko 1994: 33; Zaki 2007: 946–948; Exell 2009: 131.
- 12 Ventura 1986: 171–179.
- 13 McDowell 1994.
- 14 Sweeney 2006.
- 15 McDowell 1999: 35.
- 16 Cf. Robins 1993: 13–14, 176; Szpakowska 2012: 26.
- 17 Cf. Meskell 1999: 218–219; Sweeney 2008: 191.
- 18 Cf. Robins 1993: 19–20.
- 19 Toivari-Viitala 2001: 52.
- 20 E.g. Mathieu 1996: 246; Fellingner 2013: 52. Landgráfová and Navrátilová 2009: 89, 221 are more cautious.
- 21 Toivari-Viitala 2001: 49.
- 22 Toivari-Viitala 2001: 61–67.
- 23 Toivari-Viitala 2001: 67–69.
- 24 Toivari-Viitala 2001: 68–69.
- 25 Helck 2002: 404.
- 26 Helck 2002: 404.
- 27 Helck 2002: 240.
- 28 Demarée 2002: 42; Kitchen 2008: 380.
- 29 McDowell 1999: 34.
- 30 Johnson 2009: 84.
- 31 McDowell 1990: 152.
- 32 McDowell 1990: 152.
- 33 McDowell 1990: 160; Toivari-Viitala 1997: 161, note 59.
- 34 Toivari-Viitala 2001: 90.
- 35 Toivari-Viitala 2001: 90; Johnson 2009: 86.
- 36 Toivari-Viitala 2003: 90.
- 37 Toivari 2001: 184.
- 38 Robins 1994–1995: 29–30, 32; Spieser 2004: 57–59, 62–64. Vezzani (2011) shows that Taweret was worshipped in her own right as a protective fertility goddess.
- 39 Toivari 2001: 177–179; Raven 2014.
- 40 Toivari 2001: 172.
- 41 Brunner-Traut 1955; see also Toivari 2001: 175–179.
- 42 Janssen 1992: 83–84.
- 43 McDowell 1999: 128–129.
- 44 McDowell 2000.

- 45 McDowell 2000: 225.
- 46 Janssen 1992: 89–91; Sweeney 1993.
- 47 Janssen 1992: 89.
- 48 For female literacy, see also Luiselli 2011: 126–127.
- 49 Sweeney 2006: 136–137.
- 50 Hofmann 2006: 116.
- 51 Meskell 1995: 201.
- 52 Valbelle 1985: 118–119; Koltsida 2007: 7–8; Toivari-Viitala 2011: 4–5.
- 53 See Weiss 2009 for a fuller discussion.
- 54 Sweeney 2006: 148.
- 55 Wilson 1988: 53–55.
- 56 Janssen 1980: 146–147.
- 57 Sweeney 2006: 140, 142–145.
- 58 Sweeney 2006: 141.
- 59 Sweeney 2006: 140, 145.
- 60 Eyre 1998.
- 61 McDowell 1999: 36. A sack of grain was worth two *deben* during most of the thirteenth and twelfth centuries BCE.
- 62 Luiselli 2011: 130, 141–142.
- 63 Exell 2009: 58–59, 65–66; Sweeney 2014.
- 64 Sweeney 2014.
- 65 Exell 2009: 58, 65, 131; Sweeney 2014: 181.
- 66 Exell 2009: 58–59; Luiselli 2011: 132.
- 67 Eyre 2013.
- 68 Cf. Onstine 2005: 9–11; Teeter 2009.
- 69 Morris 2011: 99.
- 70 Szpakowska 2012: 28, 34.
- 71 Sweeney 2002: 46.
- 72 Bruyère 1927: 65–67.
- 73 Robins 1993: 175.
- 74 Meskell 1999: 185–188, 205, 209–210.
- 75 Meskell 1999: 210.
- 76 Landgráfová and Navrátilová 2009: 39.
- 77 Meskell 1999: 204–208, 211.
- 78 Meskell 1999: 164–168.
- 79 Graves-Brown 2010: 10.

References

- Bierbrier, M. L. (1982) *The Tomb-Builders of the Pharaohs*. Cairo, Egypt: American University in Cairo Press.
- Brunner-Traut, E. (1955) Die Wochenlaube. *Mitteilungen des Instituts*

- Bruyère, B. (1927) *Rapport sur les Fouilles de Deir el-Médineh* (1926). Cairo, Egypt: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire.
- Demarée, R. J. (2002) *Ramesside Ostraca*. London: British Museum Press.
- Cooney, K. M. (2007) *The Cost of Death: The Social and Economic Value of Ancient Egyptian Funerary Art in the Ramesside Period*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten.
- Eyre, C. (1998) The market women of Pharaonic Egypt. In N. Grimal and B. Menu (eds) *Le Commerce en Égypte Ancienne*. Cairo, Egypt: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, pp. 173–191.
- Eyre, C. (2013) Women and prayer in pharaonic Egypt. In E. Frood and A. McDonald (eds) *Decorum and Experience: Essays in Ancient Culture for John Baines*. Oxford, UK: Griffith Institute, pp. 109–116.
- Exell, K. (2009) *Soldiers, Sailors and Sandalmakers: A Social Reading of Ramesside Period Votive Stelae*. London, UK: Golden House Publications.
- Fellinger, R. (2013) Sex object or equal partner? The role of women as portrayed in ancient Egyptian love poems. In C. Graves, G. Heffernan, L. McGarrity, E. Millward and M. S. Bealby (eds) *Current Research in Egyptology 2012: Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Symposium, University of Birmingham 2012*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 41–54.
- Graves-Brown, C. (2010) *Dancing for Hathor: Women in Ancient Egypt*. London and New York: Continuum.
- Hagen, F. (2005) 'The prohibitions': A New Kingdom didactic text. *JEA* 91: 125–164.
- Haring, B. J. J. (2006) Scribes and scribal activity at Deir el-Medīna. In A. Dorn and T. Hofmann (eds) *Living and Writing in Deir el-Medine —Socio-Historical Embodiment of Deir el-Medine Texts*. Basel, Switzerland: Schwabe Verlag, pp. 107–112.
- Helck, W. (2002) *Die Datierten und Datierbaren Ostraka, Papyri and Graffiti von Deir el-Medineh, Bearbeitet von Adelheid Schlott*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag.
- Hofmann, T. (2006) Arbeitseinsätze und Löhne der sogenannten Sklavinnen von Deir el-Medine. In A. Dorn and T. Hofmann (eds) *Living and Writing in Deir el-Medine—Socio-historical Embodiment of Deir el-Medine Texts*. Basel, Switzerland: Schwabe Verlag, pp. 113–118.
- Janssen, J. J. (1975) *Commodity Prices from the Ramessid Period*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Janssen, J. J. (1980) Absence from work by the necropolis workmen

- Janssen, J. J. (1992) Literacy and letters at Deir el-Medīna. In R. J. Demarée and A. Egberts (eds) *Village Voices: Proceedings of the Symposium 'Texts from Deir el-Medīna and their interpretation'*, Leiden, May 31–June 1, 1991. Leiden, The Netherlands: The centre of Non-Western Studies, Leiden University, pp. 81–94.
- Johnson, J. H. (2009) The social, economic, and legal status of women in Ancient Egypt. In J. H. Johnson and E. Teeter (eds) *The Life of Meresamun: A Temple Singer in Ancient Egypt*. Chicago, IL: Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, pp. 82–91.
- Kitchen, K. A. (2008) *Ramesside Inscriptions, Translated and Annotated: Translations*, V. Malden, UK and Carlton, VI, Australia: Blackwell Publishing.
- Koltsida, A. (2007) *Social Aspects of Ancient Egyptian Domestic Architecture*. Oxford, UK: Archeopress.
- Landgráfová, R. and Navrátilová, H. (2009) *Sex and the Golden Goddess I; Ancient Egyptian Love Songs in Context*. Prague, Czech Republic: Agama poly-grafiký atelier.
- Lesko, B. S. (1994) Rank, roles, and rights. In L. H. Lesko (ed.) *Pharaoh's Workers: The Villagers of Deir el Medina*. Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, pp. 15–39.
- Luiselli, M. (2011) *Die Suche nach Gottesnähe. Untersuchungen zur Persönlichen Frömmigkeit in Ägypten von der Ersten Zwischenzeit bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag.
- Mathieu, B. (1996) *La Poésie Amoureuse de l'Égypte Ancienne. Recherches sur un Genre Littéraire au Nouvel Empire*. Cairo, Egypt: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire.
- McDowell, A. G. (1990) *Jurisdiction in the Workmen's Community of Deir el-Medīna*, Leiden, The Netherlands: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten.
- McDowell, A. G. (1994) Contact with the outside world. In L. H. Lesko (ed.) *Pharaoh's Workers. The Villagers of Deir el Medina*. Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, pp. 41–59.
- McDowell, A. G. (1999) *Village Life in Ancient Egypt: Laundry Lists and Love Songs*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- McDowell, A. G. (2000) Teachers and students at Deir el-Medina. In R. J. Demarée and A. Egberts (eds) *Deir el-Medina in the Third Millennium AD—A Tribute to Jac. J. Janssen*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, pp. 217–233.
- Meskel, L. (1995) Deir el Medīna in hyperreality: Seeking the people

- of pharaonic Egypt. *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 7(2): 193–216.
- Meskel, L. (1999) *Archaeologies of Social Life: Age, Sex, Class et cetera in Ancient Egypt*. Oxford, UK and Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Morris, E. (2011) Paddle dolls and performance. *JARce* 47: 71–103.
- Onstine, S. L. (2005) *The Role of the Chantress (Šm'yt) in Ancient Egypt* (BAR International Series 1401). Oxford, UK: Archaeopress.
- Quack, J. F. (1994) *Die Lehren des Ani. Ein Neuägyptischer Weisheitstext in seinem Kulturellen Umfeld*. Fribourg, Switzerland: Universitätsverlag and Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Raven, M. (2014) Women's beds from Deir el-Medina. In B. J. J. Haring, O. Kaper and R. Van Walsem (eds) *The Workman's Progress: Studies in the Village of Deir el-Medina and Other Documents from Western Thebes in Honour of Rob Demarée*. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters and Leiden, The Netherlands: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, pp. 191–204.
- Robins, G. (1993). *Women in Ancient Egypt*. London: British Museum Press.
- Robins, G. (1994–1995) Women & children in peril: Pregnancy, birth & infant mortality in Ancient Egypt. *KMT* 5(4): 24–35.
- Spieser, C. (2004) Femmes et divinités enceintes dans l'Égypte du Nouvel Empire. In V. Dasen (ed.) *Naissance et Petite Enfance dans L'antiquité: Actes du Colloque de Fribourg*, 18 November – 1 December 2001. Fribourg, Switzerland: Universitätsverlag and Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, pp. 55–70.
- Sweeney, D. (1993) Women's correspondence from Deir el-Medineh. In G. M. Zaccane and T. R. Di Netro (eds) *Acts of the Sixth International Conference of Egyptology*, II. Turin, Italy: Tipographica Torinese, pp. 523–529.
- Sweeney, D. (2002) Walking alone forever, following you: Gender and mourners' laments from Ancient Egypt. *NIN: Journal of Gender Studies in Antiquity* 2: 27–48.
- Sweeney, D. (2006) Women growing older in Deir el-Medina. In A. Dorn and T. Hofmann (eds) *Living and Writing in Deir el-Medine—Socio-historical Embodiment of Deir el-Medine Texts*. Basel, Switzerland: Schwabe Verlag, pp. 135–153.
- Sweeney, D. (2008) Gender and requests in New Kingdom literature. In C. Graves-Brown (ed.) *Sex and Gender in Ancient Egypt: 'Don your wig for a joyful hour'*. Swansea, Wales: The Classical Press of Wales, pp. 191–214.

- Sweeney, D. (2014) Women at worship on Deir el-Medīna Stelae. In J. Toivari-Viitala, T. Vartiainen and S. Uvanto (eds) *Deir el-Medina Studies. Helsinki June 24–26, Proceedings*. Helsinki, Finland: The Finnish Egyptological Society, pp. 181–193.
- Szpakowska, K. (2012) Hidden voices: Unveiling women in Ancient Egypt. In S. James, L. James and S. Dillon (eds) *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*. Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell, pp. 25–38.
- Teeter, E. (2009). Inside the temple: The role and function of temple singers. In J. H. Johnson and E. Teeter (eds) *The Life of Meresamun: A Temple Singer in Ancient Egypt*. Chicago, IL: Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, pp. 25–29.
- Toivari-Viitala, J. (1997) Man versus woman: Internal disputes in the workmen's community of Deir el-Medina. *JESHO* 40: 153–173.
- Toivari-Viitala, J. (2001) *Women at Deir el-Medīna: A Study of the Status and Roles of the Female Inhabitants in the Workmen's Community during the Ramesside Period*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten.
- Toivari-Viitala, J. (2003) O. DeM 764: A note concerning property rights. *Göttinger Miszellen* 195: 87–96.
- Toivari-Viitala, J. (2011) Deir el-Medina (development). In W. Wendrich (ed.) *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*. Los Angeles, CA: Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures, UC Los Angeles. Available at <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/6kt9m29r>.
- Valbelle, D. (1985) 'Les Ouvriers de la Tombe', *Deir el-Médineh à l'Époque Ramesside*. Cairo, Egypt: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire.
- Vandier d'Abbadie, J. (1937) *Catalogue des Ostraca Figures de Deir el Médineh* 2, nos 2256–2722 (texte imprimé). Cairo, Egypt: Institut français d'Archéologie orientale du Caire.
- Veazzani, I. (2011) Osservazioni sul culto della dea Thokeris a Deir el-Medina. In D. Picchi (ed.) *L'Egitto in età Ramesside: atti del Convegno Chianciano Terme 17–18 dicembre 2009*. Milan, Italy: Silvana Editoriale, pp. 81–87.
- Ventura, R. (1986) *Living in a City of the Dead: A Selection of Topographical and Administrative Terms in the Documents of the Theban Necropolis*. Fribourg, Switzerland: Academic Press and Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Weiss, L. (2009) Personal religious practice: House altars at Deir el-Medina. *JEA* 95: 193–208.
- Wilson, H. (1988) *Egyptian Food and Drink*. Princes Risborough, UK: Shire Publications Ltd.

- Žába, Z. (1956) *Les Maximes de Ptaḥhotep*. Prague, Czech Republic: Éditions de l'Académie Tchèque des Sciences.
- Zaki, M. I. (2007) Les déesses dans les tombes de Deir el-Médineh. In J.-C. Goyon and C. Cardin (eds) *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Egyptologists*. Grenoble, 6—12 septembre 2004. Leuven, Belgium and Dudley, MA: Peeters, pp. 927–951.

WOMEN IN AMARNA

Legendary royals, forgotten elite, unknown populace?

Katharina Zinn

Amarna (short for Tell el-Amarna or El-Amarna) is the modern Arabic name for the site called Akhetaten – the *Horizon of the [sun disc] Aten* – during the second half of the 18th Dynasty of the Egyptian New Kingdom.¹ Akhetaten was the newly founded capital of Egypt under Akhenaten/Amenhotep IV and at least one immediate successor² during parts of the so-called Amarna Period, which is now defined as covering the reigns from Amenhotep III until Horemhab (1393–1298 BC).³ It was situated in Middle Egypt, nearly equidistant to Memphis and Thebes.

Akhenaten set out to build a new religious capital in an empty desert plain in Middle Egypt as a fitting religious landscape for his revolutionary ideas. An estimated 20,000 or more believers in his changes followed the king. Not even 20 years later, this city was abandoned by its inhabitants, stripped bare of most of the portable goods, and partially dismantled. Akhenaten and his successors were deemed heretics and non-persons, and were deleted from the annals. What seemed a tragedy at the time in fact is a blessing for modern archaeologists, as what was left of this city when the inhabitants moved away preserved “Egypt in microcosm”.⁴ The specifics of Amarna are different from the also oft cited – but somewhat atypical – workmen’s village, Deir el-Medina in Thebes–West (see Sweeney, this volume), as the inhabitants of Amarna represented the full spectrum of Egyptian society. Archaeological excavations in Amarna over the last 100 years have produced evidence on a par with Deir el-Medina, but incorporating a wider range of demographic groups. Much has been written and debated regarding the religious changes during the Amarna Period.⁵ This chapter, however, is specifically concerned with the role of women in this exceptional city and the question of whether

the status of women was different from or representative of the life of women during New Kingdom Egypt. There are certainly indications that religious changes might have transformed the position of women during this period. Did the disappearance of most of the goddesses during this period change the perception of women as the former were seen as ideal women?

Royal women of Amarna

Owing to the better evidence base and the interest sparked by modern reception, it seems logical to start with the royal women of Amarna: Tiye and Neferneferuaten-Nefertiti in particular. As scholars, we are dependent on the existing body of evidence: the archaeological, representational-iconographic and textual sources creating and reaffirming our interpretations.⁶ Throughout Egyptian history, the religious, royal and mortuary spheres provided the most durable sources, due to the use of longer lasting materials or the location in desert areas instead of the flood plains; by contrast, the material culture representing daily life is more perishable.

The outstanding status of the royal women of Amarna should be seen in the tradition of the royal women of the late 17th and early 18th Dynasties, who were standing “at the centre of power”.⁷ These royal women – mostly sister-wives – were reliable partners of the absent kings, who guaranteed a rule in the spirit of the dynasty.⁸ Depictions like Nefertiti smiting enemies⁹ or the Amarna princesses being present in ritual scenes¹⁰ prove the general accepted role of these women.

Tiye – preparing the female power in Amarna

The line of the Amarna royal women¹¹ begins with the exceptional queen Tiye (also spelled Tiyi or Tiy), remembered as the “commoner queen” due to her non-royal birth.¹² The names of her parents were publically announced on the base of a series of 56 known commemorative scarabs.¹³ This series is widely called *marriage scarabs*, although it is more likely that they celebrate the status of queen Tiye rather than the occasion of a wedding, as there is no mention of anything about marriage or a regnal year in the text.¹⁴ After giving the fivefold titular of Amenhotep III, Tiye is introduced:

[t]he Great Royal Wife Tiy, may she live. The name of her father is Yuya, the name of her mother is Thuya. She is the wife of a mighty king whose southern boundary is to Karoy, whose northern [boundary] is at Naharin.

To mention the parentage – especially as it refers to an elite, but non-royal provincial family – is unparalleled in Egyptian history, as is the phrase regarding the boundaries of Egypt which had reached their greatest extension at this time.¹⁵ For the most part we do not know the filiation of many royal women and so could argue that a number of them were of non-royal descent; even so, the specific stress on the parents remains exceptional. These scarabs have been found throughout the Mediterranean, in modern Jordan and Syria in the north and Sudan in the south.¹⁶ These presentations could only have one goal: to stress the importance of this queen and mark her as being equal with her husband.¹⁷

As mentioned in a series of 123 *lion-hunt scarabs*,¹⁸ Tiye was married to Nebmaatre Amenhotep, today known as Amenhotep III, already in his second regnal year at the assumed age of under 10.¹⁹ As his principal wife, she was part of the reinterpretation of the state religion towards the sun cult, taking active part in the scenes of the jubilee and offering scenes.²⁰ She is even to be seen as a model for queens during the Ramesside Period, in particular Nefertari, the principal queen of Ramesses II, who has recently been described a “Ramesside copy of Tiye”,²¹ referring to the specific role both queens had complementing the divine kingship represented by their husbands.

Outside Egypt, Amenhotep III built a temple to Tiye at Sedeinga in northern Sudan²² as a complement to his own, larger temple at Soleb.²³ There, both were depicted deified; Tiye was associated with the goddess Hathor.²⁴ This identification established her role as the divine female counterpart of the king elevated beyond the usual supporting role of queens to a position within the concept of divine kingship.²⁵ This is also verified by a variety of statuary, reliefs and stelae where she appears at the side of Amenhotep.²⁶

Royal representations – of both the king and the queen – are always symbolic and codified demonstrations of power which need to be read and understood. When we see Tiye being incorporated in imagery which is usually preserved for the king, this indicates her specific religious and political role. Tiye is depicted standing behind her husband in offering scenes, during the Sed-festival (Egyptian Heb Sed,²⁷ a jubilee – celebrated usually in regnal year 30 for the first time, then in shorter intervals), or during the smiting of the enemy or in family scenes.²⁸ She also can be shown sitting on the throne, either on her own or next to Amenhotep, in the so-called kiosk scenes where

both are watching festivities or rituals, banquet scenes or family scenes.²⁹ Of special interest are the offering scenes, the attendance of the Sed-festival, the participation during the ritual of *smiting of the enemy* as well as her depiction as a sphinx. Offering scenes are very formulaic. The (divine) king appears in front of a god or goddess to whom he offered goods and from whom he will in return receive help in the upkeep of the right order (Maat). Sporadically, the king might be accompanied by the king's mother or the king's wife. Tiye is not only shown accompanying the king as priestess – holding a sistrum (a musical instrument of the percussion family) and a menat (a necklace consisting of a counterpoise), both used by priestesses in religious ceremonies – but also grasping the Year-staff (a notched palm-branch).³⁰ The latter connects her with the goddess Seshat who grants regnal years and jubilees to the king, determines his titular and authorises the annals.³¹ This sufficiently constitutes Tiye's connection to one of the oldest kingly rituals – the Sed-festival which is unprecedented in Egyptian royal iconography.

In line with the deification of her husband, Tiye took an active part in rejuvenation and regeneration at the ceremonies during the Sed-festival in the last decade of reign of Amenhotep III. Standing behind her husband, she was the female complement to the king and guarantees, like him, the potency of the ritual.³² She received an adjusted iconography and was thereafter depicted with the double feather crown with horns and sun disk both in relief as well as in statuary; the new crown replaced the simple double feather crown typical for royal women from the beginning of the New Kingdom.³³ By wearing this crown with sun disc and horns, Tiye is associated with Hathor and Maat whose attribute it was traditionally.³⁴ One example can be seen in the tomb of the Royal Scribe Kheruef (TT192),³⁵ where Tiye is depicted standing behind her husband who is sitting in the jubilee tent on a cuboid srx-block-throne with a protective falcon replacing the backrest,³⁶ together with Hathor settled on a simple srx-throne.³⁷ Even though she is depicted standing and not sitting like the king and the goddess and as such is marked as being passive, she is included in the important scene in an elevated position within the kiosk. Tiye also keeps this specific crown when depicted in Amarna. One example can be seen in the tomb of Huya *Overseer of the Royal Harem and of the Treasuries, Steward of the Great Royal Wife Tiye* (Amarna Tomb 1),³⁸ where Tiye is sitting at the banquet with Akhenaten and Nefertiti.³⁹ Also on the wooden shrine with gold foil from the mysterious tomb KV 55,⁴⁰ Tiye is depicted wearing this crown, which led the first excavator to the wrong conclusion that she was the tomb owner.⁴¹ On the back panel we see her standing behind

her scratched-out son, Akhenaten, offering an aromatic substance.⁴²

In the tomb of Kheruef (TT192) we also see Tiye seated in a kiosk behind Amenhotep III receiving gifts on the occasion of the third jubilee (Figure 18.1).⁴³ While Amenhotep III sits again on a srx-block-throne with a protective falcon replacing the backrest, Tiye sits this time on a lion-throne decorated with lion heads, captives, sphinx, usually interpreted as male attributes and being male.⁴⁴ However, in this case the lion heads, sphinx, and the captives depicted beneath this throne are rendered female.⁴⁵ The striding sphinx on the side of the throne is trampling an enemy, a variant of the kingly iconography of the *smiting of the enemy*. Even if it is not clear whether we see a male or female enemy, the sphinx is clearly marked as being Tiye, as the inscription in front of her reads: “The principal wife of the king, beloved of him, Tiye, may she live, be enduring and youthful every day.”⁴⁶ Her role as active *destructice of the enemy*⁴⁷ is marked by the words “Trampling every foreign country” written behind the sphinx.⁴⁸ The closest parallel is the depiction of Tiye as striding lion sphinx on the supraporte of her temple at Sedeinga in Nubia, showing her with an unidentified crown which nevertheless resembles the later flat-topped crown of Nefertiti.⁴⁹ Tiye as sphinx is also shown on a now lost ivory inlay displaying two female sphinxes facing each other with three cartouches between them.⁵⁰ The left one gives the name of Tiye. The most-quoted depiction of this queen as sphinx⁵¹ on the carnelian bracelet plaque in the Metropolitan Museum New York,⁵² however, is now known to have been wrongly assigned to her, being the typos of a Syrian sphinx.⁵³

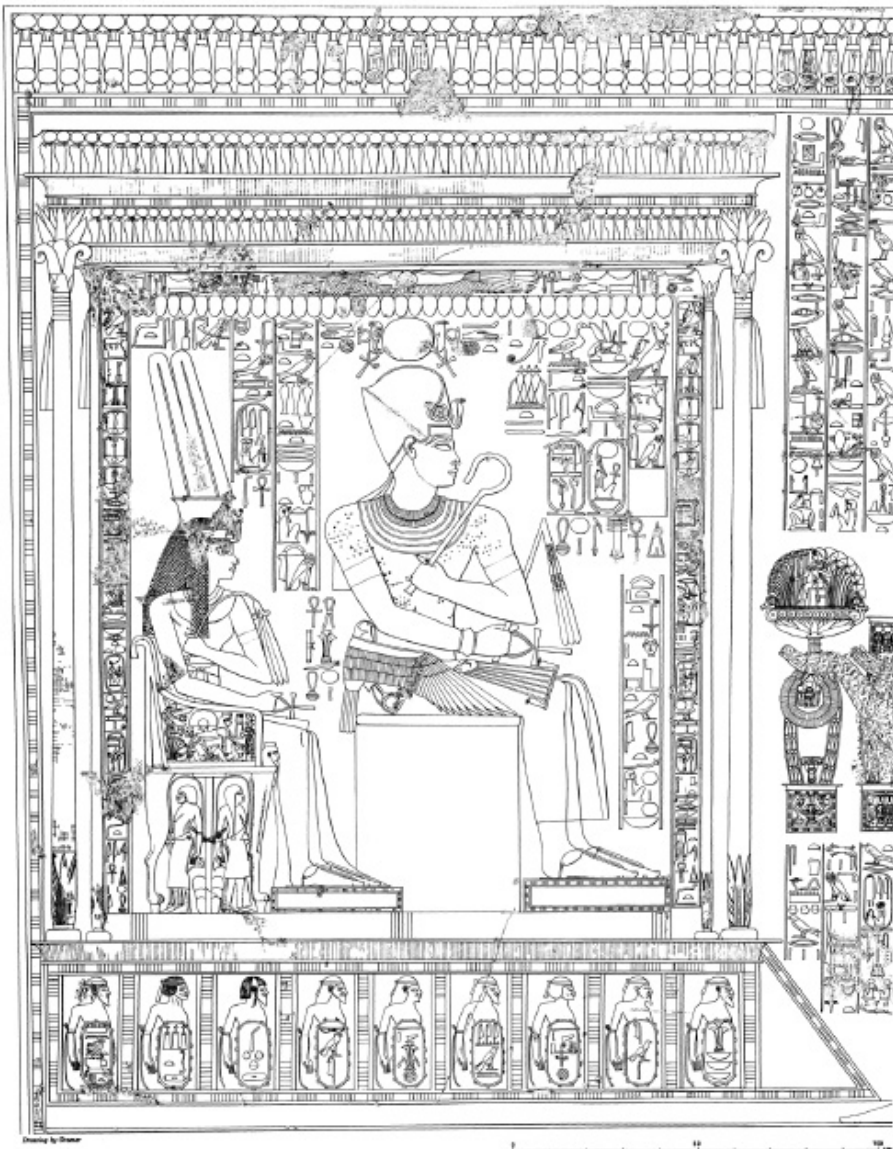


Figure 18.1 Tiye and Amenhotep III receiving gifts on the occasion of his third jubilee (Epigraphic Survey 1980: pl. 49).
(Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.)

Politically, she was dubbed as the counsellor of the wider Amarna Period by modern scholars,⁵⁴ especially due to her political and diplomatic roles. In the Amarna Letter EA29 Tušratta, the king of Mitanni, writes to Akhenaten:

T[ey]e, the principal [and favourite] wife of Nimmureya (i.e. Nebmaatre

Amenhotep), your father, knows all the words of Nimmureya, your father, tha[t] he would write [to] me over and <ov>er. It is Teye, your mother, whom you must ask about all of them: [what] your father [would write over and over], the words that he would speak with me over and over.

(Moran 1992: 92)

Nefertiti – the public figure

The most famous and best known female in Amarna is undoubtedly Neferneferuaten-Nefertiti, the wife of pharaoh, Akhenaten/Amenhotep IV. Her fame started when her famous bust – now in the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung Staatliche Museen zu Berlin⁵⁵ – was discovered in the workshop of the artist Thutmose in Amarna on 6 December 1912.⁵⁶ Akhenaten and Nefertiti created the new religion – now referred to as Amarna religion – as well as built the new capital Akhetaten (Amarna). We have to understand Nefertiti twofold: as a characteristic queen of the 18th Dynasty following many leads established by her predecessors, but also as a unique personality of Egyptian history. Despite the sheer abundance of sources and the clear impression she gives as a queen, we do not know much about her as a real woman or an historical person.⁵⁷ We should recognise her as an *icon*,⁵⁸ being omnipresent in her pictures, statuary and constant mention of her name. She was a *public figure* at her time, as she is again today. What can be traced is the historiography of a (female) ruler, but not the historical facts concerning the real woman behind the image. The guesswork already appears in relation to her name and basic dates. She is depicted at the coronation of Amenhotep IV; but nothing earlier is known.

Her full name used during her lifetime is Neferneferuaten-Nefertiti (*nfr-nfr.w-jtn nfr.t.tj* – *Perfect/beautiful are the beauties of Aten, the beautiful has come*) which reads like the programmatic names kings usually receive at coronation. The pronunciation of her name might have sounded like Nafteta,⁵⁹ but we do not even know if this was her birth name. Her name might show a connection to Hathor as does the representation with the double feather crown (with or without horns and sundisc) as already worn by Tiye.⁶⁰ Hathor as the prototype of the feminine is always connected with queenship in Ancient Egypt.⁶¹ She is mythologically interpreted as the mother of the king⁶² with Re/Amun-Re as the father.⁶³ Especially in the temples of the New Kingdom she is depicted suckling the king.⁶⁴ As mother of the king and therefore mother of Horus, she can also be addressed as Isis. Wearing the double feather crown identifies Nefertiti, and other queens therefore, as Hathor and Isis.⁶⁵

Nefertiti perfected the image of the queen as part of the concept of divine kingship so much that she could even be depicted on her own without the king. As such she is an intrinsic part of and responsible for aspects of the new religion, a quality that usually only the pharaoh will have. Examples are already found at the beginning of Akhenaten's reign. Within the four temples Akhenaten built in Karnak, Nefertiti is depicted more often than the king himself, either alone, with her oldest daughter, or her husband.⁶⁶ She also features prominently in the texts on the boundary stelae. These stelae, bearing long inscriptions, encircle the area of the new capital and express the religious and political agenda. It becomes clear that certain areas of the town are dedicated to Nefertiti.⁶⁷ Her religious-ritualistic role overlaps with the one of the king. This is especially obvious in the *smiting of the enemy* scenes.⁶⁸ Another role beyond the usual queenly one is the equation with several goddesses: besides being equivalent to Hathor and Isis, she is also identified with Maat⁶⁹ and Tefnut.⁷⁰ As the latter, she is placed within the newly formed divine triad of Aten as the creator god, with Akhenaten as Shu and herself as Tefnut, the first generation of gods.⁷¹

Her role as icon is powerful, but what can we say about the person? Until 2012, it was assumed that Nefertiti disappeared around the 14th regnal year of Akhenaten, possibly because of death due to bubonic plague or accident, or falling out of grace and being expelled.⁷² Her last known image was found in room γ (with a parallel scene in room α) of the Royal Tomb in Amarna (No. 26) and shows the royal couple grieving for the death of their daughter, Maketaten (see also Feucht, this volume).⁷³ As this event can be established for or after the 13th regnal year,⁷⁴ it was assumed that Nefertiti vanished in year 14. With the discovery of a hieratic text written in red ochre in the quarry of Dayr Abu Hinnis, 10 km north of Amarna, it is now established that Nefertiti was still alive during the 16th regnal year, indicating that she was at Akhenaten's side towards the end of his life, whose last proven evidence comes from his 17th regnal year.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, this will not help to determine the exact time or cause of her death nor the exact succession at the end of the Amarna Period.⁷⁶

From representations in temples, tombs and the boundary stelae of Amarna, it seems certain that she gave birth to six daughters. She and Akhenaten are also discussed as the parents of Tutankhamun.⁷⁷ Her own filiation is controversial: she was proposed to be the Mitanni princess Taduḥepa, one of the foreign princesses married to Amenhotep III. A different theory places her as daughter of Amenhotep III with either Tiye or a minor wife as mother. The problem here lies in the absence of any title as *daughter of the king*,

which would be expected in this case.⁷⁸ On the other hand, with the clear identification of the mummies of Yuya and Thuya – Tiye's parents – and their proven genetic relation to the mummies KV 35 EL (accepted as Tiye) and KV 35 YL (assumed Nefertiti) as well as the genetic kin of the latter to each other, Tiye and Nefertiti should be seen either as mother and daughter (more realistically) or sisters.⁷⁹ In both cases, Nefertiti and Akhenaten would be relatives.

The elite: the royal nurses

As the elite left enough evidence in equipping their houses and tombs, there are sufficient data to trace the real women among the elite of Amarna. Another source is their representations in tombs, as the typical decorated Egyptian tomb shows the (mostly) male tomb owner with his supportive wife enjoying activities with him or mourning him on her own.⁸⁰ Even though these are to be seen as a representation of an idealised society, it might still be possible to draw some conclusions from them as they reflect the relationship between the sexes and therefore gender roles. New Kingdom women who were not connected to the royal family did not have their own decorated tombs. During the Amarna Period, the wives of high officials are usually not depicted in their husbands' tombs.⁸¹ As we do not have tombs of the lower elite, it is difficult to assess if this was a general trend.

More easily traceable are the elite women connected with the royal household. One of them is Tey (also spelled Tiy), wife of Ay, the later pharaoh. Her name is similarly spelled to the one of queen Tiye, but is differentiated in the transcription by Egyptologists. In the tomb of Ay,⁸² she is mentioned as Nefertiti's wet nurse.⁸³ The titles of royal wet nurses and tutors only seem to appear during the 18th Dynasty.⁸⁴ A representation of this fact might also be established on a relief found at Hermopolis⁸⁵ which shows the upper body of presumably two female figures, with the younger one sitting on the lap of the older. Being an example of the later Amarna art style, the figures were identified as Tey with Nefertiti as a charge sitting on her lap.⁸⁶ We have to understand Tey as one of the most influential women in personal matters: significant for the real Nefertiti whom we do not know. She also appears prominently in the tomb of Ay which was the largest and finest among the non-royal tombs.⁸⁷ Tey is even kneeling in the entryway together with her husband before the text of the Aten hymn⁸⁸ and has therefore an unrivalled and unusually direct access to Aten; connection to the sun god was more typically mediated by the king. She is all the more receiving the *Gold of Honour/Valour* herself and in addition to her husband,⁸⁹ which equally shows her elevated

position, as do her titles “praised of the Good God, great nurse, who nurtured the goddess, royal ornament” or, more specifically, “praised of the Good God, nurse of the Great Royal Wife Neferneferuaten-Nefertiti”.⁹⁰ Both titles show the very special relationship of Tey to her nurseling as a special honour.⁹¹ As this tomb is dated to the first half of Akhenaten’s reign,⁹² it is quite unlikely that the above mentioned Hermopolis relief would come from there. Her filiation is equally as mysterious as Nefertiti’s: she might have come from Akhmim like her husband Ay who was possibly related to Tiye’s parents.⁹³

Another important woman was Tia, the nurse of princess Ankhesenpaaten, one of the daughters of Akhenaten and Nefertiti, the later wife of Tutankhamun. She is known from a *talatat* – small blocks of about 55 × 25 × 25 cm used only during the Amarna Period in order to quickly and efficiently construct the new temples and palaces – found in Amarna or Hermopolis, now in the Metropolitan Museum New York.⁹⁴ This block shows two scenes with an adult figure on the left, also differently discussed as being either one of the senior princesses⁹⁵ or the king himself,⁹⁶ and a smaller figure with the side lock of youth to the right. The inscription behind the figure on the left says “nurse of the king’s daughter Ankhesenpaaten, Tia”. It is interesting that this person is characterised as an adolescent, but at the same time offering or waiting on a member of the royal family. Both would mark her rank.

A further high-ranking woman is Maia (or Maya), the wet nurse of Tutankhamun.⁹⁷ Her tomb was found in Saqqara, as many of the high officials of the late Amarna Period. Alain Zivie tried to equate her with the king’s daughter and wife of Semenkhekare, Meritaten, but this seems not very likely.⁹⁸ Beyond their profession and rank as wet nurse, these women stay hidden in a way similar to royal women.

Further evidence of elite, non-royal women might be found in the material culture. In the deposits of art work within the estate of the sculptor, Thutmose, excavators unearthed not only the famous bust of Nefertiti⁹⁹ but also at least five gypsum plaster heads of non-royal women of any age,¹⁰⁰ as well as stone heads¹⁰¹ not clearly identifiable as one of the Amarna queens or princesses. Even though the latter material seems to be more appropriate for a royal setting due to its value, these objects have not enough features shared with the iconography for the royal women and might therefore also be interpreted as members of the elite. Such of slightly lower ranks than the aforementioned wet nurses are to be seen in the many *talatats* preserved: we are shown women bowing down during processions,¹⁰²

female members of the royal entourage,¹⁰³ female musicians¹⁰⁴ and attendants.¹⁰⁵

The unknown populace: lost or traceable?

Until recently, Amarna was understood as a royal city. It is to the credit of Barry Kemp and his team to have established Amarna as a *City of People*, too.¹⁰⁶ In addition to the inner city, we are now able to see the outlying villages, isolated settlements on opposite sides of the low plateau.¹⁰⁷ The workmen's village, a parallel to Deir el-Medina in Thebes,¹⁰⁸ is one of them.¹⁰⁹

The main problem for our knowledge of ancient Egyptian society lies in the separation of *elite* and *lower classes*. Boundaries are fluid. We could argue that as soon as we have traces of these lower-class women, they should be counted as belonging to the (lower) elite as they were able to afford to leave material traces behind. Should we therefore count the remains of the painted plaster wall showing a woman together with her husband found in the main chapel of the workmen's village (Figure 18.2)¹¹⁰ as belonging to the elite or not? Numerous painted fragments on white gypsums were found and restored since the excavation in the 1980s.¹¹¹

The woman is clearly dressed for a special occasion with a wig, a broad collar, the white dress, flower garland and the funerary cone. The whole scene resembles more the reliefs in the early 18th-Dynasty Theban tombs than official Amarna art, except the eyes. This could mean that the artists working for the lower classes did not adapt to or were not initiated into the new art style. In particular, the presentation of the funerary cone could also express a kind of independence or self-confidence, as the funerary sphere was not expressed in the royal sphere, but clearly here.



Figure 18.2 Woman dressed for a special occasion, fragments from the Main Chapel at the Workmen's Village. (Photo by B. Kemp, restored by F. Weatherhead; © Barry Kemp.)

Another face of Amarna, in the literal sense, is the small head broken from a small statue, which probably served as a private icon, showing maybe a revered deceased relative.¹¹² It was found in a lower-class private house (T36.68) in the North Suburb, where houses are more closely set than in other parts of the city. The question remains as to who is represented by this little statuette. The discussion ranges from royals to non-royals, from a female to a male. The statuette wears a wig popular among royal women, the so-called Nubian wig.¹¹³ However, this wig is also worn by male officials. The red skin colour, usually attributed to males in Egyptian art, was no longer a reliable indicator of sex in the Amarna Period. Nefertiti's bust presents a traditional male colour, as does the plaster fresco showing the princesses sitting in front of their father¹¹⁴ and other depictions of

royal women.¹¹⁵ Also, non-royal women have a darker skin colour, as the above mentioned talatat showing the nurse Tia or private stelae are likely to show.¹¹⁶ It would therefore be possible that this little statuette shows a revered female who may have been worshipped in a private home.

A non-royal scene of a squatting woman suckling a child from Amarna is to be found in the British Museum (Figure 18.3).¹¹⁷ The placement of this scene, which looks like an artist's sketch, into the non-royal sphere seems to be marked by the complete absence of regalia and iconography and the indicating inscriptions. Therefore, it is even more difficult to establish whether this woman is the mother or a nurse. Nevertheless, the importance of childbirth and breastfeeding highlights the significance of fertility for the ancient Egyptian society.

Another source group which could help to trace real women in Amarna, is the sphere of private religion. Some of these objects have a very clear connection to women. Among the group of ostraca showing private individuals, we see females in adoration, playing instruments, or handling children, but maybe also in pornographic scenes.¹¹⁸ Women are worshipping goddesses like Taweret on stelae,¹¹⁹ or are depicted nursing children as figurines or plaques¹²⁰ (see also BM EA 15973 below). Such evidence allows the discussion of the role of women, but does not offer facts about a particular individual. Again, the boundaries between lower elite and populace are fluid.



Figure 18.3 Limestone decorated with a sunk relief representation of a squatting woman suckling a child (British Museum EA 15973). (© The Trustees of the British Museum.)

Architectural layouts of private residences are often used as evidence for the status of woman in Amarna. While it is certain that house size is a prime indicator of status in Amarna,¹²¹ the ascription of specific spaces to women and the conclusions that have been drawn from such spaces about the status of women are at least questionable. The assumption that specific spaces in the house¹²² are exclusively dedicated to women is impossible to prove. The fact that some excavators dubbed some rooms of the Amarna houses as *Women's Rooms*¹²³ is the result of orientalist understandings of women prevalent in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, rather than based on evidence. Egyptian women were not shut off in a kind of harem. Hence, the idea of segregation based on gender is in my view anachronistic. A similar mistake was made in interpreting the so-called *birth beds* in the first or central rooms of the Deir el-Medina or Amarna houses. These elevated structures were classified as *birth beds* due to scenes of women nursing a child or Bes on them without discussion of practicalities of this space being in a main room and too small to give birth. New research classifies them as house altars.¹²⁴ There is no sufficient evidence suggesting specific women's spaces within the house. This could be interpreted as shared usage of space by all inhabitants irrespective of gender. This equality is supported by

the fact that women could own property, as proved at Deir el-Medina.¹²⁵

Equally difficult is the differentiation between the burials at the South Tombs cemetery in Amarna,¹²⁶ which was very adequately titled as “a cemetery of forgotten souls”¹²⁷ where more than 3,000 people might have been buried.¹²⁸ This cemetery lies in a desert valley behind the South Tombs.¹²⁹ The pits are dug into the sand without showing a common direction.¹³⁰ The demographic stratigraphy is not yet fully available.

The understanding of Amarna as a *City of People* and especially the South Tombs cemetery also reveals a darker side. Here, the excavators found only a few artefacts despite the bones. The latter, buried there most likely over a period of only 15 years,¹³¹ introduces us to a fragment of the actual population, people who might have been related or known to each other.¹³² The examination of the bones revealed inadequate nutrition, injuries and short lives. Poor people were very short due to malnutrition and had compression fractures of the spine due to bearing heavy loads.¹³³ Of this sample, 70 per cent died before the age of 35.¹³⁴ These quite gruesome facts seem to correlate with the weak health of Tutankhamun as a feature of this time. For the 2012 season, 41 skeletons were analysed of which 22 could be sexed: 13 (32 per cent) adult males and 9 (22 per cent) adult females suggest more males in the cemetery.¹³⁵ The bioarchaeological data show a huge rate of workload-related physical conditions and traumas – revealing the hardship the builders of Amarna faced – with no difference between male and female health.¹³⁶ The skeletal pathology found in most adults, young adults and teenagers of both sexes is spinal arthritis.¹³⁷

Most of the 234 bodies already excavated¹³⁸ were buried wrapped in cloth and rolled up in mats without traces of mummification.¹³⁹ This would indicate a cemetery of the populace. However, the South Tombs cemetery represents a large cross-section of the social hierarchy congruent to the settlement patterns found in Amarna. All but the very highest social classes lived and were interred beside one another.¹⁴⁰ Therefore, the excavators also found wooden coffins in the shape of a human figure, a number of them even decorated.¹⁴¹ If we classify them as elite burials we would expect that these coffins would follow the funerary art of this time. One coffin, however, seems to depict a canine-headed god as a strong exception of the religious iconography of the Amarna Period.¹⁴² One woman aged 25–30 was buried with a hollow cone of a pale, quite brittle wax-like substance which reminded the excavator of the Kingdom *funerary cones* often

depicted during the New Kingdom.¹⁴³ They are also to be seen in Amarna elite tombs, as Tey is shown wearing one in Amarna Tomb 25 (Ay).¹⁴⁴

The marvellous outcome of this survey for the topic of this chapter is the fact that the team generated facial reconstructions of some of the individuals, so that we can now look into the faces of the real women of Amarna.¹⁴⁵ One woman was between 40 and 50 at the time of her death and 161–162 cm tall. She had survived a blow to her head during her lifetime, had broken her left upper arm which had healed but with a shortened length, and was buried face down with her long hair plait preserved. Thus, in the end, it is a poorer woman who enables us to meet face-to-face with the women in Amarna.

List of abbreviations

- PM I,1 = Porter, B. and Moss, R. L. B. (1970) *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings I,1: The Theban Necropolis, Private Tombs*. Oxford, UK: Griffith Institute.
- PM I,2 = Porter, B. and Moss, R. L. B. (1964) *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings I,1: The Theban Necropolis, Royal Tombs and Smaller cemeteries*. Oxford, UK: Griffith Institute.
- PM IV = Porter, B. and Moss, R. L. B. (1968) *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings IV: Lower and Middle Egypt (Delta and Cairo to Asyût)*. Oxford, UK: Griffith Institute.
- PM VII = Porter, B. and Moss, R. L. B. (1975) *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings VII: Nubia, the Desert, and Outside Egypt*. Oxford, UK: Griffith Institute.

Notes

- 1 PM IV, 192–238.
- 2 For a discussion of the succession problem and further literature, see Allen 2009; Labouri 2010: 329–357.
- 3 Kemp 2012: 304.
- 4 Kemp 1989: 261.
- 5 For an overview and further literature, see Assmann 2012; Allen 1996; Krauss 2000; Hornung 1999: 19–60, 72–104; Redford 1984: 137–181; Labouri 2010: 93–327.
- 6 Robins 1993: 12.

- 7 Schoske 2008: 188.
- 8 Tyldesley 2006: 80.
- 9 Zinn 2015: 41–48. Museum of Fine Arts Boston, Inv. Nr. 64.521 und 63.260 (Zinn 2015: 41, fn. 60); for the Theban talatat see Zinn 2015: 45, fn. 70.
- 10 Ashmolean Museum, Oxford 1893. 1–41[71] (Arnold 1996c: 23, fig. 15).
- 11 Green 1996, 1988: 391–441 and 501–560.
- 12 Bayer 2014: 3–4.
- 13 Kozloff 2012: 100.
- 14 Kozloff and Bryan 1992: 67–68.
- 15 Kozloff and Bryan 1992: 68.
- 16 Kozloff 2012: 100.
- 17 O'Connor and Cline 2001: 6.
- 18 Kozloff and Bryan 1992: 67.
- 19 Bayer 2014: 3.
- 20 Bayer 2014: [XXVI], 393–398, 390–392.
- 21 Bayer 2014: [1].
- 22 PM VII, 166–167.
- 23 O'Connor and Cline 2001: 6. PM VII, 169–172.
- 24 Schoske 2008: 188. O'Connor and Cline 2001: 6.
- 25 Troy 2008.
- 26 Tiye in group statues: English Private Collection (Kozloff and Bryan 1992: 170–171, catalogue no. 13), Louvre, Paris N 2312 + E 25493 (Bayer 2014: pl. 3b–d) and Museum of Fine Arts, Boston 21.2802; (Kozloff and Bryan 1992: 175–177, catalogue no. 15; Bayer 2014: pl. 44 a–b). Relief (temple): Sedeinga and Soleb (Bayer 2014: pl. 48–54); Relief (tombs): especially TT192 – Kheruef, royal scribe and steward to Queen Tiye (Bayer 2014: pl. 59–64). Stelae (royal): Kom el-Hetan (Bayer 2014: pl. 70); Stelae (private): British Museum, London EA 834 (Bayer 2014: pl. 73b).
- 27 Hornung and Staehelin 1974, 2006.
- 28 Bayer 2014: 387.
- 29 Bayer 2014: 388.
- 30 Borchardt 1911: 18, fig. 24 (wooden stela, Amenhotep III and Tiye before Amun and Mut); 22, fig. 30 (box inlay, ivory).
- 31 Budde 2000: 113–141.
- 32 Bayer 2014: 399.
- 33 Althoff 2009: 12–13.
- 34 Althoff 2009: 13; Bayer 2014: 424.
- 35 PM I,1, 299(6).
- 36 Kuhlmann 2011: 6 and fig. 7.
- 37 West portico, south of doorway, northernmost scene (Epigraphic Survey 1980: pl. 26). The sun-disc is hacked out, but the cow horns are clearly visible.
- 38 PM IV, 211–212. Huya's titles were 'Overseer of the Royal Harim and of the Treasuries, and Steward of the Great Royal Wife, Tiye'.
- 39 PM IV, 211(4).
- 40 PM I,2, 565–566.

- 41 PM I,2, 566. Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JdE 57175. Davis 1908: p. 32–33; Bayer 2014: pl. 80–81.
- 42 Bayer 2014: 335.
- 43 PM I,1, 299(8): West portico, north of doorway, southernmost scene (Epigraphic Survey 1980: pl. 48–49, scene overview on pl. 47).
- 44 Kuhlmann 2011: fig. 8.
- 45 Epigraphic Survey 1980: pl. 52A.
- 46 Epigraphic Survey 1980: 55.
- 47 Roth 2002: 26 (‘aktive Feindvernichterin’).
- 48 Epigraphic Survey 1980: 55.
- 49 Bayer 2014: 202–207, pl. 51.
- 50 Bayer 2014: 322–324, pl. 76.
- 51 Arnold 1996a: 107, fig. 102; Kozloff 2012: 191, fig. 39.
- 52 MMA 26.7.1342.
- 53 Roth 2002: 43–49, fig. 10; Bayer 2014: 377–379.
- 54 Schoske 2008: 190.
- 55 ÄM 21300.
- 56 Jung 2012: 421.
- 57 This conundrum is explained in more detail in Zinn 2015.
- 58 Troy 2002.
- 59 Fecht 1960.
- 60 Zinn 2015: 29–30.
- 61 Troy 1986: 53–72.
- 62 Troy 1986: 54–55.
- 63 Naville 1901: pl. CVI.
- 64 Naville 1901: pl. CV (Hatshepsut as king).
- 65 Althoff 2009: 69–72.
- 66 Samson 1977: esp. 88.
- 67 Murnane and Van Siclen 1993: 40–41.
- 68 Zinn 2015: 41–48. Museum of Fine Arts Boston, Inv. Nr. 64.521 und 63.260 (Zinn 2015: 41, fn. 60); for the Theban talatats see Zinn 2015: 45, fn. 70.
- 69 Zinn 2015: 48–49.
- 70 See ring Metropolitan Museum, New York, MMA 26.7.767.
- 71 See representation like the altar Ägyptisches Museum, Berlin ÄM 14145. Cruz-Uribe 1995: esp. 17.
- 72 Zinn 2015: 31, fn. 23.
- 73 PM IV, 236(8) – room α – PM IV, 236(12)-(13) – room γ. Martin 1989: pl. 63–64. For the plan of the complete suite of the burial of Maketaten, see Freed *et al.* 1999: 167, fig. 127.
- 74 Green 1988: 11 and 138, fn. 33.
- 75 Van der Perre 2012, 2014: 70–75 (with facsimile, transcription and translation).
- 76 Van der Perre 2014: 77–102.
- 77 Zinn 2015: 33, fn. 29.

- 78 Zinn 2015: 33–34. For royal women incorporated into the concept of divine kingship, see Zinn 2015: 35–39.
- 79 Hawass *et al.* 2010: 638–647, esp. 641, fig. 2.
- 80 Roth 1999: 37–38.
- 81 Roehrig 1990: 264–265.
- 82 PM IV, 228–230. Southern group of Amarna tombs, number 25.
- 83 PM IV, 228(1)–(2); Davies 1908: pl. 24.
- 84 Roehrig 1990: [1]; Budin 2011: 107–113.
- 85 Musée du Louvre, Paris E 27,150. Arnold 1996a: 92, fig. 82 (here attributed to show Meretaten sitting on her mother Nefertiti's lap), discussed at p. 91.
- 86 Desroches-Noublecourt 1978.
- 87 Davies 1908: 16.
- 88 PM IV, 228(5); Davies 1908: 25, 39.
- 89 PM IV, 229(6)–(8); Davies 1908: pl. 29.
- 90 Roehrig 1990: 263–264.
- 91 Roehrig 1990: 2.
- 92 Roehrig 1990: 263.
- 93 Roehrig 1990: 265.
- 94 Metropolitan Museum of Arts, New York 1985.328.5, formerly Schimmel collection; Aldred 1973: 196, fig. 129.
- 95 Aldred 1973: 196.
- 96 <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/544674?=&imgno=0&tabname=label> (accessed 21 June 2015).
- 97 Sakkara, tomb Bub. I.20 (Zivie 2009).
- 98 Zivie 2009: 111–113.
- 99 Arnold 1996b: 64–66, figs. 58 and 60.
- 100 Arnold 1996b: 46.
- 101 Arnold 1996b: 49.
- 102 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 62.501.
- 103 Metropolitan Museum, New York, 1985.328.10.
- 104 Metropolitan Museum, New York, 1985.328.12.
- 105 Grieving scene, Royal Tomb, Amarna (No. 26), Room γ, Wall A and B (Martin 1989: pl. 63–68).
- 106 Kemp 2012, esp. 154–196.
- 107 Kemp 2012: 190.
- 108 Kemp 2012: 191.
- 109 Kemp 1987: 30–35, outline plan on 31, fig. 3.
- 110 I thank Barry Kemp for sending me this photo. For the whole restored scene, see Kemp 2012: [278], pl. 44. For an overview of the workmen's village and the location of the main chapel, see Kemp 2012: 192, fig. 5.30.
- 111 Kemp 1987: 32.
- 112 Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: MMA 31.114.1, available at <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/544685> (accessed 21 June 2015).

- 113 Althoff 2009: 14; Arnold 1996c: 37–38.
- 114 Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, AN1893.1–41 (267).
- 115 Freed *et al.* 1999: 220–223.
- 116 San Diego Museum of Man, San Diego, 14881.
- 117 EA 15973.
- 118 Stevens 2006: 157–159.
- 119 Stevens 2006: 144 and fig. II.5.19.
- 120 Stevens 2006: 92–93.
- 121 Crocker 1985: 52.
- 122 Kleinke 2007: 70–72.
- 123 Crocker 1985: 60.
- 124 Koltsida 2006; Kleinke 2007: esp. 75; Kemp 2012: 245, fig. 7.16.
- 125 Toivari-Viitala 2001: 96–138.
- 126 Kemp 2012: 256–263.
- 127 Dabbs and Zabecki 2014.
- 128 Kemp 2012: 227.
- 129 Kemp 2012: 257, fig. 7.26.
- 130 Kemp 2012: 256–257.
- 131 Zabecki and Rose 2010: 9.
- 132 Kemp 2012: 227.
- 133 Kemp 2012: 227.
- 134 Kemp 2012: 228 and chart 6.33.
- 135 Rose and Dabbs 2012: [2].
- 136 Dabbs and Zabecki 2014: 234.
- 137 Zabecki and Rose 2010: 7.
- 138 Until 2010. Dabbs and Zabecki 2014: 223.
- 139 Kemp 2012: 260.
- 140 Dabbs and Zabecki 2014: 217.
- 141 Kemp 2012: 260–261, figs. 7.33 and 7.34.
- 142 Kemp 2012: 261–262.
- 143 Individual 150 (I54 <13132>), Notes 2010: 3.
- 144 Davies 1908: p. 1.
- 145 South Tombs cemetery, individual 114, Kemp 2012: 225, fig. 6.32 and Rose *et al.* 2009: 5.

References

- Aldred, C. (1973) *Akhenaten and Nefertiti*. New York: Viking Press.
- Allen, J. P. (1996) The religion of Amarna. In D. Arnold (ed.) *The Royal Women of Amarna: Images of Beauty from Ancient Egypt*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, pp. 3–5.
- Allen, J. P. (2009) The Amarna succession. In P. Brand and L. Cooper

- (eds) *Causing His Name to Live: Studies in Egyptian Epigraphy and History in Memory of William J. Murnane*. CHANE 37. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 9–20.
- Althoff, E. A. (2009) *Kronen und Kopfputz von Königsfrauen im Neuen Reich*. HÄB 49. Hildesheim, Germany: Gerstenberg.
- Arnold, D. (1996a) Aspects of the royal female image during the Amarna period. In D. Arnold (ed.) *The Royal Women of Amarna: Images of Beauty from Ancient Egypt*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, pp. 85–119.
- Arnold, D. (1996b) The workshop of the sculptor Thutmose. In D. Arnold (ed.) *The Royal Women of Amarna: Images of Beauty from Ancient Egypt*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, pp. 41–83.
- Arnold, D. (1996c) An artistic revolution: The early years of King Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten. In D. Arnold (ed.) *The Royal Women of Amarna: Images of Beauty from Ancient Egypt*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, pp. 17–39.
- Assmann, J. (2012) A new state theology: The religion of light. In F. Seyfried (ed.) *In the Light of Amarna: 100 years of the Nefertiti Discovery*. Berlin: Berlin Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, pp. 79–83.
- Bayer, C. (2014) *Die den Herrn Beider Länder mit ihrer Schönheit erfreut – Teje: Eine ikonographische Studie*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz Verlag.
- Borchardt, L. (1911) *Der Porträtkopf der Königin Teje im Besitz von Dr. James Simon in Berlin*. Leipzig, Germany: Hinrichssche Buchhandlung.
- Budde, D. (2000) *Die Göttin Seschat*. Leipzig, Germany: Wodtke und Stegbauer.
- Budin, S. L. (2011) *Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Crocker, P. T. (1985) Status symbols in the architecture of El-Amarna. *JEA* 71: 52–65.
- Cruz-Uribe, E. (1995) Atum, Shu, and the gods during the Amarna period. *JSSEA* 25: 15–22.
- Dabbs, G. R. and Zabecki, M. (2014) Abandoned memories: A cemetery of forgotten souls? In B. W. Porter and A. T. Boutin (eds) *Remembering the Dead in the Ancient Near East: Recent Contributions from Bioarchaeology and Mortuary Archaeology*. Boulder, CO: University Press of Colorado, pp. 217–250.
- Davies, N. de G. (1908) *The Rock Tombs of El-Amarna VI: Tombs of Parennefer, Tutu and Aÿ*. Archaeological Survey of Egypt 18. London:

- Egypt Exploration Fund.
- Desroches-Noublecourt, C. (1978) Une exceptionnelle decoration pour la nourrice qui devint reine. *La Revue du Louvre et des Musée de France* 28, pp. 20–27.
- Epigraphic Survey (1980) *The Tomb of Kheruef: Theban Tomb 192*. OIP 102. Chicago, IL: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.
- Fecht, G. (1960) Amarna Probleme. *ZÄS* 85: 83–118.
- Freed, R. E., Markowitz, Y. J. and D'Auria, S. H. (eds) (1999) *Pharaohs of the Sun: Akhenaten, Nefertiti, Tutankhamen*. Boston, MA: Bulfinch Press.
- Green, L. (1988) *Queens and Princesses of the Amarna Period: The Social, Political, Religious and Cultic Role of the Women of the Royal Family at the End of the Eighteenth Dynasty*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Green, L. (1996) The royal women of Amarna: Who was who. In D. Arnold (ed.) *The Royal Women of Amarna: Images of Beauty from Ancient Egypt*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, pp. 7–15.
- Hawass, Z. Gad, Y. Z., Ismail, S., Khairat, R., Fathalla, D., Hasan, N., Ahmed, A., Elleithy, H., Ball, M., Gaballah, F., Wasef, S., Fateen, M., Amer, H., Gostner, P., Selim, A., Zink, A. and Pusch, C. M. (2010) Ancestry and pathology in king Tutankhamuns family. *JAMA* 303(7): 638–647.
- Hornung, E. (1999) *Akhenaten and the Religion of Light*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Hornung, E. and Staehelin, E. (1974) *Studien zum Sedfest*. Basel, Switzerland: Schwabe.
- Hornung, E. and Staehelin, E. (2006) *Neue Studien zum Sedfest*. Basel, Switzerland: Schwabe.
- Jung, M. (2012) 100 years of the discovery of Nefertiti. In F. Seyfried (ed.) *In the Light of Amarna: 100 years of the Nefertiti Discovery*. Berlin: Berlin Staatliches Museum, pp. 421–426.
- Kemp, B. (1987) The Amarna workmen's village in retrospect. *JEA* 73: 21–50.
- Kemp, B. (1989) *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization*. London: Routledge.
- Kemp, B. (2012) *The City of Akhenaten and Nefertiti: Amarna and its People*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Kleinke, N. (2007) *Female Spaces: Untersuchungen zu Gender und Archäologie im pharaonischen Ägypten*. GM Beihefte 1. Göttingen, Germany: Seminar für Ägyptologie.
- Koltsida, A. (2006) Birth-bed, sitting place, erotic corner or domestic

- altar? A study of the so-called elevated bed in Deir el-Medina houses. *SAK* 35: 165–174.
- Kozloff, A. P. (2012) *Amenhotep III: Egypt's Radiant Pharaoh*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kozloff, A. P. and Bryan, B. M. (1992) *Egypt's Dazzling Sun: Amenhotep III and His World*. Cleveland, OH: Cleveland Museum of Art.
- Krauss, R. (2000) Akhenaten: Monotheist? Polytheist? *BACE* 11: 93–101.
- Labouri, D. (2010) *Akhénaton*. Paris: Pygmalion.
- Martin, G. T. (1989) *The Royal Tomb at El-Amarna II: The Reliefs, Inscriptions and Architecture*. The rock tombs of El-Amarna 7. London: Egypt Exploration Society.
- Moran, W. L. (1992) *The Amarna Letters*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Murnane, W. J. and Van Siclen, C. C. (1993) *The Boundary Stelae of Akhenaten*. London and New York: Kegan Paul.
- Naville, E. (1901) *The Temple of Deir el-Bahri IV: Shrine of Hathor and the Southern Hall of Offerings*. London: Egypt Exploration Fund.
- Notes (2010) Notes from the field: The cemetery of Amarna's people – Further results, from spring 2010. *Horizon* 7: 2–3.
- O'Connor, D. and Cline, E. H. (2001) *Amenhotep III: Perspectives on His Reign*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Redford, D. R. (1984) *Akhenaten: The Heretic King*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Robins, G. (1993) *Women in Ancient Egypt*. London: British Museum Press.
- Roehrig, C. (1990) *The Eighteenth Dynasty Titles Royal Nurse (mnat nswt), Royal Tutor (mna nswt), and Foster Brother/Sister of the Lord of the Two Lands (sn/snt mna n nb tAwy)*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Rose, J. C. and Dabbs, G. R. (2012) *Report on the 2012 Skeletal Analysis of the South Tombs cemetery Project*. Available at <http://amarnaproject.com/documents/pdf/STC-2012-bioarchaeology.pdf> (accessed 16 August 2015).
- Rose, J. C., Zabecki, M. and Dabbs, G. R. (2009) The bioarchaeological field school. *Horizon* 6: 4–5.
- Roth, A. M. (1999) The absent spouse: Patterns and taboos in Egyptian tomb decoration. *JARce* 36: 37–53.
- Roth, S. (2002) *Gebieten aller Länder: Die Rolle der Königlichen Frauen in der Fiktiven und Realen Aussenpolitik des Ägyptischen Neuen Reiches*. OBO 158. Fribourg, Switzerland: Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Bonn.

- Samson, J. (1977) Nefertitis regality. *JEA* 63: 88–97.
- Schoske, S. (2008) At the centre of power: Tiye, Ahhotep and Hatshepsut. In C. Ziegler (ed.) *Queens of Egypt: From Hetepheres to Cleopatra*. Monaco: Grimaldi Forum, pp. 188–199.
- Stevens, A. (2006) *Private Religion at Amarna: The Material Evidence*. Oxford, UK: Archaeopress.
- Toivari-Viitala, J. (2006) *Women at Deir El-Medina: A Study of the Status and Roles of the Female Inhabitants in the Workmens Community during the Ramesside Period*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Nederlands Instituut Voor Het Nabije Oosten.
- Troy, L. (1986) *Patterns of Queenship in Ancient Egyptian Myth and History*. BOREAS 14. Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala University.
- Troy, L. (2002) The ancient Egyptian queenship as an icon of the state. *NIN* 3: 1–31.
- Troy, L. (2008) The queen as a female counterpart of the pharaoh. In C. Ziegler (ed.) *Queens of Egypt: from Hetepheres to Cleopatra*. Monaco: Grimaldi Forum, pp. 154–170.
- Tyldesley, J. (2006) *Chronicle of the Queens of Egypt from the Early Dynastic Times to the Death of Cleopatra*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Van der Perre, A. (2012) Nefertiti's last documented reference [for now]. In F. Seyfried (ed.) *In the Light of Amarna: 100 Years of the Nefertiti Discovery*. Berlin: Berlin Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, pp. 195–197.
- Van der Perre, A. (2014) The year 16 graffito of Akhenaten in Dayr Abū Ḥinnis. A contribution to the study of the later years of Nefertiti. *JEH* 7: 67–108.
- Zabecki, M. and Rose, J. C. (2010) Bioarchaeological findings from the Amarna South Tombs cemetery. *Horizon* 8: 5–9.
- Zinn, K. (2015) Nofretete: Eine Königin ihrer Zeit? In M. Eldamaty, F. Hoffmann and M. Minas-Nerpel (eds) *Königinnen in Ägypten*. Vaterstetten, Germany: Brose, pp. 27–67.
- Zivie, A. (2009) *La Tombe de Maïa, Mère Nourricière du Roi Toutânkhamon et Grande du Harem*. Toulouse, France: Caracara Editions.

THE ROLE OF EGYPT'S DYNASTIC QUEENS

Joyce Tyldesley

Egypt's dynastic period stretched from the unification of the country in approximately 3100 BCE to the death of Cleopatra VII in 30 BCE. Throughout this long period, Egypt was ruled by a succession of near-divine kings who served as the only conduit between the people and their gods. Although the role of the king evolved through time, the underlying premise remained constant: with a king on the throne, the gods were content and Egypt was safe from the chaos that constantly threatened to overwhelm both the land and its people. Egyptologists have long recognised the complex political and ritual role played by the Egyptian king. They have been far slower to recognise the equally complex role allocated to the queens who stood by his side (Troy 1986: 1–2).

Recognising the queen

In ancient Egypt, all royal titles stressed the relationship of the individual to the king (Robins 1993: 21). So *hemet-nesu*, a title that was used from the 4th Dynasty onwards and which we routinely translate as “queen” – a word that in English may indicate either a queen consort or a queen regnant – actually means “King's Wife”. Other important royal women bore the titles “King's Daughter”, “King's Sister” and “King's Mother” and, as all these titles were cumulative, a dowager queen was often a “King's Daughter, King's Wife, King's Mother” (Dodson and Hilton 2004: 26–34; important female titles have been listed by Grajetzki 2005: 99–106). Only at the end of the dynastic age did the Greek-speaking Ptolemies use the more specific word *basilissa*, or “queen” (Ashton 2003: 2). These queens, being heavily influenced by their Macedonian heritage, will not be discussed here.

As all of Egypt's kings were polygamous, and as any woman who was, or had been, married to a king could call herself King's Wife, the title was used simultaneously by a wide range of women. Not all wives were of equal status. The most important were the consorts: the queens who stood alongside the king on formal occasions. The consort was distinguished by an increasingly wide range of titles, most notably "King's Great Wife", which came into use during the 12th Dynasty, and from the Middle Kingdom onwards, by the use of the oval cartouche drawn around her name (Tyldesley 2006: 16).

Female kings

Although the ideal king of Egypt was young, fit, Egyptian and male, not all kings met this ideal. The elderly, the disabled, foreigners and even women could take the throne if necessary: once crowned, they became a king like any other. Three women are known to have ruled Egypt as kings: the 12th-Dynasty Sobeknofru, 18th-Dynasty Hatshepsut and 19th-Dynasty Tawosret. Each of these women was once a conventional King's Daughter or King's Wife but, following their coronations, they adopted the traditional titles used by all kings. Today they are designated "female kings" or "female pharaohs" to distinguish them from the King's Wives.

The queen consort

The consort was the wife who was represented in all official writings and artwork. She was the mother in the nuclear royal family; the wife who could reasonably expect to become the next King's Mother when her husband died. Troy has defined her as an "aspect of the kingship" (the kingship being a composite of male and female elements), which functions on numerous levels (1986: 2). So, just as the king might represent all mortal men before the gods, so his consort might represent all women. And, just as the king could represent either one or all of the gods to his people, so his consort could represent the goddesses. No king, the very young excepted, ever ruled unwed.

The atypical reign of the female king Hatshepsut provides confirmation that the consort was indeed an essential element of the kingship (Tyldesley 1996). From the time of her coronation onwards, Hatshepsut was careful to behave as an entirely conventional king. Like any other king, she needed a queen to fulfil the essential feminine aspect of her monarchy and, for this, she turned to her daughter, Neferure. Neferure, hitherto hidden in the royal nursery, now started

to play an unusually prominent role – the queen’s role – in public and ritual life. She used the titles “Lady of Upper and Lower Egypt” and “Mistress of the Lands” and she assumed the religious office of God’s Wife of Amun, a role that Hatshepsut herself had played while queen consort.

While Egypt’s earliest queens often bore names which associated them with the Delta warrior goddess, Neith, the consort was increasingly associated with the goddesses Maat (the companion of the king who personified the concept of *maat*, which may be loosely translated as a combination of order, “rightness”, justice, and the status quo); Hathor (who could be either the wife of the divine king Horus or the cow who nourished and protected the infant Horus and, by extension, suckled and protected all of Egypt’s kings); and Isis (symbol of the throne, wife of the king of the dead, Osiris and mother of king of the living, Horus).

The divine consort

If we are looking for a blueprint for the ideal consort, we need look no further than the myth of Isis and Osiris (summarised in Tyldesley 2010: 106–109, 199–202). The full story, recorded by the classical biographer-moralist Plutarch after the dynastic age had ended, elaborates the basic elements of the original Egyptian myth to suit Greco-Roman readers. It is, however, possible to strip out the later elements to reach an understanding of how a good dynastic consort should behave. The myth tells how, many years ago, the god Osiris ruled Egypt with his sister-wife Isis as his consort. Osiris was a wise and popular monarch; he taught the men of Egypt to cultivate crops while Isis taught their wives to bake bread and brew beer, these being the staple foods in the Egyptian diet. When Osiris travelled the world, Isis ruled on his behalf. But Seth, brother of Isis and Osiris, was jealous. He tricked Osiris, sealed him into a lead-coated coffin and cast him into the River Nile. With Osiris vanished, Seth ruled Egypt in his brother’s place. However, he had overlooked his sister’s courage and tenacity. Isis sought out the coffin that held Osiris, and brought it to Egypt for burial. Later, when Seth had cut Osiris into many pieces, she transformed into a bird to search for his remains and piece them back together again. Isis used her powers to bring Osiris back to life. So successful was her magic that ten months later she gave birth to his son, Horus. As Osiris retreated to rule the land of the dead, Isis protected the infant Horus in the marshes until he was old enough to claim the crown of the living Egypt.

Analysing Isis' actions, we can see that the ideal queen consort is a sister-wife capable of bearing the son who will one day take his father's place. In good times, she will remain in the background, supporting her husband and attending to her (female) domestic duties. But she must be intelligent and capable of independent action, because in bad times she will be expected to protect and deputise for both her husband and her child.

Incestuous unions – or not

Just as Isis was the sister-consort of Osiris, so the queen consort was often the sister, or half-sister, of the king (Robins 1993: 26–27). These incestuous marriages, which were rarely found outside the royal family, brought several benefits. Having been trained from birth to understand her role, the consort would be unlikely to fail in her duties. She would be loyal to her husband and their children rather than to her own birth family, while the restricted number of royal grandchildren would limit the number of legal claimants to the throne. Sibling marriages also provided appropriate husbands for princesses who might otherwise remain unwed: while Old and Middle Kingdom princesses were allowed to marry outside the immediate royal family, this tradition had ended by the New Kingdom.

However, brother–sister marriages were by no means compulsory. The old “heiress theory” – the idea that the right to the Egyptian throne passed through the female line, compelling the heir to the throne to marry his sister – is now discredited in the face of the undeniable evidence that some of Egypt's most politically active queens, including the 18th-Dynasty Tiye and Nefertiti, were common-born (Robins 1983) (see also Zinn, this volume). Far from concealing his wife's non-royal birth, Amenhotep III, husband of Tiye, unprecedentedly issued a scarab celebrating “Great Queen Tiye, may she live. The name of her father is Yuia. The name of her mother is Tujia. She is the wife of the strong King” (Davies 1992: 38). Tiye's lowly birth was no handicap: she was undeniably her husband's female counterpart. She remained unusually prominent throughout her husband's reign and was depicted alongside Amenhotep both on public monuments and in private tombs, while her cartouche was linked with his on official inscriptions and personal items. Developing her own regalia, she added the cow's horns and sun disk to her headdress so that she became firmly linked to the goddess Hathor. Middle Kingdom queens had occasionally been depicted as passive-protective female sphinxes, but Tiye could be both passive-protective and active. A carved carnelian bracelet plaque depicts her as a human-

headed sphinx guarding her husband's cartouche (Metropolitan Museum of Art 26.7.1342), yet in a scene in Kheruef's Theban tomb we see her consort's chair decorated with her own image as an active sphinx trampling two female prisoners (TT192: Epigraphic Survey 1980: Pl 49). Her influence was recognised outside Egypt beyond her husband's death, when we find Tušratta of Mitanni writing to Tiye, asking her to intercede on his behalf with her son, Akhenaten (EA 26; Moran 1992: 84–86).

Depicting the consort

Although we know many of their names, we know little else about the vast majority of Egypt's consorts. We see these women primarily through the formal art and writings commissioned by their fathers, husbands and sons, and we lack the personal writings that would make these women truly come alive for us. In particular, the Middle Kingdom consorts had little impact on state affairs and all but vanished from the royal monuments. Our knowledge of these women is largely restricted to their names, their tombs and their grave goods.

Formal Egyptian art was never intended to provide an accurate snapshot of daily life. Instead, in a land where formal writing (the hieroglyphic script) took the form of pictures, all pictures could be “read” as a story. Kings, intent on using their art to prove that Egypt was functioning correctly, depicted their queens as young, beautiful, passive and bland. Even where we have what we might consider to be a realistic portrait – the Berlin bust of the 18th-Dynasty Nefertiti, for example (whose subject is unnamed, but identified by her unique crown) – we cannot trust that this is what the queen actually looked like as, apart from her famous bust, Nefertiti presents us with a series of very different images in three- and two-dimensional art (Tyldesley 1996: 102–106). Art does, however, make obvious the vast gulf between the king and his people, and the consort was often depicted at a much smaller scale than her far more important husband. However, this difference in size was not inevitable, and we have many examples of the king and his consort depicted at the same scale.

The consort's crowns

Some of our earliest royal images show kings accompanied by goddesses who wear distinguishing crowns or headdresses, and mortal women, whom we assume to be consorts on the basis of their proximity to the king, who do not. Soon consorts, too, acquire crowns.

First to appear, probably in the 4th Dynasty, is the vulture crown, a headdress that resembles a bird draped over the wearer's head, with the wings hanging beside the wearer's face and the head and neck rising from the wearer's forehead. This is the headdress worn by Nekhbet, vulture goddess of Southern Egypt and Mistress of the Palace of Upper Egypt. A variant of her headdress, with a cobra replacing the vulture head, was worn by consorts from the 6th Dynasty until the end of the dynastic age, linking the queen with Wadjet, the cobra goddess of Northern Egypt (Troy 1986: 116–121). Both Nekhbet and Wadjet, the Two Ladies, might be considered to be the protector and mother of the king (vultures and snakes being considered good mothers), so it may be that the vulture crown was initially reserved for the King's Mother. Although the headdress was occasionally worn by non-royal women, it may be interpreted as emphasising the link both between the queen and the divine, and between the queen and the uraeus-wearing king. We cannot tell whether this queenly divinity is a new phenomenon, or whether it is something that was understood, but unrecorded, since the start of the dynastic age.

The double-plumed consort's headdress, a style first seen in the 13th Dynasty, consisted of two falcon feathers set on a circular platform or modius and worn above the vulture crown (Troy 1986: 126–129). It is difficult to judge the height of the feathers as often they are adjusted to fit the available space in the illustration. The precise meaning of this complicated headdress is unclear, but it suggests a link both with the solar cults (allowing this crown to be retained in the Amarna Period) and with the virile gods Amun, Montu and Min, each of whom wears tall feathers. Goddesses did not start to wear the double plumes until the late 18th Dynasty.

Duties

The consort was expected to perform a range of duties extending far beyond the basic requirement to support the king and bear his son. Although the latter may be seen as a religious duty which would allow the quasi-divine king to be reborn as his own potentially divine son, the harem, and the willingness of kings to adopt a successor if necessary, made the provision of an heir perhaps less important than it was in other societies.

All Egyptian wives were expected to deputise for their husbands in matters of business, and all had the right to raise their children in their husband's absence (Tyldesley 2006: 12–15). The consort was no exception. A consort might be called upon to rule while her husband

was engaged in a foreign campaign, or a widowed queen might be required to act as regent on behalf of her infant son, effectively ruling Egypt in the gap between her husband's death and her son's coming of age. These female "reigns" can be difficult to identify, as they are entirely hidden within the official reign of the young king, but there is evidence to suggest that they were a regular occurrence from the very dawn of the dynastic age. Egypt's first queen, Neithhotep, may have ruled Egypt on behalf of her young son, Aha, though the evidence for this is circumstantial. More obvious is the 1st-Dynasty "reign" of Meritneith, consort of Djet, then mother and regent of Den. Meritneith was rewarded with a regal tomb (Tomb Y) in the Abydos cemetery hitherto reserved for kings, misleading early Egyptologists into assuming that she was a conventional, i.e. male, king (Petrie 1900: 10–11).

Supportive King's Mothers become more obvious during the better-documented New Kingdom, which starts with one such "reign". Ahhotep I, consort of Seqenenre Taa II, raised her son, Ahmose, and his sister-wife, Ahmose-Nefertari, following the battlefield death of their father. As an adult, Ahmose commemorated her achievements on a stela erected at Karnak, boasting that his mother had performed the appropriate rites, guarded Egypt and cared for Egypt's soldiers. Ahhotep's successful defence of her land may explain why her coffin included ceremonial military equipment, including an inscribed axe, a gold dagger and three golden flies, the ancient Egyptian equivalent of medals. However, the evidence concerning Ahhotep's burial is confusing, and the assumption that her grave goods reflect her military achievements is now being challenged (Troy 1986: 136; Sidpura 2015).

The God's Wife

(See also Onstine, this volume). During the 18th Dynasty onwards, several high-profile consorts and King's Mothers assumed the priestly title "God's Wife of Amun" (information about this role is summarised in Robins 1993: 149–156). Given the rising importance of the cult of Amun at the beginning of the New Kingdom, this is a clear indication of the enhanced status of the queen (Tyldesley 2003: 93). This was more than an honorary position; scenes carved on the wall of the Karnak Red Chapel show the wife – in this case, Hatshepsut's "queen" Neferure – being purified in the sacred lake prior to entering the temple precincts, holding a fan bearing an image of an enemy of Egypt, and carrying the flaming torch which allowed her to light a brazier and perform the ritual to destroy foes by fire. In other scenes,

the wife is present and supportive as the king performs the sacred rituals.

It has long been recognised that the role of wife to a male god is one that allows the priestess to assume the role of a partner who stimulates the god, allowing him to regenerate (Blackman 1921: 11ff). This sexual duty is made obvious by the more explicit title of “God’s Hand” which occasionally follows that of “God’s Wife”: this is a reference to the hand that the creator god, Atum, used to masturbate when, alone on the mound of creation, he produced his twin children, Shu and Tefnut (discussed in Tyldesley 2010: 43–45). This hand, feminine in the Egyptian language, was closely identified with Hathor, who was herself strongly connected with queenship and who is known to have stimulated her father, the creator god, Re.

The title of God’s Wife faded in importance during the reign of Tuthmosis III. It re-appeared during the 19th Dynasty, but had lost much of its original importance. From the 20th-Dynasty reign of Ramesses VI onwards, the title was born exclusively by princesses. Egyptologists initially assumed that these priestesses were celibate: there is a growing contention that this may not have been the case.

Could the requirement that the consort be capable of stimulating both royal and divine fertility (requiring the queen herself to be fertile?) explain the fact that, during the lengthy reigns of the 18th-Dynasty Amenhotep III and the 19th-Dynasty Ramesses II, several King’s Daughters assumed the title “King’s Great Wife”? Only one of these “marriages” seems to have produced a child: even here there is confusion, as even if we accept that Bintanath, daughter of Ramesses II, bore the child who is labelled “King’s Daughter of his Body” on her tomb wall (QV 71), we are unclear about the girl’s paternity (Dodson and Hilton 2004: 169). We must therefore question the extent to which these are marriages. Could “King’s Great Wife” sometimes be a ceremonial title? Hatshepsut’s use of Neferure as her “consort” suggests that this might be the case: there is certainly no suggestion that theirs was anything other than a working relationship. Might this therefore be a way to allow an aging king to utilise his daughter’s services as deputy and in some rituals a replacement for her equally aging mother? However, we should not automatically assume that a father-daughter union, under the correct circumstances, would be considered abhorrent. There was divine precedent for father-daughter unions, and this would have formed an attractive model for any king interested in developing his own solar-based divinity (Robins 1993: 29–30). As Troy has stated (1986: 91): “The most basic reference for the process of renewal is human sexuality and thus it is that the

interaction of the generational role of father and daughter takes on sexual overtones”.

The King's Mother

A more explicit sexual relationship between the consort and a god was made obvious when, during the mid-18th Dynasty, kings started to use their mothers to explore their own divinity. This had happened before – we find the divine birth of three kings in Papyrus Westcar (P. Berlin 3033), for example (Lichtheim 1975: 215–222), but now the royal birth was directly linked to the rituals of the cult of the *ka*, and to the Opet Festival (Silverman 1994: 70–72). For a king to claim a divine father, he or she had to admit that his/her mother had consorted with a god; this left the King's Mother, who may have played a relatively insignificant role in her husband's reign, infused with her own particular divinity. Mutemwia, mother of Amenhotep III, provides a good example here. Mutemwia never served as consort, and we know nothing of her life before her son's accession. Amenhotep included her statue inside his mortuary temple, and she appears in miniature beside the left leg of the Colossi of Memnon that stood outside the temple. She is most conspicuous, however, as a key player in her son's birth myth (Berman 1998: 3–5). Copying his story more or less wholesale from Hatshepsut's own birth myth (Naville 1896: 12–18), Amenhotep had his tale carved into the walls of the Birth Room in the Luxor temple, a temple dedicated to both Amun and to the celebration of the divine royal *ka*. Here he shows us his mother sitting on a bed to receive the attentions of Amun-Re who is disguised as her husband, Tuthmosis IV. Mutemwia is stimulated by the god's perfume, a child is conceived and nine months later Amenhotep is born: he is, quite literally, the child of a god.

Harem queens

The New Kingdom consorts adopted increasing numbers of secular and religious titles and an expanded range of crowns and headdresses including the double uraeus. As this obvious increase in status coincided with an expansion in the size of the royal harem, it may be seen as a means of distinguishing the consort from her sister-wives. Egypt's many other, less important, queens are often described in modern writings as “harem wives”, “secondary wives” or, more judgementally and less accurately, “concubines”. These queens were housed away from the court in harem palaces, “the place of seclusion”: economically independent communities built to house all

the king's female dependents: his sisters, aunts, wives and women inherited from his predecessors, plus their servants and children. We know little about life in the harem palaces, with much of the information that we do have dating to the New Kingdom (see Redford 2002: 49–71). The best known harem palace is the Medinet Gurob palace built on the edge of the Faiyum by the 18th-Dynasty Tuthmosis III; this was a self-contained and self-supporting unit which derived its income from endowments of land and rents paid by tenant farmers (Kemp 1978). Here the ladies fell under the protection of a number of male administrators headed by the “Overseer of the Royal Harem” and the “Inspector of the Harem-Administration” (see Picton, this volume).

Diplomatic marriages

The New Kingdom monarchs – the wealthiest kings in the Mediterranean world – married many times. A series of diplomatic marriages – either marriages contracted between brother kings who were of equal status or between vassals and their Egyptian overlord – plus a tradition of giving women as gifts and seizing women as war booty, led to Amenhotep III acquiring an estimated 1,000 wives, including 2 princesses from Syria, 2 from Babylon, 1 from Arzawa (Anatolia) and 2 from Mitanni (Berman 1998: 20–21) (see Ebeling, this volume). This was very much one-way traffic. While foreign princesses travelled to Egypt to marry, there was – despite requests from kings eager to acquire an Egyptian bride – no reciprocal exchange. From the late 17th until the mid-19th Dynasty, we have no evidence of any Egyptian princess marrying anyone other than an Egyptian king.

As these diplomatic marriages were a personal bond between Amenhotep and his new fathers-in-law, a change in one of the parties meant that a new personal relationship had to be sealed with a new marriage. So as princes inherited their fathers' thrones, they too were expected to send a daughter to Egypt. Once installed in the harem, alongside native Egyptian wives (we had little idea how these wives were chosen) the foreign queens were forgotten by all but their closest relations. Foreign kings regularly wrote and sent gifts to their sisters in Egypt, while the royal archives contain an indignant letter from Kadashman-Enlil of Babylon, complaining that Amenhotep has asked for a daughter's in marriage even though “my sister, whom my father gave you was (already) there with you, and nobody has seen her (so as to know) if now she is alive or if she is dead” (Berman 1998: 20).

Trouble in the harem

The harem queens rarely featured in Egypt's official history. But just occasionally, at times of dynastic crisis, a queen might be summoned to become the next King's Mother. We have already seen how Mutemwia, mother of Amenhotep III, rose to prominence in this way.

Some ambitious queens were not prepared to settle for a comfortable, if somewhat dull, life of obscurity. Recognising that there was only one escape route – her son had to become king before one of his half-brothers succeeded to the throne – they took matters into their own hands. We have just three accounts of trouble in the harem, two of which are exceedingly vague. This is almost certainly a reflection of the Egyptian reluctance to commit unpleasant facts to writing, rather than a reflection of constant harmony within the harem (Robins 1993: 38–39).

The first instance dates to the 6th-Dynasty reign of Pepi I. The courtier, Weni, wrote his autobiography on the wall of his Abydos tomb, including the following cryptic comment: “When there was a secret charge in the royal harem against Queen Weret-yamtes, His Majesty made me go in to hear (it) alone . . . Never before had one like me heard a secret of the king's harem” (Lichtheim 1975: 19). We are left wondering how exactly the queen has transgressed, and what her punishment might have been. We do not even know her true name, as Weret-yamtes or “Great of Sceptre”, is an alias.

The second presumed harem plot dates to the start of the 12th Dynasty. After 30 years on the throne, Amenemhat I was murdered in his private quarters in the palace. A letter, purporting to have been written by the dead king, details events leading up to, and including, his death:

As my heart began to follow sleep, weapons for my protection were turned against me, while I was like a snake of the desert. I awoke at the fighting, [alert], and found it was a combat of the guard.

(Lichtheim 1975: 135–139)

This “letter” is supported by the fictional story of Sinuhe, the tale of a harem official who flees Egypt upon learning of the king's death (Lichtheim 1975: 222–235). The assumption is that Sinuhe knew more about the plot than was good for him, although this is not explicitly stated.

The third instance is today preserved in a series of official papyrus

documents and transcripts – probably these were originally one single document – outlining a plot to kill the 20th-Dynasty Ramesses III, and the subsequent trial (The Turin Judicial Papyrus; Papyrus Rollin, Papyrus Varzy, Papyrus Lee 1 and 2, Papyrus Rifaud I and II: the evidence is summarised in Redford 2002). The plot was masterminded from the “harem of the accompanying” by queen Tiy, who intended that the throne should pass to her son, Pentaweret. His name, meaning “The [male] One of the [female] Great One” is another instance of a criminal being identified by an alias. Tiy was able to enlist the help of officials and family members outside the harem, who promised to provoke rebellion when the assassination occurred.

Although the plot involved magic, wax figures and spells, the plot was an eminently practical one. The king was to be killed as he celebrated a festival at his Medinet Habu mortuary temple. We know that the plot went ahead and that it to a certain extent failed, as the conspirators were arrested and Ramesses III was succeeded by his intended heir, Ramesses IV. Six wives and 27 men were charged with treason, and the situation was further complicated when 5 of the trial judges were accused of misconduct with the harem women. Three separate trials saw the conspirators condemned to death, either by their own hands or by execution. We do know what happened to Tiy. More importantly, we do not know whether Ramesses survived the attack. The Turin Judicial Papyrus implies that Ramesses himself presided over the court, but this is likely to be a literary conceit and cannot be taken as proof that he was still alive. His mummy remains partially wrapped: it shows no immediately obvious wounds, but scans show what appears to be a deep cut on his throat.

References

- Ashton, S.-A. (2003) *The Last Queens of Egypt: Cleopatra's Royal House*. London: Routledge.
- Berman, L. M. (1998) Overview of Amenhotep III and his reign. In D. O'Connor and E. H. Cline (eds) *Amenhotep III: Perspectives on his Reign*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Blackman, A. M. (1921) On the position of women in the Ancient Egyptian Hierarchy. *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 7: 8–30.
- Davies, B. G. (1992) *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty*. Fascicle IV. Warminster, UK: Aris and Phillips Ltd.
- Dodson, A. and Hilton, D. (2004) *The Complete Royal Families of Ancient Egypt*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Epigraphic Survey (1980) *The Theban Tomb of Kheruef: Theban Tomb*

192. Chicago, IL: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.
- Grajetzki, W. (2005) *Ancient Egyptian Queens: A Hieroglyphic Dictionary*. London: Golden House Publications.
- Kemp, B. J. (1978) The Harim-Palace at Medinet el-Ghurab. *Zeitschrift für Ägyptisch Sprache und Altertumskunde* 105: 122–133.
- Lichtheim, M. (1975) *Ancient Egyptian Literature I: The Old and Middle Kingdoms*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Moran, W. L. (1992) *The Amarna Letters*. Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press; Berkley, CA, and London: University of California Press.
- Naville, E. (1896) *The Temple of Deir el-Bahari Vol 2*. London: Egypt Exploration Fund.
- Petrie, W. M. F. (1900) *The Royal Tombs of the First Dynasty I*. London: Egypt Exploration Fund.
- Plutarch. *Isis and Osiris, Moralia V*. Translated by F. C. Babbitt (1936). Cambridge, MA and London: Loeb Classical Library 306.
- Redford, S. (2002) *The Harem Conspiracy: The Murder of Ramesses III*. DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press.
- Robins, G. (1983) A critical examination of the theory that the right to the throne of Egypt passed through the female line in the 18th Dynasty. *Göttinger Miszellen* 62: 68–69.
- Robins, G. (1993) *Women in Ancient Egypt*. London: British Museum Press.
- Sidpura, T. (2015) Ahhotep: The warrior queen? *Ancient Egypt* 15(5): 16–21.
- Silverman, D. P. (1994) The nature of Egyptian kingship. In D. O'Connor and D. P. Silverman (eds) *Ancient Egyptian Kingship*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 49–92.
- Troy, L. (1986) *Patterns of Queenship in Ancient Egyptian Myth and History*. Uppsala, Sweden: Uppsala University (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis).
- Tyldesley, J. A. (1996) *Hatchepsut: The Female Pharaoh*. London: Viking Penguin.
- Tyldesley, J. A. (2003) *Nefertiti: Egypt's Sun Queen*. London: Viking Penguin.
- Tyldesley, J. A. (2006) *Chronicle of the Queens of Egypt*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Tyldesley, J. A. (2010) *Myths and Legends of Ancient Egypt*. London: Viking Penguin.

WOMEN IN ANCIENT NUBIA

Jacke Phillips

Setting the scene: an historical outline of Nubian civilisations

Ancient Nubia encompasses a loosely geographical and cultural region along the Nile Valley between somewhere south of modern Khartoum (at its farthest south) and its traditional border with Egypt at the First Cataract ([Figure 20.1](#)). A succession of highly developed indigenous civilisations rose and fell in the valley throughout antiquity and beyond, with clear cultural continuity throughout. Their power and strength was based mainly on their role as ‘middleman’ between Egypt and the extensive resources it coveted farther south and in the deserts. Their fortunes waxed and waned relative to those of Egypt, the high point being Dynasty 25 when Egypt itself was ruled by the Napatan kings, the so-called ‘Black Pharaohs’ who viewed themselves not as conquerors but the legitimate heirs to the Egyptian throne. ‘Lower Nubia’, between the Second and First Cataracts, is well recorded both through extensive modern archaeological fieldwork and numerous ancient Egyptian and Classical records. ‘Upper Nubia’, south of the Second Cataract, is only beginning to be investigated in depth mainly through fieldwork, but its character often is recognisably distinct from Lower Nubia as it was less directly affected by Egypt and the other civilisations that controlled Egypt at different times.

Nubian chronology refers mainly to successive named cultures and civilisations that sometimes are localised and sometimes are encompassing the entire region. [Table 20.1](#) below gives a very basic outline of periods, locations and dates.

This chapter is concerned with the period to the end of the Meroitic period, which broadly coincides with the end of the Roman Empire.

History of research

Since the mid-1960s we have seen a veritable explosion of feminist and gender research, even dedicated university departments and specialists, as well as 'women's' perspectives over a wide range of existing academic disciplines. Archaeology, anthropology, literature, history and art history are no exceptions to these developments. This growth undoubtedly is due largely to the rise of feminism and women's rights, the increasing number of women employed as university academic staff, and the greater (although still limited) public interest in balancing 'history' with 'herstory', primarily in the 'First World' and particularly in the West from the 1960s onwards. Focused research on women and gender in the ancient world is no exception, developing from 'the "obligatory" last chapter on hairstyles and dress' (Setälä 1989: 61, commenting on ancient Roman studies) to a recognised research discipline in its own right. Within the field of Egyptology, a concurrent explosion of articles, books (e.g. Lesko 1978; Fischer 1989; Robins 1993; Graves-Brown 2008, 2010), and even major exhibitions (e.g. Schoske and Wildung 1984; Arnold 1996; Capel and Markoe 1997; Wilfong 1997; Teeter and Johnson 2009) exploring the subject of women, gender, and the female perspective have appeared, while the subject has also become increasingly prominent in more general Egyptological publications.

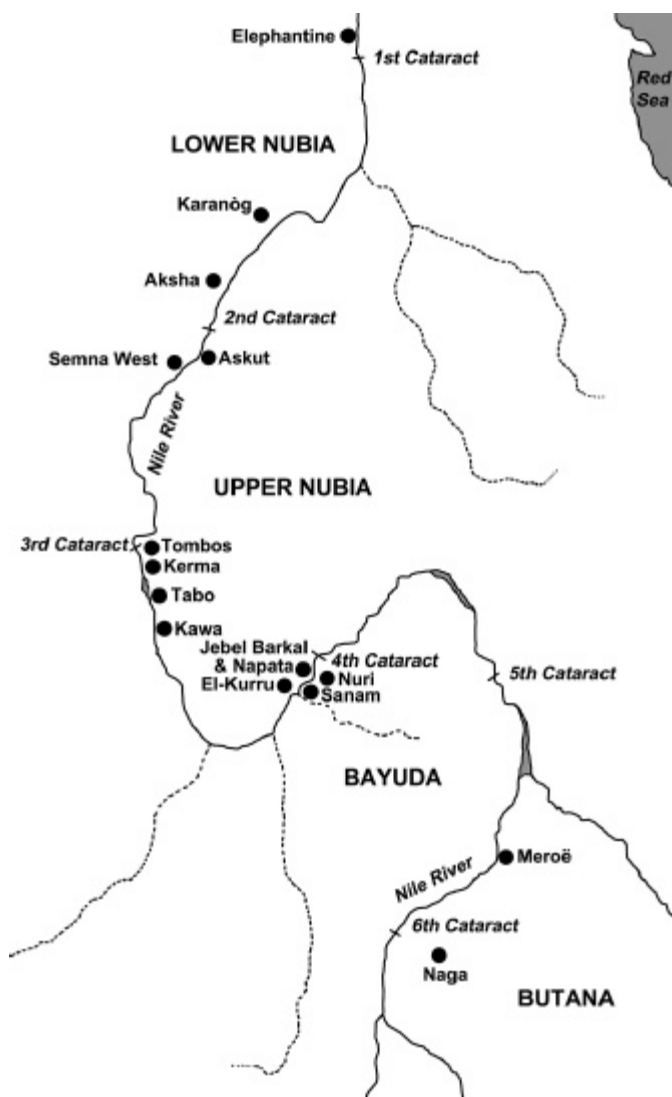


Figure 20.1 Map of Ancient Nubia. (Map by Paul C. Butler.)

Table 20.1 Outline of periods, locations and dates in Nubian chronology.

<i>Period</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Date</i>
Various Neolithic cultures	Throughout Nubia	to c.4000/3700 BC
'Pre-Kerma'/'A-Group'	Upper/Lower Nubia	4000/3700–2600/2500 BC
Kerma/'C-Group'	Upper/Lower Nubia	2600/2500–c.1500 BC
'New Kingdom'	Much of Nubia	c.1500–c.1050 BC
(Unnamed transitional)	All Nubia	c.1050–c.900 BC
Napatan or First Kushite	All Nubia	c.900–c.400/300 BC
(Incorporating Dynasty 25)	(All Nubia and Egypt)	(747–656 BC)
Meroitic or Second Kushite	All Nubia	c.400/300 BC–c.AD 350/400
Post-Meroitic/'X-Group'	Upper/Lower Nubia	c.AD 350/400–c.AD 550
Christian ('Medieval')	All Nubia	c.AD 550–c.AD 1500
Islamic	All Nubia	c.AD 1500–present

Research into Nubia and its successive civilisations has also expanded enormously since the 1980s, from similar 'obligatory last chapters' by Egyptologists in Egyptological literature to a specialist discipline in its own right increasingly divorced from Egyptology. Unfortunately, a parallel focus on women has been almost entirely neglected in Nubian research, with extremely little investigation and even commentary of their gender, status or activities. There is no detailed study of ancient Nubian women, who are mentioned (if at all) only in general, limited and passing terms in academic literature other than an 'obligatory' dress and jewellery discussion. The very prominent exception, and almost the only topic discussed in any detail, is the status and roles of royal women and, especially, queens (e.g. Török 1995; Lohwasser 2001a, 2001b; Haynes and Santini-Ritt 2012). The lives and achievements of certain royal women in particular are known, mainly through contemporary records, but we know virtually nothing of the anonymous 'ordinary' women in Nubian societies. What little we do know is discerned mainly from their physical remains, their graves and grave goods, and their occasional generalised depictions in art over the centuries. Osteological literature rarely extends beyond basic recording, limited statistical comparison, trauma description and individual case studies, with little encompassing discussion in specialist terms. Social information extends little beyond what can be extracted from these data and comparison with other cultures, so again can only be generally summarised. This chapter therefore can say little about the lives of 'ordinary' women, but attempts to emphasise this aspect as much as possible.

Source material

Contemporary or near-contemporary written sources are largely limited to historical and biographical records, chiefly relating to

royalty, deities and, to a lesser degree, the élite. Few focus specifically on women. ‘Commoners’, especially women, are rarely mentioned barring enumeration as slaves or captives. Records are both indigenous (in Egyptian and Meroitic scripts) and external (in Egyptian, Greek and Latin), but the only records earlier than the first millennium BC are from an Egyptian perspective. The Meroitic script can be transliterated but as yet not translated beyond individual names, titles and a few words, such as ‘son/daughter of’, although progress is ongoing. Therefore, the only indigenous records available to scholars are essentially limited to the Napatan and early Meroitic periods, as Meroitic replaced Egyptian scripts and language in the second century BC. These chiefly are monumental, funerary, or political statements, of which the latter can be quite lengthy (see Eide *et al.* 1994–2000: *passim*).

Visual sources likewise are limited to the élite levels of Nubian society, except for the many ancient Egyptian images of slaves, soldiers and vanquished foes that are most often stereotyped and exaggerated to emphasise differences. Very few of these are women, but occasionally women married to Egyptians are represented on private tombs and stelae, presented in Egyptian style with some visual and textual indicators of their Nubian origin. Archaeological evidence is our most direct source, especially graves and tombs and their contents. While organic preservation is remarkably good in Lower Nubia, it deteriorates southwards as the desert becomes the moister *sahel*, so many grave goods in Upper Nubia are not (or not well) preserved. Thus our available evidence is both skewed and limited, favouring certain periods and regions which are often transposed into less well-documented regions and periods. The value of transposed evidence varies considerably in Nubia, but sometimes can be remarkably apt and emphasises the great continuity inherent in Nubian cultures over time and space.

The body and gender distinctions

The vast majority of evidence for Nubian women themselves derives from osteological study of their bodies with subsequent comparisons between individuals, sexes, sites, regions, and cultural periods. These rather dryly tell us that women have consistently fewer serious physical injuries than men, usually attributed to their ‘dramatically different occupations’ (Kendall 1997: 58–59; Judd 2004), as ‘ordinary’ men would have been mostly soldiers and field labourers. Nonetheless, female head wounds and other trauma are also recorded in some quantity, mostly interpreted as accidental, but in some cases

possibly also due to domestic violence (Alvrus 1999: 427). Although chronologically beyond the scope of this volume, an extreme exception is the Early Christian woman stoned to death in what then became her grave (Vila 1976: 110–111). Female mortality rates seem to have remained generally uniform, at least in the Neolithic through Kerma periods, and in Christian times life expectancy seems to have been approximately equal to men (Adams 2004: 118). The noticeably higher mortality rate amongst adult women aged 20–30/35 is logically attributed to complications of pregnancy and childbirth (Armélagos 1969: 259; Pudło 1999: 60) but, nonetheless, women could reach advanced age in some number. Reavis (2014) describes several instances of middle/upper-class women in the Tombos cemetery (New Kingdom through Napatan periods) who survived into their seventies despite broken bones, significant osteoporosis, extreme tooth wear, spina bifida and other diseases, as well as congenital and age-related disorders. Many problems are chronic or degenerative, yet these individuals survived with their conditions for years, suggesting the existence of a ‘caring social network’ within their communities or at least amongst their families that enabled them to do so. That such a network extended far beyond family and community is illustrated by the Napatan King Anlamani’s specific command to his subjects: ‘Do not afflict the widow(!)’ (c. 620–600 BC; Eide *et al.* 1994–2000: I, 219). Whether this was normal royal protocol or an individual royal command is not known, but it does suggest a social imperative and consideration at the highest level.

Tattooing, documented from the C-Group to Meroitic periods, is almost entirely limited to women (an exception is Armélagos 1969: fig. 5) and likely relates to religious beliefs or practice, some at least protective in intent. No earlier physical evidence for other body adornment has been recovered, but the lines and dots on Neolithic through C-Group figurines likely represent tattooing or scarification (e.g. Wildung 1997: Cats. 1–3, 31, 41, 45). The earliest direct evidence is the mummified tattooed women found in C-Group cemeteries just south of the First Cataract, these locations suggesting the tattoos were intended to distinguish the wearers from both the Egyptian and Kerma peoples to their north and south (Tassie 2003: 88–89, 93, 99). Tattooing, often quite elaborate, continued in the Meroitic period (Vila 1967: 370–377 Pls. XII–XIX). Scarification is also known in the Meroitic period from the mid-first century BC, when both royal and non-royal women (as well as men) displayed deliberate vertical cheek and horizontal forehead scars, apparently indicative of social status (e.g. Welsby and Anderson 2004: Cat 163; see generally, Lobban 2004: 77–80; see [Figure 20.2](#)). This practice still serves to distinguish

members of tribal groups within the Sudan today.



Figure 20.2 Ba-figure of a woman. Her social status almost certainly is élite. She wears the traditional long wraparound skirt, here painted white so perhaps of linen rather than leather, with a bare torso. She typically also wore a solar disc separately inserted atop her head (now missing), while the folded wings behind identify her as a *ba*-figure. A horizontal scar crosses her forehead. Sandstone, Meroitic, late second–third century ad, from the Aniba cemetery at Karanog, University Museum, Philadelphia UM E 7003, Height 59.0 cm; O’Connor 1993, Col. Pl. 14.

Excess female weight is considered a beauty feature in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa. The most famous ancient representation is the 18th-Dynasty relief depicting Atiya, the ‘Queen of Punt’, and her daughter at Deir el-Bahri in Egypt. Steatopygy is a genetic condition best described as having an accumulation of excess fat in and around the buttocks, sometimes extending into the hips and upper thighs. Mummified bodies do not have folds of excess skin suggestive of

steatopygia or other excess body fat, but women represented throughout Nubian art characteristically are at least 'broad-hipped' if not overweight. Neolithic female figurines are already portrayed as steatopygous, and later art continues this tradition (e.g. Dunham 1963: fig. 168.9). The early Napatan queens and goddesses are often, but not always, depicted as 'broad-hipped' with heavy thighs and disproportionately narrow waists, as also seen in Egyptian art from the reign of Akhenaten through the Ptolemaic period. Egyptian representations of Nubian (and Egyptian) women continue to depict them in this same manner, but contemporary Nubian representations are less consistent. Napatan figures can be more or less exaggerated, but the 'broad-hipped' profiles continue well into Meroitic times in Nubian art. Winged female *ba*-statues representing the deceased and women depicted on related relief stelae are also 'broad-hipped' with a disproportionately narrow waist. Some Meroitic, although not Napatan, queens and other royal women are famously depicted as considerably but proportionately overweight, in sharp contrast to the much thinner kings and deities, including female deities. Such images can only have been created with their consent or under their direction, and therefore reflect either reality or their own preferred representation.

Burials

All social levels are represented in female graves, from very rich to very poor, judging by their grave goods and, in some periods, their grave size. Women were buried in the same cemeteries and with the same grave types as men (Adams 2004: 118), suggesting (at a minimum) that they were not segregated in death. Burials and grave goods likely reflect family rather than personal wealth and position, but some women were significant in their own right. cemeteries consistently include more 'important' (i.e. excessively large) graves inhabited by an individual woman, but double graves presumably of husband and wife are also not uncommon. Individual, and presumably individually commissioned, relief 'portrait' stelae and Meroitic *ba*-statues best illustrate the presence of independent, non-royal women. The mostly late second- to third-century AD *ba*-statues, representing the deceased either as a human-headed bird or a winged human figure, are both male and female (e.g. O'Connor 1993: Col. Pls. 13–14, Cats. 89–99; see also Török 2009: 422–423) and exclusively from Lower Nubia. A fourth-century BC Napatan woman named Palsalta and a Meroitic woman named Lapakhidaye in the second to third centuries AD commanded their own funerary stelae at Meroë and Aksha,

respectively (Dunham 1963: 397, fig. 220; Wildung 1997: Cat 309; see also Wenig 1978: Cat 127). Both likely were noblewomen.

Napatan and Meroitic queens and lesser royal women were also buried within their own dedicated pyramidal tombs in the royal cemeteries in the Napatan period, usually positioned relative to that of the kings and in accordance with their own royal status (Lohwasser 2001b: 66–67; Haynes and Santini-Ritt 2012: 179). The only males buried in these cemeteries were the kings themselves. During the Meroitic period, the pyramids of kings and queens were not even segregated within the cemetery. The proximity and integration of kings and royal women in death is in complete contrast to the conscious separation inherent in the ‘Valley of the Kings’ and ‘Valley of the Queens’ at Thebes in New Kingdom Egypt. This difference underlines the importance of female members in the royal hierarchy during their lifetimes. Nonetheless, five Dynasty 25 royal women were apparently buried at Abydos in Egypt, including a wife of Pi(ankh)y, although he and all the later Dynasty 25 kings chose to be buried at Napata.

The ‘self-sacrificed’ retainers found in the royal tumuli at Kerma were mostly women and young girls, although also men and children, who presumably belonged to the royal household. Many individual non-royal Kerma and later graves also have one or more ‘self-sacrificed’ individuals of lower status, almost always women, within the primary burial (Kendall 1997: 60). References to military enslavement of men, women and children are abundant, while female intermarriage with Egyptian men in both Egypt and Nubia is well-documented at all levels of society up to and including queens (e.g. Wildung 1997: Cat 84; Vittmann 2007: 155). Nubian women are recognisable by their physiognomy, dress and name in Egyptian texts and art, and are archaeologically distinguished from their Egyptian counterparts through their grave types, positions, orientation and contents, both in Nubia and in Egypt. In the Napatan cemetery at Sanam at the Fourth Cataract, most women are buried in flexed position with head east facing north in time-honoured Nubian fashion and many men in the Egyptian-influenced extended position often with head west, sometimes sharing the same grave. The same combination is recognised in the New Kingdom cemetery at Tombos and elsewhere along the Nile, the women especially following traditional Kerma practices. At the Second Intermediate Period-New Kingdom fortress town of Askut in Lower Nubia, Smith (2003: 113–124) has clearly demonstrated the distinct Nubian character of the women inhabitants, who continued to use their familiar indigenous vessel types and cooking methodologies, as well as religious beliefs, in

the face of Egyptian colonisation and Nubian male egyptianisation. In other words, they consciously chose to maintain their traditional cultural identity.

Occupations

Occupation, labour, and other activities associated with the vast majority of ‘ordinary’ women are inferred from interpretation of their associated grave goods, skeletal evidence, finds distribution in housing and anthropological analogy. Such evidence centres on the ‘domestic’ sphere: wife and mother, household management, cooking, baking and food processing, weaving and pot-making, presumably milking, leather processing and water collection, and possibly also sowing, reaping and harvesting in the fields (Hafsaas 2006: 16–17). The general assumption that women made handmade vessels for home use and professional male potters the wheelmade vessels is “too simplistic” (Welsby 1996: 163), not least because pottery was made on the wheel only during certain periods and the technical quality in the Nubian handmade tradition at all periods is highly accomplished. Household textile production likely was a common female occupation as in many pre-industrial societies: numerous loomweights and bone needles have been recovered in houses, as well as in poor *and* rich female graves at Karanòg (Jacquet 1971: 127; O’Connor 1993: 102; Harkless 2006: 178). This does not preclude the probability of such processing and production at industrial levels by women – not necessarily *Nubian* women – elsewhere, such as in temple estates (Robins 1993: 122; Harkless 2006: 137) as well as royal palaces, élite households and other large integrated communities, even down to village level. Excess home production by particularly accomplished women potters (and weavers?) may well have been traded within the community or beyond.

Other occupations were open to ‘common’ women, undoubtedly some unrecorded in art and literature although generically comparable with other societies. References to singers, dancers and musicians in religious contexts clearly indicate women performed these roles, but they also appear to perform similar functions in secular contexts, presumably as slaves.

Priestesses and ‘God’s Wives’

The most famous and arguably most important Nubian priestesses are the celibate ‘God’s Wives of Amun’ (*ḥmt ntr nt Imn*), certain daughters

of the 25th-Dynasty pharaohs who ruled Egypt. Each was appointed by her father, the king, and adopted by her predecessor, usually also her aunt. ‘God’s Wives of Amun’ resided at Karnak as the supreme authority over the powerful Amun priesthood, and therefore effectively ruled the Theban area both politically and economically on behalf of their royal father and were his direct intermediary with the state god of Egypt. Although much is made of their presence, power and influence at Karnak and indeed in Upper Egypt itself, the title and increasingly powerful position first appeared in Egypt during the Middle Kingdom and continued at Karnak until the end of the 26th Dynasty nearly three centuries after the Nubian retreat from Egypt (e.g. Lobban 2004: 171–172). It must therefore be seen in part as an existing Egyptian institution very astutely and successfully co-opted by the 25th-Dynasty kings for political purposes (see also, Onstine and Tyldesley, this volume).

Other royal women held the titles of ‘Divine Adoratrix’ (*dw3t nṯr*) or ‘High Priestess’ (*ḥmt nṯr* – ‘god’s wife’), rather than the singular appointment of ‘God’s Wife of Amun’ at Karnak. King Aspelta (early sixth century BC) informs us, in support of his claim to the throne on his ‘Election Stela’, that his grandmother was a ‘Divine Adoratrix’ (Eide *et al.* 1994–2000: I, 240, 249; Vittmann 2007: 143), the ‘God’s Wife of Amun’-elect. Although generally seen as modeled on the ‘God’s Wife of Amun’ at Karnak, the Nubian practice of bestowing priestly titles on royal women itself existed at least a century before the 25th Dynasty when Alara, the ‘founder’ king of the Napatan Dynasty, dedicated his sister as ‘Sistrum-Player’ of Amun. To judge from the surviving texts, only royal women would be appointed to other senior religious positions in 25th-Dynasty Egypt, but these were limited to the temples and cults of certain female deities also worshipped in Nubia such as Isis, Nut, Mut, Hathor and Neith (see the appendix to this chapter on Nubian deities). Usually, they held the title of ‘(High) Priestess’ (e.g. Vittmann 2007: 155), but at least one granddaughter of King Piye was a ‘Sistrum-Player’ at Karnak at the end of the 25th Dynasty.

Most royal women having priestly appointments from the reign of Alara’s successor, Kashta, onwards held the title of ‘Sistrum-Player’ (‘of Amun-Re, King of the Gods’) in temples of Amani and Amun-Re in Nubia (Eide *et al.* 1994–2000: I, 42–44, 250). This seems to be the only ritual position held by Nubian royal women in Nubia itself, but was far from insignificant. Three specific ‘Sistrum-Player’ titles (*ḥiūt*, *ṣḥmiit* and *ḥnw*) are referenced in the texts, but their distinction is difficult to ascertain. Half a century after the last 25th-Dynasty king had retreated from Egypt, the ‘Queen Mother’ and other royal women

prominently act as 'Sistrum-Players' on the 'Coronation' stelae of Anlamani and Aspelta (c. 620–580 BC) that both illustrate and describe the events in detail, together with names and titles of the participants (Eide *et al.* 1994–2000: I, 223, 262–263). Anlamani appointed four of his sisters as 'Sistrum-Players' at the temples of Amani at Napata, Kawa and Pnubs (Kerma? Tabo?) and to Amun-Re. Ritual titles could be transferred as, in Year 3 of Aspelta, his wife Kheb (= Henuttahbit) was elected to the position of 'Sistrum-Player' in the temple of 'Amani, Bull of Nubia' at Sanam, succeeding his brother Anlamani's widow and Kheb's mother, Madiken (Eide *et al.* 1994–2000: II, 266–267). Madiken in turn had succeeded her mother Nasalsa, a familial succession reminiscent of the 'God's Wife of Amun'. Many but not all aspects of female royalty have a strong echo, if not origin, in the roles also performed by the Kushite 'God's Wife of Amun' at Karnak (Eide *et al.* 1994–2000: I, 250), but others already existed earlier.

Although textual references to female religious titles in Nubia disappear soon after the reign of Aspelta, numerous reliefs on stelae and in royal tomb chapels throughout the later Napatan and Meroitic periods continue to depict queens as 'Sistrum-Players' and libation-pourers, and princesses carrying palm-fronds in association with a king or deity (e.g. Chapman and Dunham 1952: *passim*; Wildung 1997: Cat. 265). Yet, as Kahn (2013: 66–67) has noted, depictions of royal sistrum-playing are limited *only* to coronation scenes, while other female royal religious activities are restricted to offering sacrifices and pouring libations, participating in the king's mortuary cult and interceding between the king and the deities. Török (1997: 235) notes royal women 'could be installed as priestesses in order to distinguish them as predestined king's mothers, [but] also in priestly offices associated with the legitimacy and power of the ruler'.

Little is known of non-royal priestesses. The women depicted on two mid-third-century AD bronze bowls from Karanòg in Lower Nubia (Woolley and Randall-MacIver 1910: Pls. 27–29; O'Connor 1993: 104–105) have been seen both as ordinary women and as 'priestesses', depending on interpretation of the scene as ritual or 'daily life' and their role within it. Close analysis of costumes worn by some non-royal women in 25th-Dynasty Egypt holding religious titles identify them as Nubians, presumably married to Egyptians. One or two women were 'Singer(s) in the Interior of Amun' according to their stelae (Vittmann 2007: 157), and at least two others were 'Followers of Mut' (Ibid.: 146–147, 153; Haynes and Santini-Ritt 2012: 171). There seems to be no indication of non-royal women holding religious titles in Nubia itself amongst the scanty surviving evidence, but some,

perhaps within the higher nobility, also must have fulfilled ritual roles. certainly, non-royal women did ‘belong’ to temple estates as untitled ‘musicians to shake the sistrum’ and other unspecified ‘workers’ (Robins 1993: 122; Eide *et al.* 1994–2000: I, 173). Captured women too were brought to Nubia and given over by the king to be ‘maidservants’ (Eide *et al.* 1994–2000: I, 172, 222), presumably performing menial tasks in the temple estates. Despite the very few references, this must have been common practice.

Queens and other royal women

Much of our evidence for women in ancient Nubia focuses on the queens and other royal women, simply because they are the best documented in ancient sources. Most of this evidence dates to the Napatan and Meroitic periods, with their abundant inscriptions and detailed artistic representations. Earlier evidence is scanty, but the importance and authority of the Queen – ‘King’s Mother’, ‘King’s Sister’ and ‘King’s Wife’ – in the royal hierarchy throughout Napatan and Meroitic history is already made evident much earlier. The first female Nubian ruler (ḥḳ(3)t; ‘hekat’)¹ known to us is Satjyt, of the ‘country’ of Yamenes, sometime during the Middle Kingdom when she is named in an Egyptian *Execration Text* (Posener 1987). Other Nubian women of lesser rank are also mentioned in Old Kingdom *Execration Texts*; some are specifically named, including Kebity, wife of another ruler, together with her husband (Posener 1987: 29 no. A9; Espinel 2013: 27–29).² An inscription in modified Late Egyptian on the temple at Semna West fortress sometime in the eleventh/tenth century BC names and depicts the ‘Great King’s Wife’ [and] ‘King’s Sister’ Kadimalo as the central figure who worships the goddess Isis together with another, less important royal woman (Figure 20.3).

These texts are isolated glimpses into periods of Nubian history obscure to us, underlying not only the existence of distinct, independent, indigenous polities, but also the high status and power of royal (and non-royal) women in both periods and presumably throughout ancient Nubian history. Satjyt appears as a *reigning* monarch who was perceived as prominent and dangerous enough to warrant a retaliatory Egyptian spell designed to eradicate her power, and it is Kadimalo – not her unnamed and undepicted husband, the king – who dominates both image and text at Semna, and is the recipient of his appeal in perpetuity (Török 1995: 46, fig. 2). Her name itself is a combination of later recognisably Meroitic words *kdi mlo* (‘good lady’), indicating the indigenous language was already spoken at this early date long before it appeared in written form

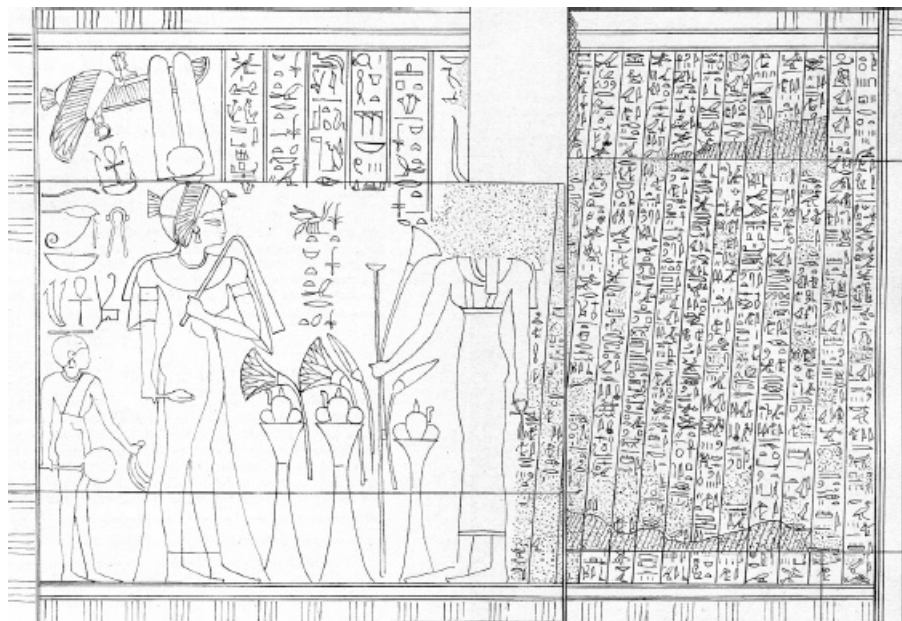


Figure 20.3 Queen Kadimalo and less important woman worshipping the goddess Isis, and accompanying text, relief superimposed in the eleventh–tenth century BC on the original Dynasty 18 façade of the Thutmose temple of Dedwen and Senwosret III at Semna West. (Detail of a drawing by W. Weudenberg (1844), reproduced in Grapow 1940, Pl. III.)

Other than the one reference to Satjyt and the ‘Nubian’ facial features of certain women in Egyptian art including some queens and nobility (e.g. Wildung 1997: Cat. 84), our most important visual source for early Nubian royal women is a ‘tribute’ scene in the late Dynasty 18 tomb of Huy, ‘King’s Son of Kush’ (TT 40) at Thebes (Davies and Gardiner 1926: Pl. XXVIII; Wilkinson 1983: Col. Pl. 42). Here an anonymous Lower Nubian woman usually called a ‘princess’ is escorted with ‘chiefs of Wawat’ and their entourage into the presence of Huy and, in a related scene, Tutankhamun with gifts (‘tribute’), including two Nubian ‘slave-women’ and three children (Figure 20.4). Another unnamed but equally well-dressed woman behind her riding in an ox-drawn cart under a protective sunshade is generally described as a ‘noblewoman’ rather than ‘princess’. These identifications are modern interpretations although clearly both

women are high-ranking. They are richly dressed in Egyptian-style clothing with added Nubian elements, most notably the excessive number of armlets and symbolic accoutrements that have suggested a mixed identity (Van Pelt 2013: 534–535). We do not know if these women (and indeed the entire delegation) in fact wore the clothing and accoutrements the Egyptian artist has depicted in order to visually identify their Nubian origin. Both women clearly are important personages in this politically charged scene, but, archaeologically, the excessively large scale of some female tombs and the quantity and quality of their grave goods allow us only to speculate as to whether some of these deceased individuals might be ‘royal’ rather than simply of the élite wealthy class.



Figure 20.4 Procession of Nubians before the ‘King’s Son of Kush’ Huy, Dynasty 18, reign of Tutankhamun. Detail of the facsimile of a wall painting in the Tomb of Huy (TT 40) at Qurna (Thebes). The ‘princess’ is the first standing person from the right, the ‘noblewoman’ is in the chariot, and the two ‘slave women’ and three children at the end of the procession on the far left. (Lepsius 1849–1859, *Ab.* III, Pl. 117.)

It is not until the early Napatan period that queens reappear in the record, visible largely due to their named tombs and to texts. Queen Kadimalo, apparently deceased when her inscription was carved, was already an important and powerful individual in the royal hierarchy of her day, and the importance of her position continued throughout the Napatan and Meroitic periods. Not long afterwards, Queen Qasaka, wife of Alara (first half of the eighth century BC), possessed her own dedicated tomb next to his at El-Kurru. Queens and other royal women continued to be buried in their own dedicated pyramids in the royal cemeteries at El-Kurru, Nuri, Jebel Barkal and Meroë, where tomb inscriptions and grave goods provide us with their names, titles, lineage and familial relationships. Queens also possessed their own stelae, being depicted worshipping – or otherwise associated with – a deity without the king present (e.g. Wildung 1997: Cats. 173, 268). The decorative programmes in the tombs of King Tanwetamani (Ku.

16) and his mother Queen Qalhata (Ku. 5) (Dunham 1950: Pls IX–X, XVII–XX) are similar and equally richly painted, while traces of paint surviving on other queens' tombs suggest hers was not unique. Many tombs were heavily plundered, but the quality and scale of the surviving furniture and grave goods interred with them rival those of the kings themselves at El-Kurru (decoration: Dunham 1950: 38, 42, 98 (queens); 55, 60 (kings), *passim* (grave goods)) and other, later royal cemeteries.

The concept of matrilineal succession has long been associated with Nubian kingship during, especially, the Napatan period due to its surviving relevant and translatable documents. The most common matrilineal concept is of male kings whose right to rule is legitimised through their mother's rather than their father's ancestry, although other variations are known. Considerable scholarly discussion has focused on the nature and religious/political concepts underlying royal succession, opinions being quite varied, and this naturally presupposes different social, political and cultural roles for the royal women themselves. Several inscriptions offer direct evidence for matrilineal succession in the Napatan (and possibly also Meroitic) period, where the female ancestry is emphasised and enumerated up to seven generations back in time in order to legitimise the newly crowned king (see Lohwasser 2001b: fig. 3). A corresponding statement of male ancestry is entirely absent, other than the 'original' ancestral king through these women, as the king's father was considered to be the supreme god, Amani. Morkot (1999: *passim*; summarised *ibid.* 2012: 122–123) has pointed out, the 'emphasis on female ancestors does not necessarily indicate that the royal succession passed through the female line', but the importance of the queen – mother, sister, wife – remains unambiguous in the inscriptions that have come down to us. Nonetheless, many kings are in fact the sons (and, in one case, brother) of a king, strongly suggesting their mothers can only have been the wives of kings, which does not preclude them from also being the sisters of kings. At least four royal texts emphasise the presence of the mother of the new king at his investiture and, in the case of Anlamani (late seventh century BC), the ceremony itself seems to have been delayed until she could be present.

Earlier Egyptian records continually name different political entities within Nubia. The question of whether one or many 'royal' families co-existed at different times within the Napatan and Meroitic periods is partly inferred by their burial choices. Six cemeteries, three near the 4th Cataract and three at Meroë farther south, are royal pyramid fields (one only partially royal), but there are some interesting overlaps although no clear chronological division between them. Do these

choices represent different and possibly competing royal families or family factions having different preferred or ancestral burial grounds? If so, was the emphasis on matrilineal ancestry a means of clearly re-establishing royal legitimacy through family descent, especially after one or more generations had not been on the throne?

The importance of Napatan royal women is underlined by their prerogatives when compared to their Egyptian counterparts and to the Egyptian king himself. Like the latter but not the former, Napatan royal women were portrayed suckling the deity, pouring libations before the deity including Amani, and accompanying their husband when he officiated at rituals and themselves officiating at these rites. As Lohwasser (2001b: *passim*) emphasises, they complemented the actions and functions of the king in his many guises. As ‘King’s Mothers’, ‘King’s Sisters’ and ‘King’s Daughters’, they represented and acted as means of transmission between the king and the gods, the king and his ancestors, and the king and his successors. Queen Kadimalo had already fulfilled this role as direct intermediary between king and god. Such roles continued in the Meroitic period, but the importance and power of royal women also increased dramatically.

Sakhmakh, wife of the last Napatan king, Nastasen, debatably reigned as *nsw* (Egyptian: ‘king’) in the late fourth century BC (Wildung 1997: Cats. 265, 268; Kahn 2013: 64, but see Lohwasser 2001a: 181–182; Haynes and Santini-Ritt 2012: 173), as a stela from Jebel Barkal not only twice calls her *nsw* but also provides her with a now damaged ‘Horus’ name, previously the prerogative only of kings. Little else is known of her. Queen Shanakdakhete (late second century BC; Rilly 2004: 4.1) certainly did sit on the throne. Her name is the earliest known Meroitic text, on a temple inscription at Naga otherwise written entirely in Egyptian hieroglyphs, including the standard pharaonic title ‘Son of Re, Lord of the Two Lands’. A funerary relief statue from Meroë pyramid Beg. N 11 also depicts her as the central figure flanked by goddesses, a position similar to the god, Osiris, whom she emulates here in a characteristic pharaonic arrangement (Wildung 1997: Cat. 305; compare Chapman and Dunham 1952: Pl. 22.B). Queen Bartare may have been the first queen to hold the title of *kn-ti-ky/ktke* (Meroitic: ‘queen’, hellenised to *kandake*), if she lived in the mid-second century BC, but this date remains very uncertain. She was also a ‘Son of Re, Lord of the Two Lands’ (Eide *et al.* 1994–2000, II: 660–661) with her name in a pharaonic cartouche; little else is known of her, but no suggestion that she actually ruled seems to have been made in print. The title *kandake* is recorded for at least seven queens only within the late second

century BC and first century AD, but is not generally considered to signify a *ruling* queen, although some did in fact rule. Four queens, Amanirenas and Amanishakheto (both late first century BC), Nawidemak (late first century BC or early first century AD)³ and Amanitore (mid- to late-first century AD) are stated to be *qore* (Meroitic: ‘king’) and so unquestionably sat on the throne, with all but Nawidemak also holding the title of *kandake*. Amanitore is always depicted equal to her husband and co-regent, Natakamani (Figure 20.5), and also held several pharaonic titles including ‘Son of Re’ and ‘Great One of the Two Lands’. Other queens may also have ruled, either solely or as co-regent, but none possesses the title *qore* in surviving titularies. All titles cited above in this paragraph, except *kandake*, are written in the masculine rather than feminine form – the feminine form of *qore* is not even attested⁴ – but are all depicted as female. Non-reigning queens and other royal women held a wide variety of other titles and epithets (Lohwasser 2001b: 61–62; Gozzoli 2010: table 2). Some, such as ‘Daughter of Re’ and ‘Mistress of the Two Lands’, parallel in feminine form those of the king.

The title *kandake* is thought to translate more specifically as ‘King’s Mother’ or ‘King’s Sister’, although other interpretations have also been suggested (Eide *et al.* 1994–2000: II, 510). *Kandake* is the origin of the modern name, Candace, derived from a Classical misconception that it was the name of the queen rather than her title. A Greek text relates the entirely fictitious tale of Alexander the Great in correspondence with an extraordinarily beautiful Nubian queen named Kandake, Queen of Meroë, and himself travelling to Meroë to meet her (Eide *et al.* 1994–2000: II, 503–511). Strabo’s detailed account of the Meroitic–Roman conflict for Lower Nubia in 25/24–21/20 BC between forces of Augustus Caesar and ‘Queen Kandake’, on the other hand, is substantially accurate. This queen is described as ‘a manly woman who had lost one of her eyes’ (Strabo 17: 1: 53–54; Eide *et al.* 1994–2000: III, 828–835) and, historically, can only have been the *qore* and *kandake* Amanirenas. While no other document mentions her eye(s), the bronze Primaporta head of Augustus recovered in front of Chapel 292 at Meroë and now in the British Museum is generally seen as part of her booty. These queens perform even more roles formerly restricted to kings, such as smiting enemies, holding prisoners and presenting gifts to Amani and other deities (Figure 20.5).



Figure 20.5 Pylon façade of the mid/late first century AD Temple of Apedemak at Naga, depicting in relief the *kore* and *kandake* Amanitore and her co-regent King Natakamani facing the temple entrance. Both are depicted smiting their enemies with a royal mace in the time-honoured pharaonic scene. The register below their feet consists of a row of defeated enemies. (http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Naga_Löwentempel.jpg)

No female *qore* held the throne after Amanitore, whose reign with Natakamani is seen as the ‘Golden Age’ of the Meroitic period. Although Queen Amaninkatashan (later first century AD) is not attested as *qore* or *kandake*, she also may have sat on the throne as ‘Son of Re’ and ‘King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two Lands’, still in masculine form (Eide *et al.* 1994–2000: III, 935). No clear evidence for later ruling queens seems to exist, although several have been proposed.

Clothing and adornment (the ‘obligatory’ last chapter)

‘Ordinary’ women’s clothing in the early periods seems almost entirely limited to cured leather garments, including long wraparound skirts and loincloths, girdles, sandals, skullcaps and other headdresses, all often decorated. Archaeological evidence suggests sandals were made of goat or sheepskin, and cowhide for other clothing. Some leather

was rather colourfully dyed with red ochre, as is illustrated in the tomb of Huy (TT 40) at Thebes. Two 'slave-women' shown amongst the 'tribute' brought by the delegation wear only a multi-coloured skirt and the distinctively Nubian 'animal tails' tied onto their arms above their elbows, as well as large loop earrings. The earliest direct evidence for women's clothing, found in C-Group graves, is comparable. The nudity of the three children with them (Davies and Gardiner 1926: Pl. XXX; Wilkinson 1983: Col. Pl. 42), at least two of whom seem to be girls, was common practice in both Ancient Egypt and in Nubia (Woolley and Randall-MacIver 1910, 1: 49, 2: Pl. 13.7079).

Neolithic and A-Group women are not *portrayed* as clothed although they have tattooed or scarred body decoration, but one woman in a well-preserved Predynastic/A-Group grave just north of the First Cataract was covered with matting and linen. Gatto (2009: 130) notes the linen most likely covered only her lower limbs, so presumably the upper body was bare. Women did have tattoos and scars on their upper body and torso that otherwise would not be visible. Hafsaas (2006: 107; see Säve-Söderbergh 1989, 1: 186–187, 2: Pl. 96.97/23) describes a particularly well-preserved C-Group grave where the woman had decorated her leather skirt, headdress and girdle with cut-out and beaded decoration on the leather (unfortunately not illustrated). Kerma women sewed mica cut-outs in different shapes onto their caps and tailored their skirts by sewing individually cut leather elements together. These they then decorated with coloured dyes, stamped designs and beaded patterns. An anonymous Nubian goddess visually similar to the Egyptian deity, Taweret, is recognisable by her apparently tailored flaring skirt (Bonnet 1990: Cats. 113, 276) that is never worn by Taweret herself. This same skirt, with the bare torso indicated by pendant breasts, continued to be worn not only by the 'lower classes' but also by élite and even royal women well into the Meroitic period (Chapman and Dunham 1952: *passim*; Wenig 1978: Cat. 127; O'Connor 1993: Col. Pl. 14; Wildung 1997: Cats. 309, 453; Haynes and Santini-Ritt 2012: 184). Two of the three women depicted on two mid-third-century AD bronze bowls from Karanòg wear variations of this skirt; the third is nude (Woolley and Randall-MacIver 1910 Pls. 27–29; O'Connor 1993: 104–105). Women, like men, wore considerable quantities of jewellery whatever their status, in both white and bright colours, which would have been highly visible on their dark skin and leather clothing.

At least from the time of Kadimalo in the eleventh/tenth century BC and onwards, costumes worn by the élite and priestesses largely derive from Egyptian costume introduced during the New Kingdom

occupation. The 25th-Dynasty royal daughters appointed as ‘God’s Wives of Amun’ at Karnak continued the costume of their Egyptian predecessors, wearing a typical sheath-like dress likely much looser than presented (following Egyptian convention) in order to depict the body beneath, together with an elaborate long wig worn under a vulture headdress supplemented by a modius and the tall double-plume and sun-disc of Amun. Little can be said of the recognisably non-royal priestess costume. Not only do representations seem limited to Egyptian images (e.g. Vittmann 2007: 146–147, figs. 3, 9), but the costumes themselves have no priestly details.

Royal women in Nubia itself also had specifically Nubian costumes, their details and accoutrements reflecting the wearer’s role, titles and position. Napatan royal dress consisted of a plain sheath-like transparent dress under a wide cape knotted at both shoulders, sometimes together with a draped cloth falling from the shoulder down the back. The dress, presumably of linen but possibly cotton, again was looser in reality than depiction. The cape trim is either striped or fringed, and a ‘little tail’ hung below the dress at the back. Very short hair or a ‘Kushite’ skullcap crown and sometimes also sandals completed the ensemble, together with jewellery elements on arms, hands, neck, ears, legs and ankles. The ‘little tail’ is one identifier in Egyptian images of Nubian women. Queens wore a variety of crowns, including a headband with the uraeus on the forehead (for the ‘Queen Mother’) and, amongst others, a double-plumed crown with or without a sun-disc and horns, or a vulture headdress, all strongly reminiscent of the ‘God’s Wife of Amun’ ensemble. Princesses (‘King’s Daughters’) are identified by up to four long streamers rising from the top to the back of the head (Lohwasser 2001b: fig. 2; Vittmann 2007: fig. 11).

These costumes and accoutrements became more varied and elaborate over time. Meroitic royal costume is even more elaborate, especially as queens became more powerful as *kandake* and even *qore*, and included additional details previously restricted to the king. Some even duplicated his entire costume. New pharonic Kushite elements include ram-headed images of Amani, a variety of crowns including the Kushite double uraeus, a diagonal sash across the chest and tasseled shoulder band, sceptres, staff and flail, once even a panther skin (worn by Queen Shanakdakhete), as well as a wider range of jewellery. The quantities of exquisite jewellery recovered in certain queens’ tombs confirms this was not artistic exaggeration (Dunham 1955, 1957, 1963: all passim; Chapman and Dunham 1952; see also Wildung 1997: 302–340).⁵ Other royal women were less elaborately dressed with fewer accoutrements and jewellery. Royal women

performing ritual actions (shaking the sistrum, libating, etc.) generally retained their royal profiles and costume, but the Egyptian goddesses retained their Egyptian profiles, dress and accoutrements. Goddesses of Nubian origin, on the other hand, wore ‘nubianised’ dress and followed the Napatan ‘broad-hipped’ profile even into the Meroitic period when queens often were shown proportionately overweight.⁶

Conclusion

Our current fragmentary knowledge of women in ancient Nubia is unfortunate. Insufficient evidence has given rise to many different interpretations and so much debate and speculation using these same limited sources. Further clarification and understanding will be achieved only through further ongoing research and excavation. Nonetheless, it is clear that ancient Nubian women, at least at the élite levels and in the latest periods, repeatedly attained levels of sustained political power and personal independence rarely seen elsewhere in the ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern civilisations encompassed in this volume. Small hints in earlier periods, such as in the *Execration Texts*, suggest this importance was of very long duration and presumably a cultural norm. Cultic roles held by royal women also wielded considerable real power in their own right. As ‘Kings’ Mothers’, ‘Kings’ Sisters’ and ‘Kings’ Daughters’ they encapsulated the past, present and future of Nubian kingship and its relationship with the gods. While women at the élite level are little known and non-élite women virtually absent in the record, the even more limited evidence, especially through the eyes of foreigners, suggests they too had at least some greater independence than elsewhere. Nubia is generally ignored or only footnoted in research conducted on civilisations with whom it interacted, usually in pejorative or combative terms. That Nubia was at the forefront of female independence remains largely unappreciated beyond its borders.

Appendix: Nubian deities

The development of Nubian theology is little understood before the mid-second millennium BC, when the Egyptian pantheon was introduced into Nubia by Egyptian soldiers, colonists and overseers in the New Kingdom occupation. Many deities were then absorbed into Nubian religion, at least amongst those who became ‘egyptianised’. Amun soon became the supreme deity of Nubia, in a distinctive Nubian form called Amani probably derived from (or subsuming) an anonymous indigenous ram deity (Kendall 1997: 76). Both male and

female indigenous Nubian deities were worshipped even before the New Kingdom, but few can be identified before the Napatan period when they are first named and recorded in art and writing. The most prolific Egyptian goddesses adopted into, or associated with, Nubian religion are Isis, Hathor and Mut, for whom major temples were erected at Jebel Barkal and elsewhere. Mut was the consort of Amani, as at Karnak. Bastet, Ma'at, Nepthys, Nut, Sekhmet, Taweret and Tefnut also were worshipped by their same names in Nubia as in Egypt. All generally continued their Egyptian roles, hierarchy and attributes, although often exhibiting additional Nubian features likely derived from an anonymous indigenous counterpart. The features of Taweret, for example, are recognisable in the indigenous goddess wearing a skirt commonly found in the Kerma culture as ivory inlays, sew-on mica cut-outs, and in other materials.

The First Cataract was both the Egyptian–Nubian border and a major transition zone that especially affected Lower Nubia immediately upriver. Isis herself may originally have been a Nubian goddess adopted into the Egyptian pantheon, as her cult centre is located on Philae Island, but Yellin (2012: 138) suggests her popularity in Nubia may reflect the existence of earlier or even contemporary indigenous mother-goddesses, of whom we know nothing. The god Khnum, his wife Satet and their daughter Anuket, the Elephantine triad who protected the First Cataract region, were also originally Nubian deities whose authority was still recognised by the Meroites centuries later. An early 6th-Dynasty inscription naming Satet was recovered in the shrine below her 18th-Dynasty temple at Elephantine (Kemp 2006: 117, 120), emphasising the continuity of her worship. Another goddess associated with this region was Mekhet, wife of the Egyptian god Anhur of the Thinite region of Middle Egypt. She also originated in Lower Nubia and was worshipped there only until the end of the New Kingdom occupation, while Anhur is associated with the indigenous Nubian god Dedwen whom the Egyptians also recognised. Egyptian theology also records a Nubian origin for the dwarf-god Bes, as well as his female counterpart Beset who first appears in Egypt in the Middle Kingdom. All these deities are associated primarily with Lower Nubia (Lobban 2004: *passim*).

Amesemi is the only indigenous goddess whom we know by name that is associated solely with Upper Nubia. Worship of both her and her husband, the supreme Nubian lion-god Apedemak, is limited almost entirely to the Butana region that includes Meroë. Known at least from the Meroitic period if not earlier, she wears a falcon-shaped crown surmounted by a crescent moon suggestive of a protective role. Undoubtedly, others also remain unknown to us, such as the

anonymous nude winged goddess with sun, crescent moon and feathered headdress (Wenig 1978: Cat. 103; Wildung 1997: Cat. 178; Sackho-Autissier 2004: 390–391) usually seen depicted on amulets.

Most if not all known Nubian goddesses were imbued with some protective quality or fulfilled some protective role, many interceding especially on behalf of women during childbirth and their young children. The mortality rate of both mothers and children was always high, judging from skeletal analyses. Representations of these goddesses or their attributes on amulets, texts, jewellery, temple walls and other venues all helped ensure beneficence or protection for the wearer or owner. Such representations have been found in domestic housing as well as in temples, and were worn by the deceased in their graves. In this respect, Nubian women did not differ from their Egyptian counterparts and, indeed, women everywhere.

Notes

- 1 As Morkot 2012: 119. Her title has also been translated as ‘princess’ or ‘governess’ (see Posener 1987: 29; Espinel 2013: 29), but the masculine form (ḥꜥ3) is normally translated as ‘ruler’ in Middle Egyptian (Faulkner 1981: 179).
- 2 In view of the later emphasis on matriarchal ancestry, it is interesting to note that a late Old Kingdom *Execration Text* now in Barcelona names two women and then cites the names of their *mothers* rather than their fathers; see Espinel 2013: 27, 29.
- 3 See Török in Eide *et al.* 1994–2000: III, 803–804.
- 4 See Dunham (1957: 10–19 *passim*) for transcribed royal names and titles at Jebel Barkal and Meroë.
- 5 These publications encompass both Napatan and Meroitic royal tombs and their contents.
- 6 Compare the profiles of Queen Amanishakaheto and the goddess Amesemi on her late first-century BC stela recently discovered at Naga, in Welsby and Anderson 2004: Cat. 163.

References

- Adams, W. Y. (2004) Peasant archaeology in Nubia. In L. Smith, P. Rose, G. and S. Wahida (eds) *Fifty Years in the Archaeology of Africa. Themes in Archaeological Theory and Practice. Papers in Honour of John Alexander*. *Azania Special Volume* 39: 111–124, 127.
- Alvrus, A. (1999) Fracture patterns among the Nubians of Semna South, Sudanese Nubia. *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 9: 417–429.
- Armelagos, G. J. (1969) Disease in Ancient Nubia. *Science* 163(3864):

- Arnold, D. (1996) *The Royal Women of Amarna: Images of Beauty from Ancient Egypt*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Bonnet, C. (1990) *Kerma, Royaume de Nubie*. Geneva: Musée d'Art et d'Histoire.
- Capel, A. K. and Markoe, G. E. (eds) (1997) *Mistress of the House, Mistress of Heaven: Women in Ancient Egypt*. New York: Hudson Hills Press.
- Chapman, S. E. and Dunham, D. (1952) *Decorated Chapels of the Meroitic Pyramids at Meroë and Barkal* (The Royal Cemeteries of Kush III). Boston, MA: Museum of Fine Arts.
- Davies, N. M. and Gardiner, A. H. (1926) *The Tomb of Huy, Viceroy of Nubia in the Reign of Tut'ankhamun (No. 40)*. (Theban Tomb Series IV) London: Egypt Exploration Society.
- Doll, S. K. (2012) Texts and writing in ancient Nubia. In M. J. Fisher, P. Lacovara, S. Ikram and S. D'Auria (eds) *Ancient Nubia: African Kingdoms on the Nile*. Cairo, Egypt: American University of Cairo Press, pp. 154–166.
- Dunham, D. (1950) *El Kurru*. (The Royal Cemeteries of Kush I). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Dunham, D. (1955) *Nuri*. (The Royal Cemeteries of Kush II). Boston, MA: Museum of Fine Arts.
- Dunham, D. (1957) *Royal Tombs at Meroë and Barkal*. (The Royal Cemeteries of Kush IV). Boston, MA: Museum of Fine Arts.
- Dunham, D. (1963) *The West and South cemeteries at Meroë Excavated by the late George Andrew Reisner*. (The Royal Cemeteries of Kush V). Boston, MA: Museum of Fine Arts.
- Eide, T., Hägg, T., Holton-Pierce, R. H. and Török, L. (eds) (1994–2000) *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum: Textual Sources for the History of the Middle Nile Region between the Eighth century BC and the Sixth century AD*. Four vols. Bergen, Norway: Department of Classics, University of Bergen.
- Espinell, A. D. (2013) A newly identified Old Kingdom execration text. In E. Frood and A. McDonald (eds) *Decorum and Experience. Essays in Ancient Culture for John Baines*. Oxford, UK: Griffith Institute, pp. 26–33.
- Faulkner, R. O. (1981) *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian*. Oxford, UK: Griffith Institute.
- Fischer, H. G. (1989) *Egyptian Women in the Old Kingdom and of the Heracleopolitan Period*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Gatto, M. C. (2009) Egypt and Nubia in the 5th–4th millennia Bce: A view from the First Cataract and its surroundings. *British Museum*

- Gozzoli, R. B. (2010) Royal sisters and royal legitimization in the Nubian period (c. 760–300 bc): Taharqo's Kawa stelae as a paradigm. In W. Godlewski and A. Łajtar (eds) *Between the Cataracts: Proceedings of the 11th Conference of Nubian Studies, Warsaw University, 27 August–2 September 2006 (Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean, Supplement Series 2.2/2)*, pp. 483–492.
- Grapow, H. (1940) Die Inschrift der Königin Katimala an Tempel von Semne. *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 76: 24–41.
- Graves-Brown, C. (ed.) (2008) *Sex and Gender in Ancient Egypt: 'Don Your Wig for a Joyful Hour'*. Swansea, Wales: The Classical Press of Wales.
- Graves-Brown, C. (ed.) (2010) *Dancing for Hathor: Women in Ancient Egypt*. London and New York: Hambledon Continuum.
- Hafsaas, H. (2006) *Cattle Pastoralists in a Multicultural Setting. The C-Group People in Lower Nubia 2500–1500 Bce*. (The Lower Jordan River Basin Programme Publication 10). Ramallah, West Bank: Birzeit University.
- Harkless, N. D. (2006) *Nubian Pharaohs and Meroitic Kings. The Kingdom of Kush*. Bloomington, IN and Milton Keynes, UK: AuthorHouse.
- Haynes, J. and Santini-Ritt, M. (2012) Women in Ancient Nubia. In M. J. Fisher, P. Lacovara, S. Ikram and S. D'Auria (eds) *Ancient Nubia. African Kingdoms on the Nile*. Cairo, Egypt: American University of Cairo Press, pp. 170–185.
- Jacquet, J. (1971) Remarques sur l'architecture domestique à l'époque Méroïtique. *Beiträge zur Ägyptischen Bauforschung und Altertumskunde* 12: 121–131.
- Judd, M. (2004) Trauma in the city of Kerma: Ancient versus modern injury patterns. *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 14: 34–51.
- Kemp, B. (2006) *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization*. Second edition. London and New York: Routledge.
- Kahn, D. (2013) The queen mother in the Kingdom of Kush. In M. I. Gruber, A. Brenner, M. Garsiel, B. A. Levine and M. Mor (eds) *Teshura le-Zafira: Studies in the Bible, the History of Israel and the Ancient Near East Presented to Zafira Ben-Barak*. Beer-Sheva, Israel: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press, pp. 61–68.
- Kendall, T. (1997) *Kerma and the Kingdom of Kush 2500–1500 B.C. The Archaeological Discovery of an Ancient Nubian Empire*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.
- Lepsius, K.-R. (1849–1859) *Denkmäler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien*:

- Nach den Zeichnungen der von seiner Majestät dem Könige von Preussen Friedrich Wilhelm IV nach diesen Ländern gesendeten und in den Jahren 1842–1845 ausgeführten wissenschaftlichen Expedition. Berlin: Nicolaische Buchhandlung.
- Lesko, B. S. (1978) *The Remarkable Women of Ancient Egypt*. Providence, RI: B.C. Scribe.
- Lobban, R. A. (2004) *Historical Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval Nubia*. (Historical dictionaries of ancient civilizations and historical eras 10). Lanham, MD and Oxford, UK: Scarecrow Press.
- Lohwasser, A. (2001a) *Die Königlichen Frauen im Antiken Reich von Kusch (25. Dynastie bis zur Zeit des Nastasen)*. *Meroitica* 19. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrasowitz.
- Lohwasser, A. (2001b) Queenship in Kush: Status, role and ideology of royal women. *Journal of the American Research center in Egypt* 38: 61–76.
- Morkot, R. G. (1999) Kingship and kinship in the Empire of Kush. In S. Wenig (ed.) *Studien zum Antiken Sudan. Akten der 7. Internationalen Tagung für Meroitischen Forschungen vom 14. bis 19. September 1992 in Gosen/bei Berlin*. (*Meroitica* 15). Weisbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz, pp. 180–229.
- Morkot, R. G. (2012) Kings and kingship in ancient Nubia. In M. J. Fisher, P. Lacovara, S. Ikram and S. D'Auria (eds) *Ancient Nubia. African Kingdoms on the Nile*. Cairo, Egypt: American University of Cairo Press, pp. 118–124.
- O'Connor, D. (1993) *Ancient Nubia: Egypt's Rival in Africa*. Philadelphia, PA: University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania.
- Posener, G. (1987) *Cinq figurines d'envoûtement* (Bibliothèque d'Étude 101). Cairo, Egypt: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale.
- Pudło, A. (1999) Population of Nubia up to the 16th century BC. *Przegląd Antropologiczny – Anthropological Review* 62: 57–66.
- Reavis, K. (2014) Skeletal analysis: Investigating senescence in ancient Nubia. *Journal of Purdue Undergraduate Research* 4: 40–47.
- Rilly, C. (2004) Meroitic palaeography as a tool for chronology: Prospects and limits. Draft version. *Arkamani*. Online (draft version): http://web.archive.org/web/20080206164646/http://www.arkamani.org/arkamani-library/meroitic_conference_paris/rilly_paleography.htm (accessed 22 February 2016).
- Robins, G. (1993) *Women in Ancient Egypt*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Sackho-Autissier, A. (2004) Sur quelques amulettes napatéennes de la nécropole d'el-Kurru. In T. Kendall (ed.) *Nubian Studies 1998*

- Proceedings of the Ninth Conference of the International Society of Nubian Studies*, 21–26 August 1998, Boston, Massachusetts. Boston, MA: Department of African-American Studies, Northeastern University, pp. 389–396.
- Säve-Söderbergh, T. (1989) *The Scandinavian Joint Expedition to Sudanese Nubia 4. Middle Nubian Sites*. Partille, Sweden: Paul Åström.
- Schoske, S. and Wildung, D. (eds) (1984) *Nofret–die Schöne. Die Frau im Alten Ägypten*. Two vols. Mainz, Germany: Verlag Philipp von Zabern.
- Setälä, P. (1989) Brick stamps and women's economic opportunities in imperial Rome. In A. Angerman, G. Binnema, A. Keunen, V. Poels and J. Zirkzee (eds) *Current Issues in Women's History*. London: Routledge, pp. 11–25.
- Smith, S. T. (2003) *Wretched Kush: Ethnic Identities and Boundaries in Egypt's Nubian Empire*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Tassie, G. J. (2003) Identifying the practice of tattooing in Ancient Egypt and Nubia. *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology* 14: 8–101.
- Teeter, E. and Johnson, J. (2009) *The Life of Meresamon: A Temple Singer in Ancient Egypt*. (Oriental Institute Museum Publication 29). Chicago, IL: Oriental Institute.
- Török, L. (1995) *The Birth of an Ancient African Kingdom: Kush and Her Myth of the State in the First Millennium BC*. (Cahier de recherches de l'Institut de papyrologie et d'égyptologie de Lille, Supplément 4). Lille, France: Université Charles-de-Gaulle–Lille III.
- Török, L. (1997) *The Kingdom of Kush: Handbook of the Napatan–Meroitic Civilization*. (Handbook für Orientalistick 1, Der Nahe und Mittlere Osten). Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Török, L. (2009) *Between Two Worlds: The Frontier Region between Ancient Nubia and Egypt, 3700 BC–AD 500*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill.
- Van Pelt, P. (2013) Revising Egypto-Nubian relations in new kingdom Lower Egypt: From Egyptianization to cultural entanglement. *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 23: 523–550.
- Vila, A. (1967) *Aksha II. Le Cimetière Merotique d'Aksha*. Paris: centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.
- Vila, A. (1976) *La Prospection Archéologique de la Vallée du Nil, au Sud de la Cataracte de Dal (Nubie Soudanaise) 4: District de Mograkka (Est et Ouest) District de Kosha (Est et Ouest)*. Paris: centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.
- Vittmann, G. (2007) A question of names, titles, and iconography: Kushites in priestly, administrative and other positions from

- Dynasties 25 to 26. *Der Antike Sudan. Mitteilungen der Sudanarchäologischen Gesellschaft zu Berlin* 18: 139–161.
- Welsby, D. A. (1996) *Kingdom of Kush: The Napatan and Meroitic Empires*. London: British Museum Press.
- Welsby, D. A. and Anderson, J. R. (eds) (2004) *Sudan: Ancient Treasures*. London: British Museum Press.
- Wenig, S. (1978) *Africa in Antiquity: The Arts of Ancient Nubia and the Sudan, II: The Catalogue*. Brooklyn, NY: Brooklyn Museum.
- Wildung, D. (ed.) (1997) *Sudan: Ancient Kingdoms of the Nile*. Paris and New York: Flammarion.
- Wilfong, T. G. (1997) *Women and Gender in Ancient Egypt from Prehistory to Late Antiquity. An exhibition at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology 14 March–15 June 1997*. Ann Arbor, MI: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology.
- Wilkinson, C. K. (1983) *Egyptian Wall Paintings. The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Collection of Facsimilies*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Woolley, C. L. and Randall-MacIver, D. (1910) *Karanòg: The Romano-British cemetery* (Eckley B. Coxe Junior Expedition to Nubia 3). Two vols. Philadelphia, PA: University Museum.
- Yellin, J. W. (2012) Nubian religion. In M. J. Fisher, P. Lacovara, S. Ikram and S. D'Auria (eds) *Ancient Nubia: African Kingdoms on the Nile*. Cairo, Egypt: American University of Cairo Press, pp. 125–144.

PART III

Hittites

(See map in Introduction to Part I: Mesopotamia)

Chronology¹

Kaneš

c.1750 Age of the Assyrian trading colony at Karum Kaneš/Kültepe. Rise of Kuššara.

Old Kingdom

-1650	L abarna
1650–1620	Hattušili I
1620–1590	Muršili I
1590–1560	Hantili I; Zidanta I
1560–1525	Ammuna; Huzziya I
1525–1500	Telipinu; Alluwamna; Tahurwaili
1500–	Hantili II; Zidanta II; Huzziya II
-1400	Muwattalli I

New Kingdom

-1400	Tudhaliya I/II
1400–1350	Arnuwanda I; Hattušili II?; Tudhaliya III
1350–1322	Šuppilulium a I
1322–1321	Arnuwanda II
1321–1295	Muršili II
1295–1272	Muwattalli II
1272–1267	Urhi-Teshub
1267–1237	Hattušili III
1237–1228	Tudhaliya IV
1228–1227	Kurunta
1227–1209	Tudhaliya IV
1209–1207	Arnuwanda III
1207–BCE	Šuppilulium a II

Introduction

“Hittite” prehistory begins with the rise of Pithana and Anitta of Kuššara in the mid-eighteenth century BCE. From what can be surmised from the later bilingual Hittite/Akkadian document called “The Anitta Text,” one primary authority on the Anatolian plateau up to this point had been a polity called Purušanda. Furthermore, from

the late third millennium there had been a thriving merchant colony of Assyrians living at the trading colony (*karum*) of Kaneš—Karum Kaneš, modern Kültepe, ancient Neša in Hittite. In approximately 1750 BCE a warrior named Pithana, ruler of a state called Kuššara (location unknown), seized control of the Kaneš region, sufficiently destabilizing the region that the merchant colony came to an end. Having proclaimed himself “Great King” this Pithana and his son, the crown prince and successor Anitta conquered and maintained control over territory within and just south of the curve of the Halys River, including ancient polities such as Kaneš, Salatuwar, Zalpa, and the later capital Hattuša. Eventually, the ruler of Purušanda presented Anitta with an iron scepter and a throne, thus symbolically recognizing the latter’s political hegemony of the region. The extent to which any of this records the actual early history of central Anatolia remains in debate, but it does provide an account of where the Hittites themselves believed they came from. The Hittite name for their own language—what we would call “Nešite”—is derived from the Hittite name of Kaneš—Neša.

A slightly clearer view of the Hittite Old Kingdom begins to emerge c.1650 BCE. Before this point, in a document called “The Political Testament of Hattušili,” Hattušili I claims that a ruler named Tabarna (or Labarna) preceded him as king of the land and head of the Assembly (*panku*). His consort was one Tawananna. However, T/Labarna is simply Hittite for “King,” while Tawananna is “Queen.” As such, Hattušili tells us little more than that before him there was a “king” on the throne. This Hattušili himself, first ruler of the Hittite Old Kingdom, is also an ambiguous character. Possibly a member of an off-shoot of the Kuššara royal family, he established his rule in eastern Anatolia and founded his capital at the ancient and easily-defensible site of Hattuša (modern Boğazköy). The king’s name—Hattušili—merely means “man of Hattuša,” and thus we do not know his original name. Nevertheless, it is clear that already by the time of Hattušili’s ascension to the throne certain governmental apparatus were already in place, including the Assembly, city elders, a military, and cult structures and personnel, all mentioned in the “Testament.”

From Hattuša, Hattušili greatly expanded the borders of his realm. His first efforts were directed south-east, against the Kingdom of Yamhad with its capital at Halab, ancient Aleppo. Hattušili succeeded in seizing the city of Alalakh before turning his attentions westwards to the upstart polity of Arzawa on the western coast. Booty and people from both regions were brought to Hattuša and presented to the heads of the Hittite pantheon—The Sun Goddess of Arinna and the Storm God. The king’s eastward encroachments, however, attracted the

attention of the newly emergent Mitanni Empire to the south—in Hattušili's third year the Hurrians (a non-Indo-European speaking population residing in eastern Syria/southern Anatolia/northern Mesopotamia) invaded eastern Hatti. The stability of the region was broken, all the regions taken by Hattušili revolted, and Hatti was reduced to the central plateau once more.

Things went far better for Hattušili's grandson and heir, Mursili I. It was he who renewed the southeastern campaigns, conquering Halab/Aleppo and even going so far south as to defeat Babylon in 1595 (according to the Middle Chronology), ending the Old Babylonian Dynasty and carrying away the statue of the city god Marduk to Hatti.

In a testament to the political instability of the period, this mighty conqueror was assassinated by his own brother-in-law, Hantili, within a few years. For the next four or five reigns, the Hittite royal family was a viper's nest of intrigue and assassinations which were recorded at the end of the bloodshed in "The Edict of Telipinu." Telipinu was the king who restabilized the realm and, quite importantly, finally established a series of rules regarding succession to the throne. Although not as militarily proactive as his ancestors, Telipinu is notable for having established a diplomatic alliance with the ruler of Kizzuwatna in southeastern Anatolia, ancient Cilicia. With this alliance in place, renewed attacks on Yamhad and Syria were once again militarily feasible.

In spite of Telipinu's clearly recorded laws regarding succession, his reign was followed by another period of infighting and political decline. Hatti was to emerge from this period of chaos into its most glorious age yet, the Empire, beginning with the reign of Tudhaliya I. It is probable that Tudhaliya began a new royal line, as most throne names (the name taken by a king upon his accession to kingship) are different from the traditional ones during the Old Kingdom. Furthermore, it is also evident that the names of the crown princes before taking their Hittite throne names were distinctly Hurrian. As such, it is possible that the New Kingdom began after a merging of Hittite and Hurrian populations at the highest levels, and that Tudhaliya himself was ethnically Hurrian.

Tudhaliya truly expanded the Kingdom he received into an empire. To the west, he defeated the land of Arzawa after its bid for freedom during the previous period of instability. He made an alliance with a banished nobleman named Madduwatta from the land of Aḫḫiyawa (Mycenaean Greece) and established him as a puppet king in the land of Zippasla on the western border of Hatti, thus establishing an easily

controlled buffer state. To the south, Kizzuwatna, seized by the Mitanni Empire and held for some years, was once again brought into the Hittite fold, as was Halab, which henceforth accepted Hittite overlordship. In the face of his military successes, Mitanni and Egypt formed a closer alliance to protect their holdings in the Levant. In exchange, Tudhaliya brought a resounding defeat onto western Mitanni, thus solidifying his holdings in Syria.

This first great expansion of the Hittite Empire saw a reversal of fortunes during the reign of Arnuwanda I. His reign is marked by invasions from the northern land of Kaska, Azzi to the northeast, Išuwa to the east, Armatana to the southeast, Arzawa to the west, and Arawanna to the northwest. Basically, everyone who was not a Hittite on the Anatolian peninsula attacked Hattuša simultaneously. The annals record the destruction of the city, although this has not been confirmed by the archaeology. Even Madduwatta eventually proved disloyal. Having reconciled with Aḫḫiyawa, he joined his Aegean allies in working against Hatti. To the far south, Pharaoh Amenhotep III of Egypt made political overtures to Arzawa, even marrying a princess of the court, daughter of king Tarhundaradu of Arzawa.

Things were set back on track by king Šuppiluliuma I. A victorious general placed on the throne after a palatial coup, Šuppiluliuma had the military *savoir-faire* to inaugurate a new period of international expansion. Taking advantage of Egypt's religious crisis during the reign of Akhenaten and their weakened alliance with Mitanni, Šuppiluliuma sought an alliance with a rival pretender to the throne of Mitanni and marched south to attack its king Tušratta. The following year Šuppiluliuma conquered the Mitanni capital of Waššukkani and drove Tušratta across the Euphrates. Campaigning in Syria, the Hittite king received the submission of Halab, Alalakh, Qadeš, Nuhašše, and Amurru, all now made vassals of Hatti. A final conquest of Carchemish was followed by Šuppiluliuma placing two of his sons on the thrones of Carchemish and Halab. In a final stroke of brilliance, luck, or both, he succeeded in placing his Mitanni pretender onto the Mitanni throne, thus reducing the remnants of the former Mitanni Empire to what amounted to a Hittite puppet state. Full of glory, Šuppiluliuma turned his eyes southward, to the Egyptian Levant. Hatti's victory was dimmed only by the extraordinary plague that the victors brought back with them, killing both Šuppiluliuma and his heir, Arnuwanda II.

It was thus Šuppiluliuma's younger son, Muršili II, who took command. Like his ancestors before him, he spent much of his reign attempting to quell rebellions within the Empire, especially by the

Kaška to the north. To their credit, these northern antagonists had sacked Hattuša in the reign of Tudhaliya III, and Muršili's heir, Muwattalli II, found it expedient to found a new capital farther south at Tarhuntašša (which was also more convenient for invasions of Syria). By this point, direct conflict with Egypt was inevitable, as the two superpowers maintained a tense and contested border at the Syrian city of Qadeš. War finally broke out between Ramesses II and Muwattalli, ending in a draw where both parties claimed victory and the status quo was basically maintained, with Hatti still in control of the contested city. Henceforth, and especially after the final fall of the Mitanni rump state of Hanigalbat at the hands of Assyria, Hatti and Egypt united in alliance.

To the west, Muwattalli signed a treaty with Alakšandu of Wilusa—Alexander of Ilion.

As with Šuppiluliuma, so too with the heirs of Muwattalli. The king's appointed heir was Prince Urhi-Tešub, who took the throne name Muršili III. But after a brief reign of no more than seven years he found himself displaced by his more experienced and militaristic uncle, Hattušili (III). Much like Sargon of Akkad, Hattušili legitimized his reign through a combination of military achievements and claims to the love of Šauška, the Hurrian manifestation of Ištar. The alliance with Egypt begun under Muwattalli was finalized under Hattušili, and the king with his queen Puduhepa sent one of their daughters to marry Ramesses II in Egypt. Returning the capital to Hattuša, Hattušili established his nephew, Kurunta, as ruler of Tarhuntašša.

The last great king of Hatti was Tudhaliya IV. At home, he conducted an extensive rebuilding campaign at Hattuša. To the northwest, he maintained the correspondence with the Kingdom of Aḫḫiyawa begun under his namesake over a century before. Reaching into the Mediterranean, he conquered (part of) the island of Cyprus, ancient Alašiya, and imposed on it a tribute composed primarily of copper, a tribute still arriving during the brief reign of Šuppiluliuma II. But to the east the growing power of Tukulti-Ninurta's Assyria was taking a heavy toll on Hatti, as Hittite strongholds with their populations were falling to Assyrian aggression. The western land of Arzawa maintained its old animosity to Hatti, and the western reaches of the Empire began to fall away and not be reclaimed. So Hatti experienced the fall of the Bronze Age as the entire eastern Mediterranean world began to collapse in the late thirteenth and early twelfth centuries. Under Šuppiluliuma II, Hattuša was finally burnt to the ground, the archives failed, and cuneiform Hittite itself ceased to exist as a language.

Note

- 1 All dates, as ever, are extremely approximate.

Further reading

- Bryce, T. (1998) *The Kingdom of the Hittites*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Collins, B. J. (2007) *The Hittites and Their World*. Atlanta, GA: SBL.
- Kuhrt, A. (1997) *The Ancient Near East c.3000–330 BC*, vol. I, chapter 5: The Hittites. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 225–282.
- MacQueen, J. G. (1995) The history of Anatolia and of the Hittite Empire: An overview. In J. Sasson (ed.) *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, Vol 2. New York: Charles Scribener's Sons, pp. 1085–1105.

THE ROLE AND STATUS OF WOMEN IN HITTITE SOCIETY

Trevor R. Bryce

Setting the scene

The Late Bronze Age kingdom of Hatti, better known to us today as the kingdom of the Hittites, emerged in north-central Anatolia (modern Turkey) in the seventeenth century BC. At its peak in the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BC, it held sway over an empire which extended over much of the Anatolian peninsula, from the Aegean coast in the west, to the western fringes of Mesopotamia in the east and southwards through the northern half of Syria to the frontiers of the Damascus region, where Egyptian subject territory began. The heartland of the kingdom lay within the region defined by the river called the Halys in classical times, and is now known as the Kızıl Irmak. In the Hittite period, it was called the Marassantiya. Scholars often refer to this region as the Hittite homeland. Its dominant city was the Hittite royal capital Hattusa, the political and administrative centre of the whole empire. Beyond the homeland, the empire was made up largely of a network of vassal states in both Anatolia and northern Syria. These were ruled by local kings who were bound to their Hittite overlord by treaties of allegiance, and sometimes marriage alliances as well, but were generally allowed considerable freedom in the administration of their kingdoms. In the mid-fourteenth century, the Hittite king, Suppiluliuma I, fresh from his conquest of the Hurrian kingdom called Mitanni, extended direct Hittite rule over parts of Syria by establishing viceregal seats at Carchemish on the Euphrates and Aleppo to the south-west of it. The viceroys were invariably members of the Hittite royal family, often the king's own sons. The Hittite empire collapsed early in the twelfth century BC during the widespread upheavals of the period which affected many parts of the Greek and Aegean and Near Eastern worlds.

Our sources for the period indicate that throughout its history, Hittite society was strongly patriarchal, at all levels from the royal family through to the lowest social classes. The textual information for this comes mainly from clay tablets written in the cuneiform script. These have been unearthed at various locations in the Hittite world, both within the homeland and beyond it, but mainly in the archives of the capital's royal palace and a number of Hattusa's temples. Of particular relevance to the status of women in Hittite society is a collection of 200 Laws, found in various copies, and with many references to marriage, inheritance and other related provisions. From these, we can draw a number of conclusions about the rights and obligations of women, including persons of both free and slave status.

The great queens of the Hittite world

Treaties between Hittite kings and their vassal rulers or foreign peers (like the kings of Egypt and Babylon) sometimes throw interesting light on the role played by women in the field of international diplomacy. Marriages between Hittite princesses and foreign rulers were often arranged as a means of consolidating important diplomatic alliances, and sometimes Hittite royal women played highly active roles in the international arena. The surviving correspondence exchanged between the royal courts of Hatti and Egypt provide a range of interesting information on the latter. And, as we shall see, although the royal succession in Hatti was essentially patrilineal, it was possible in certain instances for a king's daughter to provide the next heir to the throne in Hatti, and occasionally to the throne of a vassal kingdom.

We know of several women within the royal family who came to exercise considerable influence over the kingdom's affairs – diplomatic, political, commercial and judicial – sometimes, it seems, to the kingdom's detriment. This was due in part to the position enjoyed through much of the Hittite empire's history by a close female relative of the king, almost always the king's wife or chief consort. And that brings us to one of the most distinctive features of the Hittite power structure at its very top – the position of the woman known as the *Tawananna*. Perhaps originally a personal name (and perhaps on at least one later occasion used again as a personal name), this was the title of the woman accorded the most powerful position in the Hittite empire – the reigning queen.¹ In theory at least, and probably in origin, the position seems to have been primarily a religious one, its holder figuring prominently in religious festivals and rituals as Chief Priestess of the Hittite realm. In this role, she partnered the king, one

of whose primary obligations was to perform the duties of Chief Priest of the empire. The first known woman who held the title of Tawananna was the aunt of King Hattusili I (c.1650–1620), and subsequently the position may have been conferred on the king's sister or his daughter. But in most cases, the king's wife is attested in the role.

A unique feature of the office was that its holder retained it for life, even in the event of the death of the king with whom she was first partnered in this role. Indeed, we know of one case where a Tawananna seems to have held power through the reigns of at least three kings. (Her name was Tanuhepa,² and we shall come back to her.) Not surprisingly, the importance of her role as Chief Priestess – given the extensive religious activities of the kingdom, including its many national religious festivals – and her permanent tenure of this role gave her a power and influence which extended well beyond the religious sphere into the political and diplomatic arena. In any case, she wielded considerable authority as mistress of the royal household, an authority no doubt increased by the king's frequent absences on military campaigns, religious pilgrimages and tours of inspection of his realm. And it is not surprising to learn that women in such powerful positions were sometimes accused of using their power for subversive purposes. Already in Hattusili's reign, one of the Tawanannas of the time – perhaps the king's wife, but more likely his daughter or sister – allegedly abused her position to such an extent that the king issued one of the most virulent royal decrees in Hittite literature:

In future let no-one speak the Tawananna's name . . . Let no-one speak the names of her sons or her daughters. If any of the sons of Hatti speaks them, they shall cut his throat and hang him in his gate. If among my subjects anyone speaks their names, he shall no longer be my subject. They shall cut his throat and hang him in his gate.

*(KBo III 27 (CTH 5) 5–12)*³

The offending Tawananna may have been promptly disposed of. But the office itself was not abolished, and henceforth the holder of it was generally the king's wife – whom his heir inherited along with the succession if she outlived her husband. As I have commented elsewhere, 'the Tawananna's status and power were clearly anomalous in the male-oriented power structure of the Hittite kingdom, and were never fully reconcilable with this structure'.⁴

Occasionally, later Tawanannas also proved problematic. A notorious example was the last wife of King Suppiluliuma I, who

brought his empire to the height of its power in the second half of the fourteenth century. This Tawananna was the third of at least three queens associated with him in his kingship. The first was his first (known) wife Daduhepa, followed by his next wife, Henti. We do not know what happened to Daduhepa, and we cannot be sure how long Henti remained the royal consort, for some time after her husband's accession, she disappeared from the court. Her fate remains a mystery. But she appears to have fallen out of favour with her husband and *may have been* banished by him – perhaps to a place of exile in the Greek world.⁵ One theory has it that her expulsion – if she was expelled – was designed to make way for Suppiluliuma's next wife, daughter of the Babylonian king, Burnaburiash II. The new queen was accorded the title 'Tawananna', and may have used this title also as a personal name. There can be little doubt that political and diplomatic considerations were responsible for the Hittite marriage-alliance with Babylon, then under the rule of a Kassite dynasty. Perhaps Henti was set aside purely for political reasons, to make way for the new marriage. A system of concubinage did operate in royal circles, so that a king might have had a number of 'wives' of lower rank. But if so, the chief consort was by far the most important of the king's marriage partners, and her sons by the king would take precedence in the royal succession.

At all events, the Babylonian Tawananna soon became a powerful figure in the royal household and in the kingdom at large. But as far as we are aware, the marriage produced no offspring. We know of five sons of Suppiluliuma, all apparently by one or other of his first two wives. And two of them, Arnuwanda (III) and Mursili (II), became the next two kings, in succession, of the Hittite empire. The Babylonian queen survived her husband and also his first successor, Arnuwanda; both were carried off by a plague brought to Hatti by Egyptian prisoners-of-war. She thus continued to hold power as First Lady down into the reign of Suppiluliuma's younger son, Mursili. Already in her husband's reign, particularly in his later years, she dominated the royal household – according to an account left to us by Mursili, who speaks of her domineering behaviour, her extravagance, her habit of stripping the palace of its treasures to lavish on her favourites and her introduction of undesirable foreign customs into the land. All this without any apparent restraint from her husband – perhaps because of his preoccupation with almost incessant warfare abroad. And so her behaviour continued into the reigns of her stepsons. Though this was a matter of deep concern to them, Arnuwanda apparently did nothing to rein her in, and even Mursili resigned himself to her conduct. He later complained that, 'as she governed the house of the king and the Land

of Hatti in the lifetime of my father, likewise in the lifetime of my brother she governed them' (extract from *KBo XIV 4 (CTH 70) I 5–13*).⁶ But he too took no action against her after he had ascended the throne. At least not for the time being. The final straw came when Mursili's beloved wife, Gassulawiya, fell gravely ill and died. Mursili held his stepmother directly responsible for his wife's death. After taking oracular advice, he put the queen on trial for the alleged crime. She was found guilty, and though the death penalty was an option, Mursili shrank from imposing it and contented himself with removing his stepmother from office and banishing her from the palace (*KBo IV 8 (CTH 71) II 9–20*).

But she was not the last of the Hittite royal consorts to prove a disruptive influence in the kingdom, or at least within the royal court. Indeed not long after her fall from grace, another Hittite queen called Tanuhepa (Danuhepa) fell foul of the king. She may have been a later wife of Mursili, or else the wife of his son and successor, Muwattalli. In any case, she became embroiled in a dispute with Muwattalli, apparently over acts of profanation which she had committed, and was placed on trial by the king and banished. The parallels between the episodes of the two queens – their conduct and the fate that befell them (both were accused of abusing their authority and engaging in acts of profanation, and both were stripped of all their offices) – are recorded together in a prayer by another of Mursili's sons, the future Hattusili III (*CTH 383*).⁷

Hattusili himself acquired a very formidable consort. The daughter of a Hurrian priest, she was called Puduhepa. Hattusili met her family on his way back from Syria where he had fought against the pharaoh, Ramesses II, under his brother's command, King Muwattalli, in the famous battle of Qadesh (1274 BC). After Muwattalli's death, the throne was assumed by his son, Urhi-Teshub. But within a few years of his accession, tensions between himself and his uncle, Hattusili, flared into open conflict. Urhi-Teshub got the worse of it and was dethroned, banished and replaced as King of Hatti by his uncle. Though his claim to the throne was initially rejected by a number of his subjects as well as by some of his foreign peers, Hattusili went on to enjoy a relatively stable reign lasting some 30 years (c.1267–1237). Undoubtedly, one of the great mainstays of his reign was his queen, Puduhepa, who in some respects became virtually his co-ruler, or was at least very much the power behind his throne. Her role in international affairs is indicated by her seal alongside that of her husband's on a number of important documents of international diplomacy, including the famous peace treaty which Hattusili drew up with Ramesses 16 years after Qadesh. She often corresponded directly

with Ramesses on matters of state, which included arrangements for at least one of the two royal marriages between Ramesses and Hittite princesses, daughters of Hattusili and Puduhepa. She was also instrumental in arranging other royal marriages as well between Hittite princes and princesses and members of the royal families of important vassal rulers. After her husband's death c.1237, she continued to hold office as First Lady, in the time-honoured way, and indeed lived many more years, down to the last years of the thirteenth century (she must have been at least 90 when she died) through the reign of her husband's successor, their son, Tudhaliya IV. During this time, she was active in the kingdom's judicial affairs, sometimes becoming directly involved in legal disputes between members of different vassal states. Further, in her role as Chief Priestess of the Hittite realm, she undertook major reforms of important religious festivals and ceremonies, and sought to rationalize the vast pantheon of gods by a number of syncretisms, particularly between Hittite and Hurrian deities.

Overall, our documents present a very positive picture of Puduhepa, unlike that of several of her predecessors. She was undoubtedly a powerful force within the kingdom, throughout the Hittite world, and on the broader international stage. Yet almost inevitably, the power she wielded within the kingdom, particularly in court circles, generated a crop of enemies against her. This is indicated, very likely, by an oracle text which seeks to find the reason for the illness of a Hittite king; the text refers to factions in the court involving its womenfolk who had divided themselves into supporters and opponents of the Great Queen. No names are given, but the document may well belong to the period when the queen in question was Puduhepa.⁸ Itamar Singer has suggested that it attests to troubles in court during the reign of Puduhepa's son, Tudhaliya, and that the leader of the anti-Great Queen faction was the king's wife.⁹ As a result of the feuds, Singer goes on to say, Puduhepa may have been expelled from the palace. But if so, she seems eventually to have emerged victorious over her opponents, and very likely continued to be a major influence in both the kingdom's foreign as well as its domestic affairs until the end of her life.

Royal match-making

We have noted Puduhepa's role as a royal match-maker. As in many ages and civilizations, marriage alliances which linked royal families were an important means of establishing or consolidating political alliances between two kingdoms. Thus a large supply of royal

offspring served a valuable purpose in the world of international politics and diplomacy – particularly a king's daughters. A Great King blessed with many daughters had at his disposal a ready supply of princesses from whom brides could be selected for dispatch to the marriage-beds of his royal brothers. Thus, Hattusili sent off two of his daughters (some years apart) to wed the pharaoh Ramesses, he united himself by a double marriage with the royal house of Babylon and he provided yet another daughter as wife to one of his vassal rulers in northern Mesopotamia. Clearly, not all Hattusili's offspring were born of Puduhepa, but were rather the product of an earlier marriage or marriages, or of unions with concubines or 'second-rank wives'. Puduhepa in fact tells us that the Hittite court was already full of princes and princesses at various stages of maturity when she first entered it as Hattusili's bride (*KUB XX1 38 (CTH 176)*). And she took upon herself – with alacrity – the task of finding politically suitable marriages for them, with both His Majesty's peers as well as his important vassals.

It is only rarely that sons of the royal blood figure in such arrangements, at least as far as the textual evidence goes. We do know that one of Hattusili's sons, the prince Nerikkaili, was married off to the daughter of an important Syrian vassal called Benteshina. And there is the famous episode of Suppiluliuma I's son, Zannanza, being sent to Egypt by his father to wed Ankhesenamun, widow of the recently deceased pharaoh Tutankhamun; the marriage with a prince of the Hittite royal line had been proposed by the widow herself, and it was only after Suppiluliuma's deep suspicions about the proposal had been allayed, following a visit by his vizier to Egypt, that he took up the offer and dispatched Zannanza to Egypt. The mission ended in tragedy. Zannanza was killed on the journey. The actual perpetrators of the murder remain unidentified to this day, but Suppiluliuma held the Egyptians responsible and retaliated with an attack on their subject territories in southern Syria.¹⁰

The major incentive for Suppiluliuma's agreeing, albeit reluctantly, to the proposal of Tutankhamun's widow, was the prospect offered by the queen of the Hittite prince ascending Egypt's throne as the new pharaoh. But this situation was virtually unique. Almost always a king sent one or more of his daughters to wed his royal peer, sometimes, as in the case of the pharaoh Ramesses, in competition with the kings of other countries. Ramesses informed his royal brother that the kings of both Babylon and Hanigalbat (what was left of the old Mitannian kingdom) had tried to press their own daughters on him. But Ramesses promised Hattusili that *his* daughter alone would be accorded this honour. Still, Hattusili sought to make sure that his

daughter became the pharaoh's *chief* wife. As we shall see, this was a common demand when the Hittite king married one of his daughters to a vassal ruler. But it was an unprecedented request that Hattusili made of the pharaoh, his peer: 'Regarding the daughter that I will give to my brother . . . I want to make her superior to all the other daughters of Great Kings; no-one should be able to find (another) beside her!' (ÄHK 106 obv. 5'-9': 224-5).¹¹ It seems that Ramesses initially granted this request, at least as far as the first Hittite princess was concerned, to whom – to begin with – he seems to have been devoted. Great honours were bestowed upon her. But though Ramesses claimed that the marriage link had greatly strengthened the union between Egypt and Hatti, things did not turn out quite the way Hattusili would have liked. One benefit of having his daughter on the Egyptian throne as the pharaoh's chief wife was that the offspring of the union would have Hittite blood in their veins – giving an expectation that Ramesses' successor as pharaoh would be half-Hittite. But the union produced no offspring. This provoked a letter from a disappointed Hattusili suggesting that Ramesses was not up to it! This accusation was hardly borne out by the pharaoh's clearly demonstrated ability to produce abundant offspring of both sexes. At all events, the Hittite princess, given the Egyptian name Maat-Hor-Neferure – 'One who sees Horus, the Visible Splendour of Re' – quickly disappeared from view, or at least from our records, apparently living out the rest of her days in the pharaoh's harem at a place called Faiyum.

The importance of prospective offspring when arranging royal marriages is evident from another episode – in this case one in which the Hittite princess Massanauzzi, sister of Hattusili, was dispatched to western Anatolia to marry a king of the strategically important Hittite vassal state Seha River Land. His name was Masturi. The fruit of the union was to provide a successor to Masturi's throne. But when no fruit showed any signs of emerging, there was every possibility that Hattusili's brother-in-law would die without an heir, seriously increasing the instability of what was already a volatile region. In desperation, Hattusili wrote to Ramesses, telling him of the situation, praising the reputation of Egyptian doctors, and asking the pharaoh to send one of them to help his sister become pregnant. He admitted it would be a challenging task, for his sister was already 50. Ramesses' response was a most unchivalrous (but probably truthful) one: 'You say your sister is fifty? Never! She's sixty!' (ÄHK 75 obv. 16-19). Even so, he promised to send a doctor along with an incantation priest to see what they could do. Despite their skills, it is unlikely their mission proved successful.¹²

The royal succession

For succession to the Hittite throne, the crown prince and heir designate was chosen by the king from among his sons 'of the first rank', i.e. one of his sons by his chief consort (and not necessarily the eldest). The rules of royal succession were formalized by a late sixteenth-century Hittite king called Telipinu – in reaction to a long period of strife and bloodshed among various claimants upon the throne.¹³ Telipinu placed the succession on a firm patrilineal basis. In the event that a reigning king's first wife bore no sons, the succession would pass to the son of a 'second wife', or concubine. Of course, there was always the possibility that the king produced no male offspring at all from his legally recognized marriage unions. If this happened, the succession would then pass to what was called an *antiyant*-husband. This Hittite word literally means 'one who enters into', and refers to a man who 'enters into' a family by marrying into it and effectively becoming a member of it. That is to say, the marriage was *matrilocal* in character. Thus Telipinu made provision for a king's son-in-law to become his successor, in the event that he had no sons of his own. He stipulated that the princess whom the prospective son-in-law marries should be a daughter of the first rank, i.e. a daughter of the king's chief wife. But presumably if the chief wife produced neither sons nor daughters, a son-in-law who married a daughter of the second rank would be eligible to succeed to the kingship. In any case, if a king were obliged to select a son-in-law as his successor, he would as a matter of course adopt him as his son – so that in this way the image of patrilineal succession could be maintained.

We know of only one clear instance where this occurred. An early fifteenth-century king called Tudhaliya (the first clearly attested Hittite king of this name) associated with himself as his co-regent and eventual successor a man called Arnuwanda. Tudhaliya referred to him as his son. He was the husband of a woman called Asmunikal, whom we know from the texts was Tudhaliya's daughter. Since brother-sister sexual relationships, let alone marriages, were strictly prohibited in the Hittite world, then we must conclude that Arnuwanda was actually his 'father's' son-in-law, adopted as Tudhaliya's son after his marriage to Asmunikal.¹⁴ This presumably indicates that Tudhaliya had no sons of his own, either by his first wife or by a wife 'of the second rank'. (An alternative possibility is that Tudhaliya did in fact have sons of his own, who had either predeceased their father or disgraced themselves and been removed from all prospect of succession to the throne. The latter had been the

fate of Hattusili I's sons. But we have no evidence of such filial delinquency in Tudhaliya's family.)

Marriage provisions in general

This leads on to a consideration of *antiyant* – or matrilocal marriages at the lower levels of Hittite society. But to provide context for this, we should first look at marriage provisions in general in the Hittite world. By far the greatest bulk of our information on these comes from the collection of 200 Laws, which survives in a number of fragmentary copies – sufficiently numerous for us to piece together a fairly complete text of the Laws.¹⁵ In the same tradition as the Laws of the Babylonian king, Hammurabi, these legal pronouncements are made up of a number of 'if . . . , then . . . ' propositions. They are almost certainly a collection of guidelines rather than prescriptive laws and very likely consist of a series of decisions recorded in earlier cases. Though they are far from complete in their coverage of criminal and civil law, they contain many clauses which deal with marriage and divorce provisions and the associated issues of property and inheritance rights. Indeed provisions for the latter were extremely important since many marriages were clearly arranged ones, and were in the nature of business contracts between the families of bride and groom. Pre-nuptial agreements were a regular and integral part of the marriage process. [Figure 21.1](#) shows a probable wedding scene depicted on a vase from c.1600 BC.



Figure 21.1 Probable wedding scene from vase (c.1600 BC) found at Bitik, near Ankara, now in Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara. (Drawing by Paul C. Butler. Used with kind permission.)

We can draw a broad distinction between what we might call formal and informal marriages. In the first of these, it was apparently the custom for a prospective bridegroom to present his bride-to-be or her family with a gift before the betrothal became official, and then a more substantial 'gift' as part of the betrothal procedures. This second gift was known as a *kusata*. The term is generally translated as 'bride-price', though 'spouse-price' or even 'spouse-gift' might be a more appropriate term (but we shall continue to use the conventional one here). As part of the wedding preparations, a father presented the bride with a dowry which presumably represented her share of the family estate. It was to remain her property throughout her life. Her husband was the formal custodian of it, but it only became his own property if she predeceased him. The *kusata* was an important, indeed perhaps an essential, way of conferring formal status upon a marriage, as distinct from unions which, though perhaps permanent or long-lasting, were of a more informal nature. This had a major bearing on property and inheritance rights.

Hittite society was fundamentally a patriarchal one and

predominantly a patrilocal one, but matrilocal marriages did occur at all levels of society. In most, if not all, cases such marriages were very likely motivated by practical considerations, with benefits to both contracting parties. At the top level of society, a matrilocal marriage could ensure that a king was provided with a suitable heir to his throne, even if not one of his own royal blood. At a much lower level, a matrilocal marriage could eventually elevate a family's social status from slave to free. And at all social levels, there may have been another major incentive for the contraction of matrilocal marriages. Hittite kings regularly conscripted able-bodied males from the civilian population to supplement their standing army of professional troops. And we know that Hittite society suffered from a chronic shortage of manpower. In response to this situation, some families may have sought, via matrilocal marriages, to import sons-in-law into their family structure as surrogate sons. Their prime purpose in such cases would have been to maintain a supply of males able to share, or if necessary take over, the tasks and responsibilities normally assumed by their own male family members, such as managing or working on family estates. In extreme situations, matrilocal marriages may have a last-resort means of ensuring a family's survival.

Earlier, I made the point that marriages were often in the nature of business contracts, involving the all-important matter of property and inheritance rights. This is reflected in the terminology used of marriage. There is no specific word for 'marry' in the Hittite language – a new husband is said to 'take' his wife, and henceforth to 'possess' her. Romantic love has little if any part in such a context. Yet there were undoubtedly many cases where a pair of young lovers decided to disobey their families' arrangements for them and simply elope. Such a situation is clearly recognized by the Laws, and provisions made for what constitutes appropriate action if this happens. Let us look at two clauses which deal with this:

If a daughter has been promised to a man, but another man runs off with her, he who runs off with her shall compensate the first man for whatever he gave. The father and mother of the woman shall not make compensation.

(Clause 28a, trans. Hoffner)

If anyone elopes with a woman, and a group of supporters goes after them, if three men or two men are killed, there shall be no compensation.

(Clause 37, trans. Hoffner)

As far as we can interpret it, the first of these clauses has to do with a case in which an early stage in an arranged marriage has been reached. In the course of the arrangements, a prospective groom has

presented his bride-to-be's family with gifts, perhaps even the bride-price. But then the girl elopes with another man. Her new (?) lover is obliged to compensate the jilted groom for any payments the latter has already made as part of the marriage arrangement. But no compensation is required from the girl's parents, presumably because they are not considered responsible for their daughter's conduct. This clause seems further to imply that a family had no legal means of compelling daughters – or sons – to enter into a marriage arrangement against their will. The second of the above clauses also refers to a case where a man 'runs off' with a woman. We cannot be entirely sure whether the Hittite verb which describes this action (Hittite *pittenu-*) means that the girl has gone willingly with the man, or whether a case of abduction is involved. But almost certainly it is the former, since there is no suggestion of criminal action. Even so, the overall import of the clause is unclear. A possible interpretation is that if members of the runaway girl's family decide to pursue her to get her back and are killed in the process, there will be no retribution for their deaths. They must suffer the consequences of their own actions, if we have interpreted the clause correctly, since – or if – the runaways have committed no punishable offence and therefore the pursuing family has no recourse to legal protection or legal retribution if they suffer from their action. Again, this would further highlight the ultimate freedom of a young woman to make her own decision as to who her marriage partner will be – on the understanding that a rejected partner is compensated for any losses he has incurred.

There were of course a number of cases where marriages failed, and in such cases divorce proceedings could be initiated by either husband or wife. The Laws actually tell us little about the grounds for divorce, though presumably adultery or finding another partner were common among these grounds. The Laws themselves often deal with divorce, but are much more concerned with the question of property settlement and arrangements for the children of the marriage when a divorce takes place. The situation is made more complicated in mixed marriages, i.e. marriages in which one of the partners is a slave and the other free. Clause 31 is a case in point:

If a free man and a female slave are lovers and live together, and he takes her as his wife, and they make a house and children, but afterwards either they become estranged or they each find a new marriage partner, they shall divide the house equally, and the man shall take the children, with the woman taking one child.

(trans. Hoffner)

Clause 32 talks of a divorce between a male slave and a free woman.

Once again, the property from the marriage is divided equally between the divorced couple, but in this case the male slave takes but one of the children, and the free woman all the rest. The same conditions apply in Clause 33 where both marriage partners are slaves. (I shall discuss in more detail below the provisions made for slaves in marriage settlements.)

Among the significant points to emerge from these provisions is the apparent relative even-handedness of the Laws in the rulings they make for divorced partners – most notably in the equal division of property between the two partners, irrespective of their sex or their social status. certainly in a mixed marriage, a free person benefits more than his partner in the allocation of children after the divorce, receiving custody of all but one of the children of the marriage, but it seems that in cases of divorce between partners of the same social status it is the woman who receives custody of all but one of the children.

But let us again stress that the Laws as we have them are almost certainly not prescriptive. They are essentially a series of guidelines based on records of cases that had previously come before the courts and the judgements handed down in these cases. They could be consulted afresh as similar cases arose, but each time, presumably, the judging authorities made their own decisions, after no doubt taking account of previous rulings.

We have noted that a king often had secondary wives or concubines among his marriage partners as well as a chief wife, to ensure a continuing supply of royal offspring of both sexes – sons from whom His Majesty's heir could be appointed, daughters for marriage alliances with foreign and vassal rulers. But with the possible exception of (what *may* have been) levirate marriages (see below), we have no evidence that Hittite society at its lower levels was a polygamous one. Indeed, the emphasis in the Hittite Laws which deal with marriage provisions, is on purely monogamous relationships, whether formalized by a spouse-price or of a more informal arrangement. As I have commented elsewhere:

Liaisons formed outside these categories were not legally recognized, and presumably neither the partners to such a liaison, nor the children who may have resulted from it had any claim at law to the rights and obligations which monogamous partnerships entailed.¹⁶

Marriages between or with slaves

Since unions between slaves, or a free person and a slave, figure in a number of the Laws' pronouncements, we should say something here about slavery in general in the Hittite world before considering its implications within the context of provisions for 'mixed' (free-slave) or slave marriages.

Slaves, acquired by various means, made up a substantial part of the population of Hittite society. They could be bought in the marketplace like other goods. Alternatively, a person might be enslaved to a creditor for failing to pay off a debt (though he or she might be freed if the debt was discharged, and sometimes a king issued a proclamation declaring that all debt-slaves should be freed). Enslavement to a victim's family might also be inflicted on an offender, or a member of his family, for a particularly serious crime he had committed. But most slaves were acquired as prisoners-of-war through military conquest. A lot of these were used as labourers on the estates of land-owners, to whom they had been allocated as part of the spoils of war. No doubt many slaves were treated harshly. But some, both male and female, seem to have fared relatively well, sometimes being able to acquire property and goods of their own. In a number of cases, they apparently saved sufficient funds to buy their freedom.

We do not know how often marriages involving slave-partners occurred. But the specific provisions for them in the Laws, and the number of clauses that deal with a range of issues associated with them suggest that they were not altogether uncommon. Almost certainly, however, a slave could not enter into a marriage with a free person, or indeed another slave, without his or her owner's consent.

Of particular interest are several clauses which relate to the future status of a woman who enters into marriage with a slave. For example, compare the following clauses in the Laws: 'If a male slave gives a bride-price for a woman and takes her as his wife, no-one shall change her social status' (Clause 34). 'If an overseer or a herdsman elopes with a free woman and does not give a bride-price for her, she will become a slave for (only) three years' (Clause 35, new version, trans. Hoffner). There is some doubt about the interpretation of these clauses. One interpretation is that even if a male slave did give a 'bride-price' for a woman, she would still either become or remain a slave. Thus in place of the above translation 'no-one shall change her social status', Professor Hoffner translates 'no-one shall free her from slavery'.¹⁷ But I am inclined to the view that the provision of a bride-price confers a formal status on the marriage as distinct from simple cohabitation, enabling the woman, *if of free status before the marriage*,

to remain so after it. The implication would be that if the union between a male slave and a free woman lacked the formality of a bride-price ceremony, the woman would lose her free status – for a period of three years (though it is possible that the relevant words in Clause 35 should read ‘*after* a period of three years’).

The obvious question to arise from all this is why a free woman, or rather the family of a free woman (since most marriages were very likely arranged affairs) would countenance a situation where a member of their family, if free, would marry a slave. Almost certainly it has to do with slaves who have accumulated significant wealth, perhaps in many cases by acquiring land, perhaps as a tenant farmer of his master, or perhaps even outright, and making it productive. He could then afford to ‘buy’ a free wife by putting up a sufficient bride-price to make the proposition attractive to his wife’s family – particularly, perhaps, to a father who had a number of daughters to dispose of and who may have been of modest means. The Laws provided an assurance that the woman herself would not become a slave if the formalities were followed. There was a clear incentive for a relatively well-heeled slave to enter into such a marriage, for it would ensure that his descendants by his free wife would be born and remain free, even if he himself retained his slave status. Throughout the ages, the two greatest aspirations of slaves have been to die free and to have children who are born free. The Hittite Laws made at least the second of these distinctly achievable. We find too in Roman imperial society a number of instances of a male slave marrying a free woman, very likely because in Roman law the offspring of a woman who had this status were always freeborn, regardless of their father’s status.¹⁸

I referred earlier to *antiyant*-marriages whereby a man entered his wife’s family and became the adopted son and heir of his father-in-law. In other words, the marriage was *matrilocal*. This was at royal level. But it could happen at lower social levels as well. An interesting case of an *antiyant*-marriage is provided by Clause 36 of the Laws which reads: ‘If a slave gives a bride-price for a free young man and acquires him as an *antiyant*-, no-one shall change his (i.e. the son-in-law’s) social status’. If this translation is correct,¹⁹ we see once again the paying of a bride-price as an important determinant of a formal marriage, which in the case of a mixed marriage ensures that the free partner remains free. But in *this* case, it is the father of the bride who pays the ‘bride-price’, in reversal of the normal practice, to the family of his future son-in-law. How do we explain this? We cannot be altogether sure, but here is a possibility: The father of the bride, though a slave, has sufficient means to induce a poor though free

family to provide one of its sons for the marriage. The incentive for the slave would be that the free status of his son-in-law would ensure that his grandchildren, and descendants thereafter, would be free. If, however, the free family could not meet the formal requirement of paying a bride-price, but the marriage still took place, then the son-in-law would lose his free status. So to get around the problem, the bride-price is still paid – perhaps nominally by the groom's family to the bride's father after receiving it from the bride's father in the first place. It is clear from the Laws that Hittite marriage provisions were sufficiently flexible to allow for some circumventing of what might have been strictly the letter of the law.

Sexual offences

But once a marriage had taken place, the marriage partners were expected to remain loyal to it, and a stern view was taken of adultery, which could in fact lead to the death penalty, at least in some instances. Let us consider the following two clauses:

1. If a man seizes a woman in the mountains (and rapes her), the man is guilty and shall die, but if he seizes her in her house, the woman is guilty and shall die. If the woman's husband catches them (in the act) and kills them, he has committed no offence.

(clause 197)

2. If he brings them to the palace gate (*i.e. to the royal court*) and says: 'My wife shall not die', he can spare his wife's life, but must also spare the lover . . . But if he says, 'Both of them shall die' . . . the king may have them both killed or he may spare them.

(clause 198, after Hoffner)

In the first clause, the hypothetical locations where the sexual offences take place should not be construed in too literal or specific a sense. The issue is whether the woman was a willing or unwilling participant in the sexual act. That is to say, is the case one of rape or sex by consent? The former would apply if the act occurred in circumstances where the woman could claim she had not given her consent and had no means of summoning assistance. In that event, the offence if proven will result in the death penalty for her attacker. If, on the other hand, the act took place in circumstances where the woman had the opportunity to prevent rape by calling on the protection of others nearby but failed to do so, this would imply complicity on her part. This does not automatically lead to the death penalty. However, if the cuckolded husband catches his wife and her lover *in flagrante*

delicto, he is entitled to kill them without committing an offence. An alternative open to him is to bring the case of adultery before the highest court in the land, i.e. the king's court. He can ask the king (or his deputy) to impose the death penalty on both parties. What he cannot do is ask for his wife to be spared and her lover killed. It is a case of both or neither. And if both, the final decision is still up to the judge.

Hittite law had strict prohibitions against incest, one of the few crimes that attracted the death penalty. Such offences extended also to sexual relations between in-laws, including a man's daughter-in-law, mother-in-law and sister-in-law. Thus we are informed in Clause 195. But in the last of these cases, the prohibition applies only if the husband of a sister-in-law is still alive. In fact, we have a clause (193) which appears to make provision for one of a woman's in-laws to marry her in the event of her husband's death:

If a man has a wife, and the man dies, his brother shall take his widow as wife. (If the brother dies), his father shall take her. When afterwards his father dies, his (i.e. the father's) brother shall take the woman whom he had.

(*trans. Hoffner*)

This recalls the custom of levirate law (from the Latin *levir*, 'brother-in-law') attested in Deuteronomy:

If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead shall not be married outside the family to a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in to her, and take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his brother who is dead, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel.

(*Deut. 25:5-6, RSV*)

The comparison is valid only up to a point, for the essential feature of the biblical law is that the dead man has left no son and the purpose of the levirate marriage may have been primarily to perpetuate the deceased's name and family, and perhaps more importantly to make sure that his estate stays within his own family. There is no indication in the Hittite Laws that what appears to be a form of levirate marriage applies only in cases where the former marriage has produced no children. Probably the main purpose of the Hittite provision is to ensure that a woman whose husband has predeceased her is adequately provided for after his death, by his extended family. It may be that an actual levirate marriage is not envisaged, but that the woman is simply taken into her husband's family, with male members

of the family in particular assuming responsibility for her continuing welfare. As we have already said, the situation envisaged here may often have arisen, given the constant warfare in which the Hittite world was involved and the inevitable constant draining of Hittite manpower to fill the ranks of a king's regular campaigning activities both in his vassal states and abroad.

Women in the workforce

Women do not figure prominently in written sources which relate to the trades or professions of the Hittite world. For example, we have no evidence that they engaged on their own behalf in mercantile activities, as they did in a number of other ancient societies, or were involved in the scribal profession. We do, however, find occasional references to their employment in more menial activities as bakers, cooks, weavers and fullers. The Laws inform us that they could also hire themselves out (or be hired out by their families, or owners if they are slaves?) as seasonal farm labourers. They may well have worked alongside male labourers, though their rate of pay, as specified in the Laws, was only half that of men, or even less. Payment was often in kind. Thus the Laws stipulate that in the harvest season:

If a free man hires himself out for wages, to bind sheaves, load them on wagons, deposit them in barns, and clear the threshing floors, his wages for three months shall be 1,500 litres of barley. If a woman hires herself out for wages in the harvest season, her wages for three months shall be 600 litres of barley.

(Clause 158, trans. Hoffner)

It is possible that the difference in wages reflected different types of tasks assigned to the workers on the basis of their sex, or a view that women were less productive, particularly in performing more physically demanding tasks. And they may only have been employed, or employed mainly, at times when there was a labour shortage due to plague, the redeployment of males on public works projects or the absence of males on military campaigns.

There was certainly no question of women playing any role in military operations. Indeed, any references made to the female in such a context are highly derogatory. When a king takes his officers to task for failing to capture a city by siege, he rebukes them thus:

Why have you not given battle? You stand on chariots of water, you are almost turned into water yourself(?) . . . You had only to kneel before him and you would have killed him or at least frightened him. But as it is you have behaved

And when soldiers took an oath on being inducted into the army, they were threatened with the following humiliation if they broke the oath:

They bring the garments of a woman, a distaff and a mirror, they break an arrow and you speak as follows: 'Is not this that you see here garments of a woman? We have them here for (the ceremony of taking) the oath. Whoever breaks these oaths and does evil to the king and the queen and the princes, let these oaths change him from a man into a woman! Let them change his troops into women, let them dress them in the fashion of women and cover their heads with a length of cloth! Let them break the bows, arrows, and clubs in their hands and let them put in their hands distaff and mirror!

(trans. Goetze in Pritchard, 1969: 354)

Women did play a major role in the various healing professions. We know that a number of women practised as physicians, perhaps as many as one to four male physicians,²⁰ and women were very prominent in other healing arts. Midwives figure in a number of our texts – first to assist with the birth of a baby (which commonly involved the use of a birthing stool), and then in uttering incantations designed to ensure that the baby would be healthy and enjoy a long life (see Beckman, this volume). Hittite medicine was holistic in approach, involving both conventional medical practice and rituals.²¹

A particularly important category of women figured prominently among the practitioners of ritual procedures. They were known by the term 'Old Women'. But this may give a misleading impression if it conjures up for us an image of cackling, spell-casting old hags. In Hittite they are called by the term *hasawa*, a term which may originally have been used of midwives, because literally it means '(she) of birth'. We can be sure that the women so designated were highly skilled in their profession, indeed multi-skilled, and often collaborated with other health professionals, like doctors, incantation priests and augurs (given the holistic nature of Hittite medicine) in the arts of ritual performance, healing, and divination. It is quite likely that, like scribes, their profession was an inherited one, passing down from one generation to another in the same family. It is likely too that at least the great majority of women who practised this profession were not only literate (and thus among the very small fraction of the population who were) but also multilingual – at least to some degree – for there were a range of languages used in the ritual and liturgical texts, including – in addition to Hittite – Luwian, Hurrian, Babylonian and the Hattic language, native to Anatolia. They were obliged to

utter incantations in a number of tongues, though their knowledge of these tongues may have been largely restricted to the terminology of the rituals themselves (see Collins, this volume).

Rituals were used in a very broad range of situations, at both state and domestic level. At state level, they were concerned with ensuring a successful outcome in a military campaign, or winning favour from the gods for the fertility of the soil and good rainfall at the coming of spring. At the domestic level, they could be used for attempting to cure impotence, for warding off evil influences from a household or restoring a harmonious relationship between husband and wife. And even the more simple rituals required a range of paraphernalia to ensure their success, including foodstuffs and items of wax, tallow, wool and animals for sacrifice (or at the very least, clay images of such animals for clients who could not afford the real thing). We may assume that the 'Old Women' had regular consultancy practices covering a wide range of situations and could be called on by clients whenever the need arose. Theirs was a highly skilled occupation, for a misstep in the ritual could invalidate the whole procedure and perhaps provoke divine wrath.

Conclusions

Hittite society was a predominantly patriarchal one, in which males presided over the power structure, occupied most of the important positions in the land and filled the most important professions. In these respects, the Hittites were no different from almost all their predecessors, contemporaries and successors in world history. Nonetheless, women often figured significantly in the Hittite world. At the topmost level, we have seen that some of the most powerful figures in the royal family were women, particularly those who held the rank of Tawananna, First Lady of the Hittite world, and sometimes exercised authority far in excess of their role as Chief Priestess of the Hittite realm. Indeed, both Hittite texts and Hittite iconography represent a king and his chief consort very much as equal partners. At lower levels of Hittite society, women enjoyed a relatively high degree of equality with men in areas such as marriage provisions, which covered slave, free and mixed marriages, and a number of clauses in the Laws indicate that they appear to have been guaranteed certain rights and certain protections. Though they are not represented, or at least not attested, in most of the trades and professions of Hittite society, they were hired as farm labourers, and perhaps as labourers more generally, and played a major role in the professions associated with ritual and the healing arts. And indeed they may well have

played a significantly greater role in Hittite society than we can learn from either the archaeological or the written record. Given that the Hittite kingdom had a chronic shortage of manpower, for both food-producing as well as military purposes, and the constant and protracted absence from the homeland of many of the Hittite able-bodied male population because of military campaigns abroad, it is most likely that the womenfolk of the Hittite world played a greater role in normally male-dominated activities within their own society than we can ever glean from what our records alone tell us.

List of abbreviations

ÄHK Edel, E. (1994) *Die Ägyptische-hethitische Korrespondenz aus Boghazköi*, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag

CTH Laroche, E. (1971) *Catalogue des textes hittites*, Paris: Klincksieck

KBo *Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi*, Leipzig and Berlin: J. C. Hinrichs.

KUB *Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi*, Berlin: Akademie-Verlag.

Notes

- 1 On queenship in the Hittite world in general, see Bin-Nun 1975; Collins 2007: 98–101.
- 2 See Bryce 2005: 242–245.
- 3 Cited with refs in Bryce 2005: 93.
- 4 Bryce 2005: 92.
- 5 If a passage in the Ahhiyawa texts can be so interpreted; see Beckman *et al.* 2011: 160.
- 6 For the full text with commentary of this document, which is a prayer, see Singer 2002: 73–77.
- 7 Singer 2002: 97–101.
- 8 For further discussion and refs, see Bryce 2005: 298–299.
- 9 Singer 1991: 332.
- 10 For a more detailed account of this episode, with refs, see Bryce 2003/14: 187–198 (pp. 188–189 on the question of the identity of the Egyptian queen and her dead husband, whom some scholars identify with Nefertiti and Akhenaten, respectively).
- 11 Trans. by Meier 2000: 171–172. For further discussion and refs, see Bryce 2003: 118.
- 12 For more detail, with refs, see Bryce 2003: 122–123.
- 13 For more detail, with refs, see Bryce 2005: 107–109.
- 14 Bryce 2005: 128–129, with refs.

- 15 For a translation of these, see Hoffner 1997a and 1997b. All translations henceforth attributed to Hoffner are from, or adapted from, these volumes.
- 16 Bryce 2002: 133.
- 17 For a discussion of both interpretations, see Hoffner 1997b: 185.
- 18 Thus I have commented in Bryce 2002: 123 and 279, n. 7.
- 19 Hoffner's translation of the second part of the statement as 'no-one shall free him from slavery' is consistent with his translation of Clause 34, referred to above, and obviously provides a contrasting interpretation to the one I propose here.
- 20 See Bryce 2002: 163.
- 21 See Bryce 2002: 165–167.

References

- Beckman, G. M., Bryce, T. R. and Cline, E. H. (2011) *The Ahhiyawa Texts*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Bin-Nun, S. R. (1975) *The Tawananna in the Hittite Kingdom*. Heidelberg, Germany: Winter.
- Bryce, T. R. (2002) *Life and Society in the Hittite World*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Bryce, T. R. (2003/14) *Letters of the Great Kings of the Ancient Near East*. London and New York: Routledge (reissued in paperback, 2014).
- Bryce, T. R. (2005) *The Kingdom of the Hittites*. New edition. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Collins, B. J. (2007) *The Hittites and Their World*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Gurney, O. R. (1990) *The Hittites*. London: Penguin.
- Hoffner, H. A. Jr. (1997a) Hittite laws. In M. T. Roth (ed.) *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*. Second edition. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, pp. 213–247.
- Hoffner, H. A. Jr. (1997b) *The Laws of the Hittites: A Critical Edition*. Leiden, The Netherlands, Cologne, Germany and New York: Brill.
- Meier, S. A. (2000) Diplomacy and international marriages. In R. Cohen and R. Westbrook (eds) *Amarna Diplomacy: The Beginnings of International Relations*. Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Pritchard, J. B. (1969) *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. Third edition. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Singer, I. (1991) The title 'Great Princess' in the Hittite Empire. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 23: 327–338.
- Singer, I. (2002) *Hittite Prayers*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical

Literature.

BIRTH AND MOTHERHOOD AMONG THE HITTITES

Gary Beckman

Sexuality and procreation

Sexual reproduction is fundamental for most beings in our world, a fact that was well recognized by the Hittites of Late Bronze Age Anatolia. Human propagation, while of primary concern to the community, was simply one aspect of the general fertility of the cosmos. This perspective may be recognized in a mythological narrative in which a deity becomes angry and abandons his sphere of responsibility, with the result that the universe literally seizes up:

Mist seized the windows. Smoke seized the house. On the hearth the logs were stifled. [On the altars] the gods were stifled. In the fold the sheep were stifled. In the corral the cows were stifled. The sheep refused her lamb. The cow refused her calf.

(The god) Telipinu went off and took away grain, the fertility of the herds, growth(?), plenty(?), and satiety into the wilderness, to the meadow and the moor. Telipinu proceeded to disappear into the moor. The *ḫalenzu*-plant spread over him. Barley and wheat no longer grow. Cows, sheep, and humans no longer conceive, and those who are (already) pregnant do not give birth in this time.¹

Only after the god's anger has been appeased and he himself has been pacified, do conditions return to normal:

Telipinu came back home and concerned himself for his land. The mist released the window. The smoke released the house. The altars were reconciled with the gods. The hearth released the log. In the fold he (Telipinu) released the sheep. In the corral he released the cows. Then the mother tended her child. The sheep tended her lamb. The cow tended her calf. And Telipinu <tended> the king and queen. He concerned himself for them in regard to life, vigor, and future (existence).²

Note also the inclusion of human fertility among other miscellaneous

aspects of fecundity requested in a prayer addressed to this same Telipinu:

Give to the king, queen, princes, and to (all) the land of Ḫatti life, health, strength, long years, and joy (in) the future! [Also] give [them] future thriving of grain, vines, fruit, cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, mules (sic), asses—together with that of wild animals—and of human beings!³

Nonetheless, the desire to produce their own progeny and thereby assure the continuation of their particular lines of descent was a major concern for the men and women of Ḫatti. In a ritual, the gods are urged to bless the royal family:

And provide the king and queen with life, health, long years and children—male children and female children, to the first and second generations—and for the male (offspring) (provide) manliness and valor, and for the female (offspring) womanliness and motherhood!⁴

The failure to beget or deliver a child, particularly a male heir, was a cause of acute embarrassment. In a folk tale we read of the sad lot of an otherwise prosperous citizen named Appu:

And he lacks nothing; only one thing does he lack—he has neither a son nor a daughter. (When) the elders of (his town) Šudul sit before him to eat, and this one gives bread and meat to (his) son, while [that] one gives something to drink to (his) son, Appu has no one to whom to give bread.⁵

Since this text is a *Märchen*, Appu's problem is soon remedied through divine intervention, which allows his wife to present him with two boys in succession.

The threat of childlessness is included among the sanctions intended to enforce loyalty to the crown in an oath of allegiance administered to Hittite troops:

Whoever should transgress these oaths by undertaking evil against the king and queen or against the royal princes—let the oaths of the gods on that account likewise destroy his future! Let his wife bear neither male nor female children!⁶

Given this concern for offspring, it is not surprising that much of the respect accorded women in Hittite society can be traced back in one way or another to their role in carrying and delivering the next generation, or to their expertise in assisting in this process as midwives (on whom see below).⁷

In my dissertation (Beckman 1977) and its later published revision (Beckman 1983),⁸ I have treated all aspects of birth in Hittite culture. In this volume dedicated to women in the ancient world, I will

concentrate on the experience of Hittite women in conceiving children, carrying them to term, and giving birth, rather than on the larger topic of fertility in the cosmos.

But first a word about the character of Hittite civilization. Despite the fact that the Hittite language and its sister tongues in the Anatolian branch constitute the earliest attested members of the Indo-European language family, the culture of Ḫatti had relatively little in common with the religion and life-ways of early India, Ireland, or of the Classical world of Greece and Rome. Rather, Hittite civilization arose from the synthesis of inherited Indo-European elements with beliefs, social practices, institutions, and technologies borrowed from their indigenous Hattic predecessors in central Anatolia, from the Hurrian polities of northern Syria and Cilicia, and above all from the high culture of Mesopotamia—Sumer, Babylonia, and Assyria. Indeed, Ḫatti is most appropriately considered a peripheral cuneiform civilization, like those of pre-Hellenistic northern Syria and southwestern Iran.⁹

In particular, this cultural diversity is apparent in regard to birth practices, for we have recovered from the Hittite capital more than 20 individual Hittite-language rituals concerned with parturition¹⁰ as well as a sizable body of incantations relative to these matters in the Luwian tongue.¹¹ A number of the ceremonies had been imported from Cilicia/Hittite Kizzuwatna,¹² while others reflect native central Anatolian traditions.¹³ Some of the provisions in these regimens are mutually exclusive, so that they cannot all have been followed in any particular instance. Their presence in the royal archives is probably to be explained as the result of a survey conducted by the king's scribes of gynecological practices throughout the realm, with the aim of assuring that the combined wisdom of all practitioners subject to the monarch be available, if necessary, for the treatment of the queen and other members of the royal family.

Becoming pregnant

We have already established that failure to produce offspring was such an undesirable condition that it was invoked to frighten soldiers into obedience. This threat was also made in treaties between the Hittite Great King and his vassals. Here is an example, excerpted from the accord between Šuppiluliuma I of Ḫatti and his son-in-law, Šattiwaza of the rump Hurrian state of Mitanni:

(The gods) shall stand and be witnesses to these words of the treaty. If you,

Prince Šattiwaza, and you Hurrians do not observe the words of this treaty, the gods, lords of the oath, shall destroy you and you Hurrians, together with your land, your wives, and your possessions. They will draw you out like malt from its husk. As one does not get a plant from the midst of . . . so you, together with any other wife whom you might take (in addition to my daughter), and you Hurrians, together with your wives, your sons, and your lands shall thus have no progeny.¹⁴

But an individual might experience reproductive difficulties even if he or she had not deservedly attracted the malign attentions of the para-human world. The ritual attributed to the Old Woman¹⁵ Tunnawiya was intended to remove impurity (*papratar*¹⁶) that was thought to block successful generation of children. It was to be performed:

[i]f a person, either a man or a woman, should find him-/herself in some impurity, or if someone else has (through sorcery) named him/her for impurity, (so that) either a woman's children keep dying, or she continually aborts, or if the sexual organs of a man or a woman are disabled in consequence of a polluting spell.¹⁷

Or the problem might lie squarely upon the male partner, as in the rite credited to the Arzawan woman, Paškuwatti, to be carried out “if some man has no capacity for reproduction (*ḥaššatar*) or is not a man in regard to women.”¹⁸ In the course of this ceremony, the magician addresses the goddess Uliliyašši:

Allot to (the patient) your servant girl and he will become a yoke (for her). Let him take his wife and produce for himself male and female children! They will be your servants and servant girls.¹⁹

The success of the procedure is to be judged through incubation. The client spends the night in the deity's shrine in the hope that she will have sexual intercourse with him in his dreams.

Our sources provide next to no information about medical treatments for female infertility in ancient Anatolia, but the primitive state of Hittite gynecological knowledge is hinted at by the following passage from an Akkadian-language letter sent by Pharaoh Ramses II in reply to a request by his colleague, Ḫattusili III of Ḫatti:

Say to my brother: That which my brother wrote [to me concerning] his [sister] Matanazzi: “Let my brother send a man to prepare medicines for her, so that she might be caused to give birth.” That is what my brother wrote to me.

Say to my brother: Now, I, the king, your brother, know about Matanazzi, my brother's sister. She is said to be fifty or sixty years old. It is not possible to prepare medicines for a woman who has completed fifty or sixty years so that she might still be caused to give birth.

O that the Sun-god and the Storm-god might command, so that the ritual that will be performed will be carried out fully for my brother's sister!

And I, the king, your brother, shall send a competent incantation priest and a competent [physician], and they will prepare medicines for her in order that she might give birth.²⁰

As was the case elsewhere in the ancient world, conception in Hatti was closely associated with the moon and its immanent deity (Hitt. ^d*Arma*).²¹ The denominative verb “to (be)come pregnant,” *armāi-*, means literally “to be in a lunar way”; the factitive *armahḫ-* is “to make pregnant, impregnate,” and with the reflexive particle *-za* indicates “to become pregnant.”²² The relevant adjectives are *armant-*, *armawant-*, and *armahḫuwant-*, all “pregnant, gravid,” used of both humans and animals.²³

Being pregnant²⁴

The entering of a woman into the state of pregnancy could be celebrated by a special festival performed in honor of the Mother-goddesses. Over the course of her term, monthly rites might be carried out for these same deities, and the mother-to-be herself was subject to certain restrictions in her diet and sexual activities. Periodically, pregnancy offerings and purifications were made, and after a certain point, the woman could be sequestered from her family for the balance of her pregnancy. Nonetheless, it seems that most deliveries occurred in the home.

Prior to parturition, an oracle might be sought to determine if the mother was in the proper spiritual condition to give birth successfully, and offerings could be performed to correct her situation in the event that this inquiry yielded a disturbing result. Finally, there were rites to prepare the woman's possessions, the birth apparatus, and the woman herself for the act of delivery. As for the physical integrity of a gravid woman and her child, the Hittite Laws record:

If anyone causes a free woman to miscarry, if it is her tenth month,²⁵ he/she will pay ten shekels of silver; if it is her fifth month, he/she will pay five shekels of silver.²⁶

That is, the fine was prorated according to how long the pregnancy had progressed at the time of the miscarriage. Since this paragraph follows directly upon a series of laws concerned with bodily violence, it is safe to conclude that it deals with the effects of an assault on the woman's person rather than with a case of abortion.

Giving birth

A single Hittite verb was used to express the process of sexual reproduction in regard to both biological genders, whether human or animal: said of a female, *ḫa(š)š-* means “to give birth”; if the subject is a male the term should be rendered “to engender.” The abstract *ḫaššatar* indicates “procreation; giving birth,” and the causative *ḫaššanu-*, “to bring to birth,” is employed of midwives in relation to a newborn whose entry into the world they have facilitated.²⁷

Birth rituals as well as descriptions of accouchements in mythological narratives indicate that the mother did not face the ordeal of delivery alone, but was aided by more experienced members of her sex, generically referred to as *MUNUSḫašauwa-*, “(she) of birth.”²⁸ While we might have thought that the sense of this word is rather “pregnant woman,” as such it would mark a transitory condition and could hardly have served as a professional title, as it does elsewhere in Hittite records. Therefore it probably originally referred to another woman customarily present at parturition, namely the midwife. By the era when the majority of our Hittite texts were inscribed, however, it had become a general designation for female ritual expert, sometimes applied to a woman additionally called by another title, such as “wet-nurse.”

In the Hittite texts of the empire period (fourteenth to thirteenth century BCE), the more specific word for midwife is *MUNUSḫaš(ša)nupalla-*, literally “bringer to birth,” often written with the Sumerogram *MUNUS_{sa}.ZU*. Yet another expression meaning “midwife” is *MUNUSḫarnauwaš*, which may be rendered literally as “woman of the birth-stool.” In a passage from a prayer on behalf of her ailing husband, King Ḫattušili III, Queen Puduḫepa tells a goddess:

Among men it is said: “To a ‘woman of the birth-stool’ a deity is favorable.” I, Puduḫepa, am a “woman of the birth-stool,” (and since) I have devoted myself to your son (the Storm-god of the city of Nerik), yield to me, O Sun-goddess of Arinna, my lady! Grant to me what [I ask of you]! Grant life to [Ḫattušili], your servant! Through [the Fate-deities] and the Mother-goddesses let long years and days be given to him.²⁹

When we examine the activities of actual midwives in the Hittite birth rituals,³⁰ we find that their duties fall into two categories. First, there are the actual physical tasks involved in any birth. The midwife prepares the necessary equipment, attends and comforts the mother, and delivers the child, cleansing the mouth first of all.³¹ Second, the practitioner recites incantations on behalf of the newborn and the

mother, both during the course of her labor³² and after the infant has emerged. For example, the technique of analogy so frequent in Hittite magic³³ is employed in this spell in which the lifespan of the baby is compared to the permanence of a royal mausoleum:

And come! [As] the wind and rain cannot [lift] the rock sanctuary [from] its place—because he/she was born in this house—likewise let [not] an evil thing lift [his/her life] from its place! And let it likewise be protected! And let it be alive for eternity!³⁴

The similarity of this speech to the request made by Puduḫepa on behalf of Ḫattušili in her prayer quoted just above is striking: in each instance it is life and long years that are sought from the divine addressee. The significance of the queen's reference to herself as a midwife is thus apparent. The Hittites believed that the gods turned a favorable ear to the midwife when she sought a good fate for the newborn, and through her metaphor, Puduḫepa strengthens her own request for vitality for the invalid king.

Also of note is the well-known historiola, “The Cow of the Moon-god (Sin),”³⁵ included in a birth-ritual of Hurrian origin.³⁶ The recitation of this narrative, in which the lunar deity dispatches heavenly beings to ease the travail of a cow which he himself had impregnated, was intended to serve as a cosmic template for the relief of the human parturient.

Males, including the “physician” (LÚA.ZU) and the *patili*-priest,³⁷ might also be present during birth, but their duties included no gynecological matters, only the performance of offerings and recitations and general housekeeping. There is no mention in Hittite sources of the participation of the husband during the actual delivery of his child, although several literary texts demonstrate that soon thereafter he acknowledged his paternity by dandling the baby on his knees and bestowing a name upon it.³⁸

On the divine level, responsibility for overseeing each human birth fell to the Birth-deities or Mother-goddesses, who are usually designated by the Sumerogram DINGIR.MAḫ.MEŠ/ḫI.A, to be read in Hittite sometimes as Ḫannaḫanna,³⁹ other times as Kunuštalleš.⁴⁰ As far as our sources indicate, these divinities seem to have taken little or no part in the actual delivery, beyond lending their benevolent presence.

The Mother-goddesses were accompanied by the para-human beings who inscribed or determined an individual's fate (Hitt. *gulšuwar*), an undifferentiated collegium of uncertain number, who took their name

from the same root: ^d*Gulšeš*.⁴¹ We may refer to them simply as the Fate-deities.⁴² By the time of the writing of our texts, the two groups of divinities had become so closely identified due to their shared activity that they had been largely conflated.⁴³ A major complex of rituals is dedicated to the joint worship of these two divine bodies.⁴⁴ In any event, there can be little doubt that the Fate-deities, like the Mother-goddesses, were held to be female. Their Hurrian counterparts were the *Ḫudena Ḫudellura*, likewise goddesses.

A good illustration of the responsibilities of these deities around a birth is provided by an incantation in which both groups are addressed:

In regard to this matter we have just now summoned as witnesses the Mother-goddesses and the Fate-deities. [And], if a person is born at a certain time, [then] as the Fate-deities and [the Mother-goddesses] on that day designate well-being for him/her—now this is that day! May you, O Fate-deities and [Mother-goddesses], today designate life, [joy], strength, long years (and numerous other boons) for the king (and) queen!⁴⁵

This retrospective reference to the blessing of the newborn is occasioned by the desire that the Fates and the Birth-deities, at least one of whom seems to have watched over an individual later in life, intervene in order to help adults. We have already seen several examples of incantations directed to them or to para-human forces in general during parturition and its following moments.

Little in the way of equipment was required for a birth in *Ḫatti*. One ritual simply calls for several pieces of ordinary household furnishings: two stools, three cushions, and a blanket. The delivering mother was settled on the padded stools, while the third bolster was placed on the ground between them awaiting the emerging baby. The midwife held the blanket to catch the infant.⁴⁶

Other rites mention a specialized implement, the *GIŠḫarnau-*, “birth-stool,” which was composed of a platter (*DUGDILIM.GAL*) and pegs (*GIŠKAK*).⁴⁷ Presumably, the parturient arranged her buttocks in the ceramic receptacle and grasped the pegs during her travail.

However, most Hittite texts treating birth do not discuss the technical aspects of parturition in any detail,⁴⁸ either because these were common knowledge, or alternatively because they belonged to the arcane lore of the Old Women. There is no evidence for the use of special birth-bricks known elsewhere throughout the pre-modern Near East.⁴⁹

Special ceremonies might be carried out to introduce the newborn and to reintegrate the new mother into the community. One source tells us that the birth of a child was commemorated by a *mala*-offering on the seventh day of his/her life, and that the infant was ritually cleansed at the beginning of the third month if a boy, or of the fourth in the case of a girl.⁵⁰

Motherhood and children

Naturally, reciprocal affection between parents and their children was assumed in Hittite society. When a Hittite-language text describes the favorable treatment experienced by the population of a city conquered by the early Anatolian ruler, Anitta, it says that he “treated them as (his) mothers (*annuš*) and fathers (*attuš*).”⁵¹ And recall that Queen Puduḫepa supports her plea to the Sun-goddess that we considered earlier in this essay with a reminder that she had performed outstanding services for the deity’s beloved son, the Storm-god of Nerik.

Nonetheless, in the Hittite Laws, children were basically treated as a type of property, and when partners of equal social status divorced, the male walked off with the greater portion of the children.⁵² As for the question of legitimacy,⁵³ we have evidence only in regard to the royal family, among whom the Proclamation of King Telipinu distinguishes between the ruler’s sons and daughters begotten on the queen, and his offspring produced with concubines.⁵⁴

List of abbreviations

CTH refers to entries in Laroche 1971, as updated by the Konkordanz der hethitischen Keilschrifttafeln (<http://www.hethport.uni-wuerzburg.de/hetkonk/>). Abbreviations of primary publications of cuneiform texts are those of the *Chicago Hittite Dictionary* (Chicago, IL: The Oriental Institute, 1980—date) (abbr. *CHD*). Note also *HED* = J. Puhvel. *Hittite Etymological Dictionary*, Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 1984—date. Online at <http://www.degruyter.com/view/serial/16389>.

Notes

- 1 KUB 17.10 (CTH 324) i 5’–15’. I have translated the entire text at Beckman 1997.
- 2 KUB 17.10 (CTH 324) iv 20–26.
- 3 KUB 24.2 (CTH 377) rev. 12’–16’.

- 4 KUB 14.34 (CTH 483) ii 17–19.
- 5 CTH 360 i 15–21, combined text established by Siegelová 1971: 4.
- 6 KBo 6.34 (CTH 427) ii 34–39, ed. Sørenhagen 1976.
- 7 See Beckman forthcoming b.
- 8 See also Pringle 1983 and Mouton 2008.
- 9 For more on the multicultural civilization of the Hittites, see Bryce 2005: 8–20.
- 10 Edited in Beckman 1977, 1983.
- 11 Starke 1985: 202–257.
- 12 Mouton 2008.
- 13 E.g., KUB 30.29 (CTH 430.1), KBo 17.60 (CTH 430.3.A), and KUB 33.67 (CTH 333.A).
- 14 KBo 1.1 (CTH 51) rev. 58–63. A full translation of this text is found in Beckman 1999a: 42–48.
- 15 On this title for a magical practitioner, see Beckman forthcoming a.
- 16 On this quasi-substance, see *CHD* P: 103–106.
- 17 KUB 7.53 (CTH 409) i 4–6, ed. Goetze 1938: 4–5.
- 18 KUB 9.27 (CTH 406) i 1–3, ed. Hoffner 1987: 271, 277. Miller 2010 suggests that the issue here is the patient’s homosexuality. For another rite possibly intended to counter same-sex preference in a male, see Peled 2010 on CTH 393.
- 19 KUB 7.8 (CTH 406) ii 7–10, ed. Hoffner 1987: 273, 278–279.
- 20 KBo 28.30 (CTH 163) obv. 8–rev. 13, translated fully in Beckman 1999a: 137–138.
- 21 See Theuer 2000: 116–120, 185–197.
- 22 For this family of words see *HED* 1–2: 155–157.
- 23 For the rare non-cognate synonym *arnuwant-*, perhaps literally “made high/swollen; pregnant,” see Hoffner 1997: 194.
- 24 Most of this section is adapted from Beckman 1983: 250, where I gather the relevant data from all of the rituals edited in that volume. Please go there for textual references.
- 25 By the Hittite way of reckoning, the woman gave birth *in* the tenth month, rather than *after* nine.
- 26 §17, ed. Hoffner 1997: 28–29. Cf. *The Laws of Hammurapi*, §§209–14, tr. Roth 1995: 122–123.
- 27 For these words and related vocabulary, see *HED* 3: 212–118.
- 28 For the argument that this is the Hittite reading of the Sumerogram MUNUS\$U.GI in ritual contexts, see Beckman 1983: 232–233 and forthcoming a.
- 29 KUB 21.27 ii 15–23 (CTH 384), ed. Sørenhagen 1981: 112–113.
- 30 See Beckman 1983: 232–235.
- 31 KBo 17.61 (CTH 430.2) obv. 13–15, ed. Beckman 1983: 42–43.
- 32 Note KBo 12. 112 (CTH 470) rev. 11’–13’, ed. Beckman 1983: 68–69: “As the door turns [in the socket], let the child [likewise] turn [in] his/her mother!”
- 33 See Beckman 1999b.
- 34 KBo 17.62 + 63 (CTH 478) iv 7’–12’, ed. Beckman 1983: 34–35.
- 35 See Veldhuis 1991.
- 36 KUB 44.4 (CTH 520) i 1–17, ed. Beckman 1983: 176–177.

- 37 Beckman 1983: 235–238.
- 38 See Hoffner 1968.
- 39 Beckman 1983: 239–242.
- 40 See Haas 1994: 372.
- 41 See Melchert 2015.
- 42 For a detailed discussion, see Archi 2013.
- 43 See Beckman 1983: 238–248.
- 44 CTH 434.
- 45 KUB 43.55 (CTH 448) ii 11–21; for transliterations see Beckman 1983: 244–45, Haas 1988: 90–91, and Taracha 2000: 58–61.
- 46 KUB 30.29 (CTH 430.1) obv. 1–7, ed. Beckman 1983: 22–23.
- 47 Beckman 1983: 102–104.
- 48 For contemporary practices, see Scurlock 1991; Biggs 2000; Stol 2000; Volk 2004; Böck 2013; Couto-Ferreira 2014.
- 49 See Stol 2000: 117–122; Töpfer 2014: 327–332.
- 50 KBo 17.65 (CTH 489.A) obv. 27–36, ed. Beckman 1983: 134–137.
- 51 KBo 3.22 (CTH 1) obv. 9, ed. Neu 1974, 10–11.
- 52 §31, ed. Hoffner 1997: 40–41.
- 53 On practices of inheritance and adoption, see Beckman 1996; cf. Lebrun 1979; Imparati 1995; Klock-Fontanille 2014.
- 54 CTH 19 ii 36–39, combined text established by Hoffmann 1984: 32–33. In Hattî only the monarch seems to have had multiple legitimate sexual partners.

References

- Archi, A. (2013) The Anatolian fate-goddesses and their different traditions. In E. Cancik-Kirschbaum, J. Klinger and G. Müller (eds) *Diversity and Standardization: Perspectives on Social and Political Norms in the Ancient Near East*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1–26.
- Beckman, G. (1977) *Hittite Birth Rituals*. Dissertation Yale University.
- Beckman, G. (1983) *Hittite Birth Rituals*. Second edition. Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten, Vol. 29. Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz. Online at <http://www.hethport.uni-wuerzburg.de/stbot/anforder.php?band=29>
- Beckman, G. (1997) The Wrath of Telipinu. In W. W. Hallo and K. L. Younger (eds) *The Context of Scripture I: Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 151–153.
- Beckman, G. (1999a) *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*. Second edition. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.
- Beckman, G. (1999b) The tongue is a bridge: Communication between humans and gods in Hittite Anatolia. *Archiv Orientalní* 67: 519–534.
- Beckman, G. (forthcoming a) The old woman: Female wisdom as a resource and a threat in Hittite Anatolia. In S. Velhartická (ed.)

- Audias *Fabulas Veteres: Anatolian Studies in Honor of Jana Součková-Siegelová*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Beckman, G. (forthcoming b) Females as sources of authority in Hittite government and religion. In I. Peled (ed.) *Proceedings of the Conference Structures of Power: Law and Gender across the Ancient Near East and Beyond*, Chicago, IL. 6–7 March 2015.
- Biggs, R. D. (2000) Conception, contraception, and abortion in Ancient Mesopotamia. In A. R. George and I. L. Finkel (eds) *Wisdom, Gods and Literature: Studies in Assyriology in Honour of W. G. Lambert*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1–13.
- Böck, B. (2013) Medicinal plants and medicaments used for conception, abortion, and fertility control in Ancient Babylonia. *Journal Asiatique* 301: 27–52.
- Bryce, T. (2005) *The Kingdom of the Hittites*. New edition. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Couto-Ferreira, M. E. (2014) She will give birth easily: Therapeutic approaches to childbirth in 1st millennium BCE cuneiform sources. *Dynamis* 34: 289–315.
- Goetze, A. (1938) *The Hittite Ritual of Tunnawi*. New Haven, CT: American Oriental Society.
- Haas, V. (1988) Das Ritual gegen Zugriff der Dämonin ^dDÌM.NUN.ME und die Sammeltafel KUB XLIII 55. *Oriens Antiquus* 27: 85–104.
- Haas, V. (1994) *Geschichte der Hethitischen Religion*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Hoffner, H. A. (1968) Birth and namegiving in Hittite texts. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 27: 198–203.
- Hoffner, H. A. (1987) Paskuwatti's ritual against sexual impotence (CTH 406). *Aula Orientalis* 5: 271–287.
- Hoffner, H. A. (1997) *The Laws of the Hittites*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Imparati, F. (1995) Private life among the Hittites. In J. Sasson (ed.) *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. New York: Scribners, 571–586.
- Klock-Fontanille, I. (2014) La famille hittite: ce que les lois nous apprennent. In L. Marti (ed.) *La Famille dans le Proche-Orient Ancien: Réalités, Symbolismes, et Images. Proceedings of the 55th Rencontre Assyriologiques Internationales at Paris 6–9 July 2009*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 413–428.
- Laroche, E. (1971) *Catalogue des Textes Hittites*. Paris: Klincksieck.
- Lebrun, R. (1979) Considerations sur la femme dans la société hittite. *Hethitica* 3: 109–125.
- Melchert, H. C. (2015) Formal and semantic aspects of Hittite *gul(aš)ša-* 'Fate'. Online at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/295694397/>

- Miller, J. (2010) Paskuwatti's ritual: Remedy for impotence or antidote to homosexuality? *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 10: 83–89.
- Mouton, A. (2008) *Les Rituels de Naissance Kizzuwatniens: Un Exemple de Rite de Passage en Anatolie Hittite*. Paris: De Boccard.
- Neu, E. (1974) *Der Anitta-Text*. Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten, Vol. 18. Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Peled, I. (2010) Expelling the demon of effeminacy: Anniwiyanni's ritual and the question of homosexuality in Hittite thought. *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 10: 69–81.
- Pringle, J. (1983) Hittite birth rituals. In A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt (eds) *Images of Women in Antiquity*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 128–141.
- Roth, M. T. (1995) *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.
- Scurlock, J. (1991) Baby-snatching demons, restless souls and the dangers of childbirth: Medico-magical means of dealing with some of the perils of motherhood in Ancient Mesopotamia. *Incognita* 2: 135–183.
- Siegelová, J. (1971) *Appu-Märchen und Hedammu-Mythus*. Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten, Vol. 14. Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Starke, F. (1985) *Die Keilschrift-Luwischen Texte in Umschrift*. Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten, Vol. 30. Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Stol, M. (2000) *Birth in Babylonia and the Bible: Its Mediterranean Setting*. Groningen, The Netherlands: STYX Publications.
- Sürenhagen, D. (1976) *Die Militärischen Eide der Hethiter*. Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten, Vol. 22. Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Sürenhagen, D. (1981) Zwei Gebete Hattusilis und der Puduhepa. Textliche und literaturhistorische Untersuchungen. *Altorientalische Forschungen* 8: 83–168.
- Taracha, P. (2000) *Ersetzen und Entsühnen. Das mittelhethitische Ersatzritual für den Großkönig Tuthaliya (CTH *448.4) und verwandte Texte*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Theuer, G. (2000) *Der Mondgott in den Religionen Syrien-Palästinas*. Freiburg, Germany: Universitätsverlag.
- Töpfer, S. (2014) The physical activity of parturition in Ancient Egypt: Textual and epigraphical sources. *Dynamis* 34: 317–335.
- Veldhuis, N. (1991) *A Cow of Sin*. Groningen, The Netherlands: STYX

Publications.

Volk, K. (2004) Vom Dunkel in die Helligkeit: Schwangerschaft, Geburt und frühe Kindheit in Babylonien und Assyrien. In V. Dasen (ed.) *Naissance et Petite Enfance dans l'Antiquité*. Fribourg, Switzerland: Academic Press, 71–92.

WOMEN IN HITTITE RELIGION

Billie Jean Collins

Upon induction into the military, Hittite soldiers were required to swear an oath to protect the interests of their king. Typical for the time, the oath was filled with dire threats of the evil that would befall anyone who betrayed the king. Among the threats is the following:

They bring a woman's garment, a distaff and a spindle and they break an arrow. You say to them as follows: "What are these? Are they not the garments of a woman? We are holding them for the oath-taking. He who transgresses these oaths and takes part in evil against the king, queen, and princes may these oath deities make (that) man (into) a woman. May they make his troops women and let them dress as women. Let them put a scarf on them. Let them break the bows, arrows, and weapons in their hands and let them place the distaff and spindle in their hands (instead)."

Despite the generally negative attitude toward womanhood suggested by these words, there are some grounds for optimism when assessing the role and status of women in the Hittite world, at least in the religious sphere.¹

The substantial Hittite cuneiform textual corpus includes a host of documents of a religious nature. We have copious festivals, rituals, and cult inventories, among other genres, that describe a wide range of religious activities in diverse cultic contexts, and within these contexts women have a major role to play. From the evidence it is clear that, where the gods were concerned, women were not limited to the traditionally female religious spheres of marriage, birth, and death. We cannot speak of women's rituals as something lesser, marginal, or even separate. There are no Thesmophorias or Brauronia, no Vestal Virgins. Neither was the worship of deities gendered; women served male deities and men served female deities. Even the pantheon had gender symmetry, with a supreme divine pair, the Storm God of Hatti and the Sun Goddess of Arinna, sharing the Great Temple of Hattusa.

The religious texts, more so than any other of the genres in the Hittite libraries, reflect a mix of elements from the diverse cultural and linguistic strata that made up the population of Anatolia in the Late Bronze Age, including Hattian, Luwian, and Hurrian. Sometimes it is possible to isolate regional differences in traditions, but sometimes it appears that the streams of tradition have merged into something new and heterogeneous.² Isolating the original milieu for particular modes of thought, including attitudes toward women, is complicated by the fact that the genres in question, in particular the festivals and rituals, are not necessarily reliable witnesses, since they are, to lesser and greater extents, constructions of the scribal class. In the following, I do not attempt systematically to map gender roles either spatially or diachronically as such would require a more detailed study than is possible here.

The queen

The Hittite queens commanded (sometimes considerable) authority as complements to their kings. This authority is most in evidence in the religious sphere. Queens might author or coauthor a personal prayer to the gods so long as it served the interests and wellbeing of the king. Thus Queen Puduhepa prayed to the Sun Goddess for the health of Hattusili III (see [Figure 23.1](#)), and Taduhepa to Tesub in the Hurrian language, likewise for Tudhaliya II, while Asmunikal coauthored a prayer with her husband King Arnuwanda regarding the problem of the ever-hostile northern Kaska tribes.



Figure 23.1 Puduhepa pouring a libation to the Sun Goddess alongside her husband, King Hattusili III, who does the same for the Storm God. Firaktin rock relief. (From *Hittites: An Anatolian Empire*. Istanbul: Yapı Kredi, 2013: 570, fig. 3.)

At festival time, queens were by their husbands' sides, typically in a supporting role. Often this involved toasting whatever deity was the current concern while either seated or standing. Occasionally, however, they did more. On day five of the *nuntarriašḫaš* festival, while the king continued his circuit of the towns in the district, the queen and her entourage remained in Tahrurpa to celebrate the Sun Goddess of Arinna and Mezzulla (Nakamura 2002: 188–207). The queen retreats to the “inner chamber” so that the diviner (^{LÚ}HAL) may prepare eight divine images—three statues and five solar disks—of the sun goddesses of six former queens in the *ḫalentuwa*-building (i.e., the royal residence). Were these divine images of the Sun Goddess dedicated by the former queens or were they statues *representing* the former queens, who in death became identified with the Sun Goddess? With the divine images readied, the queen enters the *ḫalentuwa*-building, washes her hands, and then proceeds with the offerings, which include a lamb for each of the divine images.

On day 35 of this same festival, according to its outline tablet, the queen performed the “festival of the pig” (Nakamura 2002: 70–71); the tablet containing the festival itself is unfortunately lost to us, but it is not the only occasion on which the queen is associated with pig sacrifice. A festival of Kuliwisna in the Lower Land (south-central Anatolia) has her officiating during a pig sacrifice directed to the local Utniyantas-deities/demons.³ In another festival celebrated by the queen, Hannahanna, goddess of childbirth and motherhood, receives a piglet offering.⁴ At the end of the first day of this ritual, the queen enters the “inner chamber,” and after washing her hands, pours libations for Hannahanna and the Fate Goddesses (Gulses). An unusual example comes in a fragmentary ritual honoring Ishtar of Taminga, wherein the queen dances before the deity while holding an axe given to her by an exorcist (LÚAZU).⁵ The rites performed by the queen share some common elements, such as the use of the “inner chamber” as a locus for some of the rites and the similar nature of the goddesses being worshipped.⁶ Pig sacrifice too connects some of the rites, and signals a female orientation for the festivals in question.⁷

Priestesses and other religious professionals

The general title for priestess in Hittite religion was “mother of the deity,” usually written logographically MUNUS^{AMA}.DINGIR (Hittite *šiwanzanna*). This title coexists with the less-frequent, but parallel term MUNUS^{SANGA}, “priestess” (Taggar-Cohen 2006: 367–368). Just as the king was the highest-ranking priest (LÚ^{SANGA}), so was the queen the highest-ranking AMA.DINGIR. The AMA.DINGIR is the only female priestess represented in the text of *Instructions for the Temple Personnel*. In this text, as elsewhere, she is classed with the high-ranking SANGA and GUDU₁₂ priests, the three forming the core priestly personnel of the Hittite state cult.

Of special status was the NIN.DINGIR, “lady of the deity,” priestess. Unlike with other priestly positions, this appointment could be held by only one person at a time, and was comparable in importance to the religious roles of the king, queen, and crown prince (Taggar-Cohen 2006: 411–413). Possibly a member of the royal family, she had access to tremendous resources in the fulfillment of her duties, which involved the celebration of festivals with and without other members of the royal family.

The term SUHUR.LÁ is variously translated “hierodule” or “palace woman.” Tudḫaliya IV’s instructions for his courtiers stipulate that they may not take a palace woman, whether a SUHUR.LÁ or a free

person, as a lover, suggesting that these women were female slaves attached to the palace or a temple.⁸ Three are known by name. Annella and Hilamaddu were each connected to intrigues having to do with black magic.⁹ Kuwatalla, by contrast, authored the “Great Ritual” in the time of King Arnuwanda and, though a slave, was honored by the royal couple with a gift of land.¹⁰ The SUHUR.LÁ are attested primarily in ritual (rather than festival) contexts. A SUHUR.LÁ assists in Tunnawiya’s Ritual of Purity, for example.¹¹ In another ritual, the SUHUR.LÁ, who are in the “inner chamber,” eat the portion of a sacrificed piglet that is not presented to the Sun Goddess of the Earth.¹² Finally, a group of SUHUR.LÁ provide assistance in a ritual against illness in the army, at one point joining in the ritual feasting alongside (male) cooks and harolds.¹³

Following Assyriological practice, the term MUNUSKAR.KID is usually translated “prostitute,” though it has now been shown that in Mesopotamia it served as a legal term for single women who did not have patriarchal status, that is, were not under the guardianship of a father or husband (Assante 1998). Indeed, the whole notion of sacred prostitution in the ancient Near East has been discredited (Assante 2007). Thus, there is scarcely any reason to retain the translation “prostitute” in Hittite contexts (Mouton 2011: 27–29; Taggar-Cohen 2006: 317 n. 830). Among the Hittite laws regarding inappropriate sexual pairings, §194 stipulates: “If father and son sleep with the same female slave or a KAR.KID woman, it is not an offense.” This supports the idea that KAR.KID in Hatti as in Mesopotamia is a legal status rather than a professional title (Mouton 2011: 28). Single women (some with children) are attested in the land-donation tablets as living outside of a household (the basic socioeconomic unit in Hittite society).¹⁴

In a festival for the goddess Tetewatti (CTH 639), after the priest presents the goddess with meat from a pig, a group of KAR.KID women, led by an overseer, dance in tandem with the “wolf-men,” who are also cult functionaries, before the deity.¹⁵ The festival as a whole is overseen by a SANGA-priestess and involves as well a young female assistant (DUMU. MUNUS *šuppešara*–; see also below), who holds up a red cloth. The colophon of the tablet labels the festival the “songs of the KAR.KID women,” indicating that they are its main focus. Given the generally female bent of the festival proceedings, the fragmentary nature of the copies is especially regrettable; perhaps here we are dealing with a festival largely by and for women.

The KAR.KID women turn up again, famously, at the end of the first tablet of the *ḫaššumaš* festival for the crown prince. A dozen KAR.KID women eat with the prince in the *arzana*-house. That night, the prince

is consecrated, then made to lie down. Loaves of bread are placed on either side of his head and feet and a circle is drawn around him with beer. At this point the KAR.KID women are brought in; but the tablet then ends, with the festival unfinished. As sexually suggestive as this scene appears on the surface, it has recently been argued that the magic circle placed around the prince and the action of making him to lie down are rather describing a dream incubation than an initiation into sex (Mouton 2011: 23–24). Exactly what the reason is for the presence of the KAR.KID women remains unclear.

There are, in fact, no terms in Hittite that label a woman based on her sexual activity; neither for a prostitute, nor for a virgin. Young female assistants appear on a handful of occasions assisting the Wise Women with their rituals. The term used is DUMU.MUNUS *šuppešara*, literally “sacred/pure daughter/girl,” and in one case KI.SIKIL (*zintuḫi-*), “young girl.”¹⁶ DUMU.MUNUS *šuppešara* is sometimes translated “virgin,” however, while the virginity of the girl may be implied or assumed, as it would be for any girl who was unmarried, and while her virginity may even have been the source of her ritual value, the term used to identify her is a religious, potentially even legal, designation and not the word for “virgin.”¹⁷ The duties of these young assistants include reciting incantations, conveying the ritual materials (see above), and performing actions that advance the ritual.

The *katra*-priestesses were associated in particular with the Ishtar cult in southeastern Anatolia (Miller 2002) and performed various cultic functions, including singing and dancing, but also incanting, libating, breaking bread, purifying, and so forth (Beckman 1983: 107–108). They are also connected with rituals of birth. They held a respected place within the religious hierarchy (Miller 2002) and were even included among the personnel of the “House of Crafts” (Beckman 1983: 108). Arzakiti is the only *katra*-woman known by name; she coauthored an eight-tablet ritual with a high-level priest, the purpose of which was to purify a temple (perhaps Ishtar’s) that had been defiled and to entice the deity back into residence (Miller 2002: 425–426). An omen report records an episode in which the provisioning of the temple (of Ishtar) has been disrupted. The *katra*-women and certain temple personnel are accused of protesting the failure of the deliveries and it is their actions in response to the problem that the oracular inquiry apparently determined to be blasphemous (Miller 2002: 428–430). That the *katra*-priestesses were in a position to present an organized opposition is noteworthy (p. 430), though the implications of this affair for women’s religious status and power are unclear.

Some cultic functionaries operated locally in cults for particular deities, like the *katra*-priestesses just discussed, and the *alḫuitra*- and *ḫuwaššannalla*-priestesses connected to the cult of the goddess Huwassanna in south-central Anatolia (see Pecchioli-Daddi 1982). Others, like the *ḫazgara*-women, were not so geographically or culturally delimited. The *ḫazgara*-women always worked in groups and are attested primarily in the festivals conducted by the king or his representative and in the cult inventories, which detail the performance of local cults and festivals. Their main task in the festivals was to welcome the king or prince upon arrival at a village, with singing and offerings. When not distracted by these occasional royal visits, the *ḫazgara*-women were responsible for seeing to the needs of the divine statues in the local cults. They are described bringing the divine image from the temple to the *ḫuwaši*-stela for the performance of the seasonal festival. They also bring the bread and beer for libations (Torri 2006: 110–111). We find them with the “lion-men” functionaries fetching fruit for the cult of the Deity of the Night in Parnassa:

While(?) the *palwatalla*-woman i[s] coming back, the lion-men (and) the *ḫazga[r]*a-women go to the fruit. The *palwatalla*-woman comes back and takes a stand before the [s]tela. She cries out three times. The lion-men and the *ḫazgara*-women bring the [fr]uit and they [pu]t it down in front of the deity. They eat. They drink. The young men lift the stone. The *palwatalla*-woman takes up the deity. The women take the fruit.¹⁸

In a festival for the selection of a new priest, the *ḫazgara*-women assist the new priest in his first duties performed in the presence of the old priest (Torri 2006: 111). In this festival they are also said to perform for the deity.¹⁹

Several other terms for female cult functionaries are attested, but other than their titles, the texts provide few particulars about them (see *passim* in Pecchioli-Daddi 1982). So far as we know, no female functionaries were prohibited from having families.

Festivals

Outside of the formal structures of the official priestly offices just described, women participated in the regular festivals that were interspersed throughout the year. For ancient Greece, choral performance has been described as a form of education and a means of presenting young girls of marriageable age to the public. The same will have been true no doubt in Anatolian society. Hittite festivals that describe choruses of girls (KI.SIKIL; *zintuḫi*-), women, and men (^{MUNUS}/

LÚ.MEŠŠIR) are particularly connected with the early Hattian cultural layer. Choruses were often associated with specific towns or places. In some cases they may have been permanent choirs attached to temples; in others, they may have been specialized groups of singers provided by a town for the duration of the festival (Rutherford 2008: 78–79; see also *ibid.* 2004). Women whose repertoire included singing in festival contexts are the *ḫuwaššannalla-*; *katra-*; KLSIKIL /*zintuḫi-*, “girl chorus singer”; *palwatalla-*, “psalmodist”; and the *ḫazgara*-women. Any of these might have been included in the general designation *SIR*, “singer” (Figures 23.2a and 23.2b).

Elaborate relief vases excavated from several sites in north-central Turkey provide visual documentation of the festivals, the most important of which revolved around the fall and spring agricultural calendars. On the vases, male and female singers, dancers, acrobats, and musicians are seen in procession, while priests present animals to the gods for sacrifice, and preparations are made for the feast. The female musicians play what may be tambourines or cymbals (Figures 23.2a and 23.2b). The texts confirm that women played percussion instruments called the *arkammi-* and the *BALAG*. Women whose repertoire included dancing, are the *KAR.KID* women, the *zintuḫis*, the *NIN.DINGIR* priestess, and the queen. On the whole, though, dance and mime performed by men are attested in the texts with much greater frequency and variety (see De Martino 1989).

Rituals

The personnel who populate the festivals overlap very little with those who are responsible for conducting rituals, which were designed to address particular problems of daily life. These include sexual issues, family grievances, impurity, and bewitchment, the latter two resulting from a whole host of possible misfortunes. Such rituals required the oversight of skilled individuals (male and female) with specialized knowledge of the necessary rites. The women who were primarily (though not exclusively)²⁰ responsible for overseeing ritual performance for private individuals fell into a category of professionals who bore the title *MUNUSŠU.GI*, which is generally translated in English as “Old Woman.” The Hittite word hidden behind the logogram is *ḫašauwa-*, derived from *ḫaš-*, “give birth, procreate,” and refers not to an old woman, but to a female ritual practitioner.²¹ The translation “Old Woman” is not only incorrect, but misleading as it conjures up images of wicked old crones living on society’s margins that simply do not apply in a Hittite context. I will use the translation “Wise Woman,” which better reflects the respect

with which such women were regarded in Hittite society.

Usually in the texts they are identified by their place of origin: Paskuwatti, woman of Arzawa who resides in Parassa; Tunnawiya, Wise Woman of Hatti, and so forth. Wise Women were probably in most cases in servitude of some kind—whether to an individual or a temple institution. They were not a part of the official cult apparatus in the same way that other religious professions were. They could act independently or in tandem with a male colleague, such as an augur or priest. Although they might have female assistants, such as the DUMU.MUNUS *šuppešara* discussed above or the SUHUR.Lá who aids Tunnawiya, Wise Women seem as a rule not to work alongside other female practitioners. An exception is the ritual attributed to both the SUHUR.Lá Kuwatalla and the Wise Woman Silalluhi.

Some rituals make it clear that the ritual client could be of either gender, and adjustments were made accordingly. Thus, Tunnawi's Ritual of Impurity: "If [the client is] a man, they take a black ram, if [it is] a woman, they take a black ewe; one black piglet, one black puppy—a male piglet if a man, [a female] if a woman" (and so on). As far as we know, both men and women had equal recourse to the services of a ritual practitioner, though of course it is impossible to say who might have resorted to them more often.

Birth and death

Marriage, birth, and death are considered the traditional spheres for women's religion. The general lack of rites of passage in the Hittite sources has frequently been noted, and rituals surrounding female initiation and marriage are not attested. By contrast, several rituals surrounding birth have survived. In those that derive from central Anatolia, a midwife supervises the birth (Wilhelm 2008). The midwife in fact had two roles to perform. The first of course was to deliver the child. In addition, the act of birth had a strong magical-mythological component, and thus the midwife's other function was to recite incantations on behalf of the mother and the newborn. For example, Tunnawiya's birth ritual stipulates that whenever the mother cries out, the midwife is to recite the incantation of crying out. Pittei's ritual contains an elaborate incantation directed against the malevolent forces that have afflicted the newborn:

a



h



Figures 23.2a and 23.2b Scenes of female musicians and dancers on two relief vases from Hüseyindede. Left (Figure 23.2a): the large vase; right (Figure 23.2b): the

small vase. (From *Hittites: An Anatolian Empire*, Istanbul: Yapı Kredi, 2013: 589, fig 4a; 588, fig. 3c.)

Who contrives evil for this child, let him see heaven flattened. Let him see the earth opened. Likewise the great god Zilipuri blazing. Let him see Ishtar *papartama*. Likewise death *zappian*. Likewise the lion confined. Likewise the wolf fettered. Likewise the feet [of] the snake, who . . . this child, who contrives evil for him.

(Bachvarova 2014: 298)

When Puduhepa, in a prayer to the Sun Goddess of Arinna, refers to herself metaphorically as a woman of the birthstool, she is drawing upon this power of the midwife to bring divine blessings upon the newborn, though in her case the request is being made on behalf of King Hattusili (Beckman 1983: 233–235).

The birth rituals that originate from the Hurrian-influenced region of southeastern Anatolia focus not on the activities of the midwife, but on a specialized class of priests called *patili*-priests, alongside of whom work the *katra*-priestesses. Birth rituals are the main sphere of activity for the *patili*-priests, who perform elaborate purifications and make offerings. One birth ritual, authored by a *patili*-priest named Papanikri contains an interesting rite. The *patili*-priest anoints a lamb, which is a substitute for the child, dresses its feet with red wool, and places it in the lap of a *katra*-woman, who is a substitute for the mother. The priest then washes the lamb and the bath water is poured out before a deity. Next the lamb is dressed in red (symbolic of blood) clothing, adorned with ornaments belonging to the child, and taken to the *šinapši* building whence it is taken away from the *katra*-woman²² “to a pure place” and blessed. The rite is a symbolic enactment of the birth itself (Beckman 1983: 122–123).

Mother and child reentered the community after three months for a boy child and four months for a girl child (due to a greater degree of impurity attached to female birth). That female children were valued as highly as male children, though, is suggested in the midwife Tunnawiya’s birth ritual:

Whenever a bo[y] is born, the midwife speaks a[s follows]: “Now her[e I] broug[ht] the goods of a boy, but in the following y[ea]r may I bring the goods of a girl!” § [But,] if it is a gi[r], she speaks as follows: “No[w] here I brought the goods [of a gi[r]], but in the following year may I bring the goods [of a bo]y.”

(Bachvarova 2014: 296)

The royal funerary ritual provides our only evidence for the rites surrounding death. Many individuals of both genders were required for the 14-day ritual. Some of the activities performed by women are worth singling out. The royal corpse is cremated on a funeral pyre during the night following the first full day of the ritual. The following morning, anonymous women collect the remains of ashes and bones, wrap them in fine cloth, and place them on a throne. On this same day (2), two women enact a puzzling scene in which they appear to be bartering for the soul of the deceased:

The Wise Woman takes a pair of scales. On one side she lays silver, gold, and all (kinds of) precious stones, on the other, however, she lays clay. § The Wise Woman speak as follows to her colleague while mentioning the deceased's name: "Will they bring him, so-and-so? Who will bring him?" Her colleague then answers: "The men of Hatti (and?) the *uruḫḫi*-men will bring him." And the first one says: "Let them not bring him!" but her colleague says: "Take the [si]lver (and) gold." And the first one says: "I will not [ta]ke it" and she says so three times. § The third time the first speaks thus: "The clay I will ta[ke]," [and] she breaks the pair of sca[les]. She [holds?] them up tow[ards] the Sungod [and . . . si]ng? and [starts] to wail.

(*van den Hout 1994: 47*)

In breaking the scales, the Wise Woman is demonstrating that the sale has not been made and the deceased will not remain in the netherworld (*van den Hout 1994: 47*). The *taptara*-women, mourners attested exclusively in funerary contexts, punctuate the rites with their orchestrated wailing. Women, it seems, carried out all of the ritual actions (*van den Hout 1994: 62*). Male cultic personnel (cup bearers, cooks, singers, the ALAN.ZU₉-men [acrobats?], the *kita*-men) were present, but in a supporting role. The absence of any members of the royal family in the funerary rites has been noted; in that vein, we may also point out the marked absence of any members of the official priesthood.

Divination

The supremely versatile Wise Women were also practiced in the divinatory arts, specializing in the symbol (Sum. KIN) oracles. These involved the manipulation of symbolic tokens bearing the names of persons and concepts and were often conducted in conjunction with other forms of divination (e.g., extispicy or augury) performed by (male) diviners in order to corroborate the results: "Through the Wise Woman that same question [regarding a fever befalling the king]: Then let the KIN be unfavorable. The DEITY took for him/herself the ENTIRE SOUL and FAVOR and (it is) in the SMALL ILLNESS. (Result:)

Unfavorable.”²³

The texts also contain a handful of references to prophetesses or seeresses (ENSI), but no oracles or utterances are preserved and the texts say nothing about who they might have been or how and on whose behalf they might have operated.

Sacrifice

Women did not participate in blood sacrifice, even when they (e.g., the queen or the Wise Women) were officiating in the rite. When animals are killed in rituals officiated by women, it is usually the anonymous “they” who perform the deed. This was a custom that for the Hittites required no explanation in the texts and none is given. Women were not, however, always excluded from the feasting that followed the sacrifice. Women were the sole commensals in obscure, specialized rites in which the feasting consisted of a piglet: the SUHUR.LÁ, for instance, in a Hattian ritual for a newborn, and women attendants of uncertain identity in a festival for the goddess Teteshapi.²⁴ More mainstream examples of ritual feasting that include women are scarce. In a festival of the town of Nerik dating to the early empire, a cook distributes meat stew and bread to the priests, the inhabitants of the town of Hursama, the AMA.DINGIR priestesses, and the *ḫazgara*-women, and then gives *marnuwan* beer to these same participants as well as the king.²⁵ This is the only testimony to women feasting in the presence of the king. We may also recall the SUHUR.LÁ-women who shared a feast with the harolds and cooks.²⁶ Finally, in the rites for the Deity of the Night in Parnassa, the *ḫazgara*- and *palwatalla*-women eat together with the lion-men and before the *huwasi*- of the deity.²⁷ The small number of such examples suggests restrictions on which female functionaries might be invited to the feast and in what circumstances.

Women and impurity

Women were effective mediators of contact with the impure, because they were themselves by nature impure, or potentially so. Their connection with birth and menstruation made them thus. By extension, the rites for the dead—death being a kind of birth—also fell in great part to them. Women were linked to the fertile but intrinsically impure pig, which expressed both a wish for fecundity and women’s ritual “otherness.” Wise Woman were specially qualified to negotiate with the supernatural in removing pollution without

themselves becoming tainted. This notion of female impurity underlies one of the more famous rites recorded by the Hittites. The ritual of the augur, Ashella, was intended to be performed when sickness was devastating the troops. For the rite, each army commander must prepare a substitute ram, but the king's substitute is a very human woman:

§3 Then in the morning I drive them (i.e., the rams) to the countryside. With each ram they bring one pitcher of beer, one offering loaf, and one cup of fired clay. Before the king's tent, he seats an ornamented woman. He sets one *huppar* of beer and three offering loaves at the foot of the woman.

§4 Afterwards the camp commanders place their hands on the rams and recite as follows: "The deity who has caused this plague, now the rams are standing here and their liver, heart, and thigh are very succulent. May human flesh be repulsive to him (the deity) once again, and may you (o deity) be satisfied with these rams." The army commanders bow down to the rams and the king bows to the ornamented woman. Afterwards, they take the rams, the woman, the bread, and the beer through the army and drive them to the countryside. They go and abandon them at the enemy border (so that) they do not end up at any place of ours. Thereupon they recite as follows: "Whatever evil was among the men, cattle, sheep, horses, mules, and donkeys of this army, these rams and the woman have just carried it away from the camp. Whoever finds them, may that land receive this evil plague."

A woman is best suited to carry away the pollution, because she is already of ambivalent status. As the evidence shows, though, women rarely operated alone in the space between purity and pollution, even in those most female of rites having to do with birth and death. What distinguishes the work of the augur, exorcist, or *patili*-priest from that of the Wise Woman? What qualifies a person—male or female—to mediate contact with the impure and the sacred? The answer to these questions will require further research.

Religious parity?

In Hittite Anatolia, women's participation in the religious sphere was inseparable from the whole. While gender no doubt regulated women's participation, in that their social and marital status would have been a consideration, the relative equality of priests and priestesses and other cult functionaries in the cult suggests it did not hinder it. Can we then speak of religious parity between the sexes? Perhaps not. We need only note that the number of professional religious titles for men far exceeds that for women (Pecchioli-Daddi 1982). Moreover, we know little about how women came to their religious roles, and there we might find our patriarchy strongly in play. Appointment to the office of priestess could have been reserved

for daughters of high-ranking officials and thus was a reflection of the father's honor, or, alternatively, was an extension of the family business, with daughters and wives filling roles on the basis of their family ties. The relative equality we see in the religious sphere stands in contrast to the social and political inequality we see outside of it, and this difference too is a topic for further research.

Notes

- 1 Cf. the comments of Bachvarova 2014, 272, Miller 2002: 525–526.
- 2 Whether this heterogeneity is limited to the texts of the Hittite libraries is a matter for further research.
- 3 KUB 43.56 iii 11'–17' (CTH 694); Trémouille 2002: 361; Collins 2006: 161.
- 4 KBo 20.89 obv.? 9'–10' (CTH 646); Trémouille 2002: 361; Collins 2006: 162.
- 5 KUB 45.32 iii 6'–10' (CTH 713); de Martino 1989: 79 (no. 36); Trémouille 2002: 364.
- 6 So Trémouille 2002: 367–369. See here for these and additional rites celebrated by the queen alone. For more examples of pig sacrifice, see Collins 2006.
- 7 On the connection between women and pigs in Hittite ritual, see Collins 2006: 168–171.
- 8 CTH 255.2, edition by Miller 2013: 304–305, who translates “chambermaid” without comment. Note also that Tunnawiya's rituals CTH 409.II and 409.IV include the slander of the SUHUR.Lá-women among that of other palace personnel to be ritually neutralized.
- 9 Hilamaddu in KUB 40.83; discussed in Miller 2010: 181–182; Annella in KUB 14.4 iii, see Pecchioli-Daddi 1982: 202; Singer 2002: 76. Both women and men were accused of acts of sorcery at various points in Hittite history. While many rituals are intended to counteract anonymous acts of witchcraft, one ritual text addresses the specific case of Ziplantawiya (CTH 443), whom King Tudhaliya II, her brother, believed had performed sorcery against him and his family.
- 10 CTH 760.II and CTH 222.91 resp.
- 11 CTH 409.I.
- 12 KUB 25.36 ii 8–16 (CTH 678); see Torri 2006: 110; Taggar-Cohen 2006: 350–351. Taggar-Cohen suggests that the women are excluded from the drinking ceremony with the king.
- 13 KUB 54.65 iii1 13'–14' w. dupl. KUB 7.54 iii 8–10; edition in Bawanypeck 2005: 142–143.
- 14 See Wilhelm 2009. While many of these may have been widows, as assumed by Wilhelm, there are many reasons a woman might live outside of a household, including divorce, desertion, separation (see laws §§26–37), unmarriageability (lack of dowry, etc.), lack of men to marry, even because they were care givers to an aging mother (for examples of which, see Assante 2007: 126). In this connection, note the instruction to the supervisors regarding the imposition of work obligations on members of a household. Even single women were not exempt: “You shall impose work upon single women (too)” (CTH 266: l. 15'; edition by Miller 2013: 268–269). Hitt. *wannumiya-* in this text is assumed to refer to widows, though this understanding is due largely to the mindset that

- women of marriageable age must have been either wives, widows, or whores.
- 15 KBo 23.97 i 5–9 w. dupl. KUB 7.19 obv. 2'–6' (CTH 639; Collins 2006: 163–164; Taggar-Cohen 2006: 317–320).
 - 16 DUMU.MUNUS *šuppešara*: Paskuwatti's Ritual (CTH 406); Anniwiyanni's Rituals (CTH 393); Unki's Ritual (KBo 22.110, 3; CTH 470); Storm God of Kuliwisna (CTH 330); Storm God of the Scribe Pirwa (CTH 328); festival for Teteshapi (see n. 11). MUNUSKI.SIKIL: Ammā's Ritual (CTH 456.2.1).
 - 17 See Collins forthcoming.
 - 18 KBo 2.8 iii 22–30. Translation after Hazenbos 2003: 140. See *HW*², 549–550 for additional examples of the *ḥazgara*-women working with the lion-men.
 - 19 KUB 17.35. See Taggar-Cohen 2006: 218–219; Torri 2006: 111–112.
 - 20 Rituals could also be performed by midwives, hierodules, temple singers, or priestesses. Males attesting authoring rituals include augurs, physicians, diviners, and priests.
 - 21 The terms for midwife were MUNUS *ḥarnauwaš* and MUNUSšà.ZU; see Beckman 1983: 232–233.
 - 22 Beckman suggests the reference is to the mother (1983: 119), but there is no indication that the lamb is not still with the *katra*-woman; in any event, the latter is a substitute for the former so the distinction is perhaps irrelevant.
 - 23 KBo 2.2 i 26–29. Translation modified from van den Hout 1998: 126–127.
 - 24 KUB 17.28 (CTH 730.1); Bo 6594 (CTH 738); see Collins 2006: 165–166 for both texts.
 - 25 KUB 25.36 ii 8–16 (CTH 678); see Torri 2006: 110; Taggar-Cohen 2006: 350–351. Taggar-Cohen suggests that the women are excluded from the drinking ceremony with the king.
 - 26 KUB 54.65 iii1 13'–14' w. dupl. KUB 7.54 iii 8–10; edition in Bawanypeck 2005: 142–143.
 - 27 KBo 2.8 iii 22–30. Translation after Hazenbos 2003: 140. See *HW*², 549–550 for additional examples of the *ḥazgara*-women working with the lion-men.

References

- Assante, J. (1998) The kar.kid/harimtu, prostitute or single woman? A reconsideration of the evidence. *UF* 30: 5–96.
- Assante, J. (2007) What makes a “prostitute” a prostitute? Modern definitions and ancient meanings. *Historiae* 4: 117–132.
- Bachvarova, M. (2014) Hurro-Hittite stories and Hittite pregnancy and birth rituals. In M. W. Chavalas (ed.) *Women in the Ancient Near East*. London: Routledge, pp. 272–306.
- Bawanypeck, D. (2005) *Die Rituale der Auguren*. THeth 25. Heidelberg, Germany: Winter.
- Beckman, G. (1983) *Hittite Birth Rituals*. StBoT 29. Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz.
- Collins, B. J. (2006) Pigs at the gate: Hittite pig sacrifice in its Eastern Mediterranean context. *JANER* 6: 155–188.

- Collins, B. J. (forthcoming) Virginité in Hittite ritual. Conference proceedings, *Hrozný and Hittite: The First Hundred Years*. Prague, Czech Republic, 11–14 November 2015.
- De Martino, S. (1989) *La danza nella cultura Ittita*. Eothen 2. Florence, Italy: Elite.
- Hazenbos, J. (2003) *The Organization of the Anatolian Local Cults during the Thirteenth century B.C.* CM 21. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, Styx.
- Hout, van den, T. (1994) Death as a privilege: The Hittite royal funerary ritual. In J. M. Bremer, T. van den Hout and R. Peters (eds) *Hidden Futures: Death and Immortality in Ancient Egypt, Anatolia, the Classical, Biblical and Arabic-Islamic World*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Amsterdam University Press.
- Hout, van den, T. (1998) *The Purity of Kingship: An Edition of CTH 569 and Related Hittite Oracle Inquiries of Tuthaliya IV*. DMOA 25. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Miller, J. L. (2002) The *katra/i-* women in the Kizzuwatnean rituals from Hattusa. In S. Parpola and R. M. Whiting (eds) *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the XLVII^e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Helsinki, July 2–6, 2001*. CRRAI 47. Helsinki, Finland, pp. 423–431.
- Miller, J. L. (2010) Practice and Perception of Black Magic among the Hittites. *AoF* 37: 167–185.
- Miller, J. L. (2013) *Royal Hittite Instructions and Related Administrative Texts*. Writings from the Ancient World 31. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Mouton, A. (2011) Réflexions autour de la notion de rituel initiatique en Anatolie hittite. Au sujet de la fête *haššumaš* (CTH 633). *JANER* 11: 1–38.
- Nakamura, M. (2002) *Das hethitische nuntarriyašḫa-Fest*. PIHANS 44. Istanbul, Turkey: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten.
- Pecchioli-Daddi, F. (1982) *Mestieri, professioni e dignità nell'Anatolia Ittita*. Rome: Ateneo.
- Rutherford, I. R. (2008) The songs of the *Zintuhis*: Chorus and ritual in Anatolia and Greece. In B. J. Collins, M. Bachvarova and I. R. Rutherford (eds) *Anatolian Interfaces: Hittites, Greeks and Their Neighbours*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 73–83.
- Rutherford, I. R. (2004) Women singers and the religious organisation of Hatti: On the interpretation of CTH 235.1 & 2 and other texts. In M. Hutter and S. Hutter-Braunsar (eds) *Offizielle Religion, lokale Kulte und individuelle Religiosität*. Ugarit-Verlag, Münster, Germany, pp. 377–394.

- Singer, I. (2002) *Hittite Prayers*. Writings from the Ancient World 11. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Taggar-Cohen, A. (2006) *Hittite Priesthood*, THeth 26, Heidelberg, Germany: Winter.
- Torri, G. (2006) Le ^{MUNUS.MEŠ}*hazkarai*: Operatori culturali femminili nelle feste ittite. In M. Rocchi, P. Xella and J.-Á. Zamora (eds) *Gli operatori culturali: Atti del II Incontro di studio organizzato dal Gruppo di contatto per lo studio delle regioni mediterranee*. SEL 23. Verona, Italy, pp. 99–106.
- Trémouille, M.-C. (2002) Une cérémonie pour Huwassanna à Kuliwisna. In P. Taracha (ed.) *Silva Anatolica: Anatolian Studies Presented to Maciej Popko on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*. Warsaw, Poland: Agade, pp. 351–369.
- Wilhelm, G. (2008) Rituelle Gefährdungsbewältigung bei der Geburt nach altanatolischen Quellen. In B. Heininger (ed.) *An den Schwellen des Lebens: Zur Geschlechterdifferenz in Ritualen des Übergangs*. Berlin: LIT, pp. 11–25.
- Wilhelm, G. (2009) Demographic data from Hittite land donation tablets. In F. Pecchioli-Daddi, G. Torri and C. Corti (eds) *central-North Anatolia in the Hittite Period: New Perspectives in Light of Recent Research*. Acts of the International Conference Held at the University of Florence (7–9 February 2007). Studia Asiana 5. Rome: Herder, pp. 223–233.

Cyprus



Chronology

3800–3500	Early Chalcolithic
3500–2800	Middle Chalcolithic
2800–2300	Late Chalcolithic
2500–2250	Philia Facies
2250–1900	Early Cypriot Bronze Age (EC)
2250–2075	EC I
2075–2000	EC II
2000–1900	EC III
1900–1600	Middle Cypriot Bronze Age (MC)
1900–1800	MC I
1800–1725	MC II
1725–1600	MC III
1600–1050	Late Cypriot Bronze Age (LC)
1600–1450	LC I
1450–1200	LC II
1200–1050	LC III
1050–950	Cypro-Geometric I
950–900	Cypro-Geometric II
900–750	Cypro-Geometric III
750–600	Cypro-Archaic I
600–475	Cypro-Archaic II
475–400	Cypro-Classical I
400–300	Cypro-Classical II
300–50 BCE	Hellenistic

Introduction

Although the Cypriots adopted a writing system in the mid-second millennium BCE, the language that it conveys is not yet legible. As such, the vast majority of information about Chalcolithic, Bronze Age, and Early Iron Age Cyprus must perforce come from archaeological materials and references to the island in foreign materials. Fortunately, there are numerous excellent excavations underway on the Island of Aphrodite providing data for all phases of Cypriot (pre)history. Furthermore, as a true crossroad of ancient civilizations, texts from the ancient Near East and the later Aegean fill in numerous gaps left by the continued incomprehensibility of the Bronze Age Cypro-Minoan script and language.

Cyprus was inhabited since the Neolithic. However, as the chapters in this part deal predominantly with Chalcolithic through Hellenistic Cyprus, this survey will begin in the fourth millennium. Chalcolithic (literally “Bronze-Stone,” and thus the “Copper” Age) remains have been excavated at Cape Andreas-Kastros, Khirokitia-Vounoi, Kalavassos-Tenta, Kalavassos-Ayios, Kissonerga-Mosphilia, Kissonerga-Mylouthkia, Lemba, Ayios Epiktitos-Vrysi, Souskiou, Aminos-Zorzakis, Khirokitia, Sotira-Teppes, and Erimi-Pamboula, *inter alia*. Villages are defined by conglomerations of round houses with central hearths and radiating space separators upon the floors. It is possible, based on finds of ritual

items in a specific section of some of these homes located in the southwest of the island, that early ritual was located within the household.

Adult burials were located in cemeteries away from the residential areas. Based on a single large such cemetery in the region of Souskiou-*Laona*, located between five close but independent villages, it is possible that separate villages recognized some kind of common political or religious identity. In contrast to adults, child burials are sometimes found within the houses, suggesting a different social identity for infants. The prominence of certain kinds of possibly elite body adornments, notably cruciform figures and dentalium beads associated exclusively with child and female burials, suggest a relatively high status for females during this early phase of Cypriot history.

It is generally now accepted that the Philia phase is the transitional period between the Chalcolithic and the Bronze Age, archaeologically evident especially at such sites as Vasilia, Philia, *Dhenia-Kafkalla*, *Episkopi-Bamboula*, *Kissonerga-Mosphilia*, *Marki-Alonia*, *Nicosia-Ayia Paraskevi*, and *Sotira-Kaminoudhia* amongst others. What brought about the transition from Chalcolithic to Bronze Age (via Philia) is still a matter of debate. One theory is that the transition was instigated by the arrival of a new population into Cyprus from southern Anatolia. The new pottery indicative of the Philia phase (Red Polished) is clearly distinct in color and shape from the earlier Chalcolithic wares, while the majority of Philia metal instruments are also without earlier, local antecedents. Instead, Red Polished Ware has forerunners in Anatolia, specifically in the region of Cilicia. By contrast, others have argued that the transition from Chalcolithic to Bronze Age was not dependent upon immigrants from Anatolia (although trade with Anatolia seems clear), but rather through changes in the Cypriot economy which had their heaviest impacts in the subsistence economy, notably in the introduction of new animals and ploughing technologies, and the increasing importance of copper mining and trade. This latter innovation led to the formation of an elite class who demanded foreign prestige items, thus increasing demand for the export of copper products. In either case, two things are evident: there is a distinct difference in the physical remains from the Chalcolithic culture and those from the Philia—rectilinear structures replaced circular domestic units, funerary goods were placed in graves, and graves themselves became more elaborate and often contained metal weapons. Likewise, some kind of contact with Anatolia is apparent, commingled to one extent or another with indigenous developments.

More important than the transition from the Copper Age to the Bronze Age was the decisive break between Early – early Middle Cypriot and Middle Cypriot III – Late Cypriot I. A. B. Knapp considers these two latter phases together and names them the Protohistoric Bronze Age, dating from 1700–1400 BCE. Perhaps the most important defining characteristic of this period is Cyprus's increased contacts with the other powers of the eastern Mediterranean. From the west, a Middle Minoan IA spouted jar appeared in a tomb at Lapithos at the end of Early Cypriot III, while at the dawn of the Middle Cypriot period a Middle Minoan Kamares-style cup appeared in a tomb in Karmi. Perhaps even more significant is the emergence of writing in Cyprus with the creation of Cypro-Minoan script, appearing between 1550–1500. The close similarity between this syllabary and that of Minoan Crete offers yet further evidence for close contacts between Crete and Cyprus.

To the east, growing contacts between Cyprus and the Near East are manifest textually and archaeologically. Ten Akkadian-language texts have come to light that bear the name *Alašiya*, the Bronze Age, Near Eastern name of Cyprus. Eight of these come from the Syrian city of Mari and are dated to the Old Babylonian period (c. 1750 BCE); while fragmentary, they all concern the importation and use of copper from *Alašiya*. Of the two documents from Syrian Alalakh, dated to the eighteenth century, one refers to Arammu the *Alašīyan*, while the other mentions 15 shekels of silver received from *Alašiya*.

Archaeologically, trade between Cyprus and the Near East is evident primarily in the dispersal of Cypriot pottery throughout the Levant. While MC I wares never leave the confines of Cyprus, MC II wares appear at Ugarit, Megiddo, and El-Lahun. The presence of Cypriot pottery in this region increases in MC III. In Palestine, MC wares have come to light at Tel el-‘Ajjul, Megiddo, Aškalon, Tanturah, Tel el-Far’ah (south), Gezer, Lachish, Tel el-Jerisheh, and Akko, while simultaneously Tell el-Yahudiya Ware makes its way to Cyprus. In Syria, MC wares have been found at Ugarit, Qal’at el-Rus, Tell Sukas, Kassabine, and Alalakh.

Beyond foreign relations, there are internal changes which mark the passage from Prehistoric Cyprus to Protohistoric (MC III–Late Cypriot). Public and ceremonial architecture begin to appear in urban centers; the social stratification, which began in the Early Cypriot Bronze Age, becomes increasingly apparent in mortuary practices and remains; copper mining and smelting increase significantly; and both fortifications and a new interest in weapons indicate a growing need for defense. In general, there is an economic rise based on control of

the copper supply and export of this material to the Near East and, to a lesser extent, the Aegean. Foreign prestige items begin to appear in greater numbers on the island as the latest elite affirms its place in the hierarchy.

That this hierarchy was important not only on the island but within the eastern Mediterranean community is supported by the correspondence between Cyprus and the Levant at this time. According to this textual evidence, Cyprus was not only well connected with the various political powers of the Near East, but the Cypriot king was recognized as one of the high kings of the Bronze Age international milieu. The Akkadian-language letters from the King of Alashiya to the King of Egypt discovered at Amarna all show the king of Cyprus addressing the Egyptian pharaoh as “brother,” the form of address used between peer kings in the Amarna Age. Later, in the thirteenth century, the island, or some parts of it, came under the hegemony of the Hittites.

Cyprus remained relatively stable at the fall of the Bronze Age, certainly in comparison to places such as Mycenaean Greece or Ugarit, and the collapse of the Hittite Empire left the island once again wholly independent. Evidence of the twelfth-century calamities are most apparent in a wave of destructions throughout the island and the overall population decline evident on the island at this time. Sites with evidence of violence at the transition from Late Cypriot II to LC III include Enkomi, Kition, *Maa-Paleokastro*, and *Pyla-Kokkinokremos*. Other sites, such as Kalavassos, Maroni, and *Morphou-Toumba tou Skourou* were abandoned altogether. Nevertheless, considerable continuity was also apparent on the island. In spite of the wave of destruction, Enkomi, Palaepaphos, Kition, and Kourion all continued in quite prosperous existence with full urban populations. Graves at the cemeteries of Palaepaphos reveal foreign goods and prestige items—gold, worked ivory—indicating that not only did this city survive, but thrived, and similar data come from the Bronze Age metropolis of Enkomi. Furthermore, sites such as Enkomi and *Pyla-Kokkinokremos* show evidence of fortification at the end of the Bronze Age, and it has been argued that the signs of depopulation are somewhat ameliorated when considering that much of the “missing” population may have relocated to the urban, fortified centers on the island. Even the final evanescence of major urban centers, such as Enkomi and Hala Sultan Tekke, can be explained more by environmental factors than military: When their harbors silted up, they moved to Salamis and Kition, respectively.

One major change over the transition from the Bronze Age to the

Iron Age was the Hellenization of Cyprus. It is commonly assumed (and frequently debated) that Mycenaean refugees settled on relatively stable, prosperous Cyprus starting in the early twelfth century. The first so-recognized settlement was at Maa-Palaeokastro on the west coast, with the Aegean population there soon moving south to Palaepaphos. A second, potentially Cretan wave of immigration is recognized (and debated) for the early eleventh century. It was during this century that the earliest known Greek inscription appeared on the island. A bronze spit was discovered in a tomb at Palaepaphos bearing the Greek name *Opheltes* written in Syllabo-Cypriot, the Iron Age form of writing that replaced the earlier Cypro-Minoan script.

In the ninth century, colonization came from a different direction, as the Phoenicians established a permanent settlement at the site of Kition in c.850 BCE. The old sanctuary center was resuscitated and expanded, and the great temple once dedicated to a Cypriot goddess associated with gardens and bronze-working came to be dedicated to Phoenician Astart, to whom inscribed votives were dedicated at the sanctuary and whose bureaucratic records were preserved. Henceforth, the island was divided into three primary ethnic groups: Eteocypriot (the indigenous population), Greek, and Phoenician. Some cities were more distinctively indigenous than others, notably the royal city Amathus on the island's south coast. Others, such as Paphos, were decidedly Greek, while Kition remained distinctly Phoenician. Nevertheless, trade and communications fared well on Cyprus, with all of the separate cities-turned-kingdoms in correspondence and interaction with each other.

By the eighth century, Cyprus was divided into several relatively independent city-kingdoms, still ethnically distinct, with local elites who established their authority through displays of goods acquired from the east. By the sixth century, imported pottery from Greece—especially east Greece and Attika—increased in number, and Cyprus began copying Greek sculptural styles. Early in the fifth century, Cyprus backed Athens and the Ionian poleis in their bid for freedom against the Persians, and much of Cyprus's international relations during the fifth and fourth centuries pertained to their relations with Persia. Briefly, at the start of the fourth century, Evagoras I of Salamis managed to stave off Persian influence on the island while turning west to Athens. It was during his reign that the Greek alphabet started to replace the Cypriot Syllabary, leading to the further Hellenization of the island. It was also during this century that the Greek name, "Aphrodite," first appeared on the island, replacing the goddess's regional, indigenous titles of *Wanassa* ("Queen"), *Paphia* ("The Paphian"), and *Kypria* ("The Cyprian").

Alexander the Great never technically went to Cyprus, merely passing by on his way to Tyre in 322 BCE. Nevertheless, he laid his claim to the island by minting his own coinage there. Upon Alexander's death, the rival Ptolemy and Antigonid dynasties fought for the island, with the Egyptian kingdom winning control of Cyprus in 312 BCE. The island remained a Hellenistic possession until 58 BCE, when the Ptolemies gave Cyprus to Rome as a good-will gift, and the island became annexed to the *provincia* of Cilicia.

Further reading

- Given, M. (2000) Cyprus. In G. Speake (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Greece and the Hellenic Tradition*. London: Fitzroy Dearborn, pp. 427–430.
- Steel, L. (2004) *Cyprus Before History: From the Earliest Settlers to the End of the Bronze Age*. London: Duckworth.

REAL BONES, REAL WOMEN, REAL LIVES

Bioarchaeology and osteobiographies of women in ancient Cyprus

Kirsi O. Lorentz

Introduction

This chapter introduces to the reader a number of real women who lived on the island of Cyprus during different periods in the past, ranging from prehistoric periods through to the medieval period. Inferences on the lives of these real women are made through their physical remains, that is through bones and teeth that preserve in their structure, composition and appearance a record of various life events, augmented by contextual mortuary data. The bones and teeth (and other tissues deriving from the human body, where available) yield an increasing array of data relevant to individual life histories, as well as contributing to population level research, through methods and techniques both traditional and cutting edge. The positioning of the bones, as found during excavation and when recorded in detail, together with other contextual data, contain information on the treatment of the bodies of these women at death. In comparison with other mortuary remains from the corresponding periods, they also allow inferences as regards the standardized or normative versus exceptional nature of their treatment at death. The chapter focuses on real women in their various roles, functions and experiences in the past, whether it is in the context of birth or death, or the various aspects of life in the period as accessed through the actual bodily remains of these women, including health and disease; body modification, aesthetics and visual appearance; social relations, repetitive activity or work.

bioarchaeology of individuals

The focus on (individual) women in ancient Cyprus arises from a request framed within the overall volume theme (*Women in Antiquity: Real Women Across the Ancient World*). When we single out women as a focus of archaeological writing and inquiry, we implicitly refer to a form of identity, and gender in particular – women in relation with, in contrast to, in comparison with, men and other genders. While archaeologists have attempted to study identity through several different avenues and varied archaeological remains (see, e.g. Insoll 2007), including employing data derived from human remains, the attempts by bioarchaeologists to employ their data towards social interpretations with a focus on identity issues is a somewhat more recent phenomenon (see, e.g. Gowland and Knusel 2006; Agarwal and Glencross 2011). It is a challenging undertaking, as only some differential practices relating to cultural identity leave traces on the human skeleton and/or dentition, and any observed differences may be caused by a variety of other phenomena in addition to these cultural practices. Further, while identity in archaeology continues to form the focus of theoretical debates, such theoretical discussions often take place in separate fora from physical anthropological ones. Theoretically informed bioarchaeology is however a necessary starting point for the investigation of any aspect of identity through human remains.

Archaeological and bioarchaeological focuses have shifted between individual and population level studies in connection with various paradigm shifts. Very early studies of human remains by medical doctors and other such specialists often focused on prominent individuals discovered by early explorers and archaeologists. After a predominantly population level focus advocated within processual archaeology, there has been a growing emphasis on exploring individuals, and publications on theoretically informed approaches to the bioarchaeology of individuals have been on the rise in recent years (see, e.g. Stodder and Palkovich 2012; Zvelebil and Weber 2013). Several such works set out to consider the articulation of the individual with broader cultural patterns and structures (White 2009).

Zvelebil and Weber draw attention to the ‘paramount importance of documenting and understanding what people [as individuals] do on daily bases and how they differ from each other in their needs, preferences, choices, decisions, and strategies developed and employed to satisfy them’ (2013: 275, brackets mine). They note that the ‘approach of *individual life histories* has been facilitated by a rapid

growth in the area of bio- and archaeological sciences, and in human osteology' (ibid.). While Zvelebil and Weber advocate the emphasis on individuals (rather than groups or cultures) as it feeds naturally into the modern scientific-evolutionary archaeology focusing on mechanisms generating human cultural diversity (ibid.), Stodder and Palkovich (2012: 2) advocate the focus on individuals in their own right.

Within the context of explicitly scientific, adaptation oriented 'new physical anthropology' and 'new archaeology', skeletal populations have been analysed to 'document major biocultural trends in human adaptation' and individuals have seldom been the subject of research (Stodder and Palkovich 2012: 2). Human remains studies have been justified most often by reference to their contribution to understanding big questions about the evolution of our species (think impact of agriculture or the emergence or reemergence of diseases) (ibid.). While such approaches are important and valid, we should not ignore and neglect other avenues of research and potential further data on the past: the study of individuals can be a complementary domain to the 'populational framework of bioarchaeology' (Stodder and Palkovich 2012: 2). Explaining away, or even deleting unusual individuals as outliers normalizes the data, and abstraction of data with the aim of generating data characterizing age and sex groups, social classes and 'populations' ignores the heterogeneity and variety inherent in bioarchaeological data (Joyce 2005: 149; Stodder and Palkovich 2012: 2). Further, focusing solely on population level data distances the study of skeletal remains from the lives of the people we study (Goldstein 2006; Stodder and Palkovich 2012: 2).

Joyce recognizes the key position of human remains studies in opening up avenues for exploring embodied experience (Joyce 2005: 148–149), in the form of data on bodily practices, habitual gestures and postures, and consumption practices. Intentional bodily modifications can also be studied in order to make inferences on both the process and the visual impact of such practices on cultural marking and differentiation.

Following the publication of a volume on *The Bioarchaeology of Individuals* and a variety of papers drawing attention to individual life histories (see, e.g. Zvelebil and Weber 2013), the time seems ripe to also engage more fully in the bioarchaeology of individual women in Cyprus. Such studies are best undertaken not in isolation but, where possible, in the context of population data, which provide the framework for interpreting data derived from the analysis of specific individuals, together with the contextual archaeological data.

In particular, this chapter explores specific women's identity and individual life histories through the real bones of these real women, focusing on specific case studies illustrating the way bioarchaeology in Cyprus can be used to explore the embodied traces left by health and disease; body modification and aesthetic ideals; social relations, repetitive activity or work, as well as the treatment of specific women in mortuary contexts.

Cypriot archaeological human remains are often relatively poorly preserved, due to a combination of factors deriving from soil chemistry, taphonomy and ancient burial practices, as well as the vagaries of recovery and curation. Studies of consumption patterns (through stable isotope analyses), another avenue to explore individual osteobiographies, have been largely hampered by soil chemistry and bone diagenesis. Lack of sufficient amounts of well-preserved joint surfaces hamper studies of habitual movement patterns and repetitive postures, but some data have been preserved, especially in the dentition (see case studies below). Contrarily, Cyprus presents a fertile ground for studies of bodily modification and intentional cultural cranial modification in particular. The earliest approaches to cultural cranial modification (headshaping) in Cyprus, at the inception of physical anthropological activity on the island, are best viewed in the context of Joyce's category of studies focusing on the body as a site of display (2005: 139, 151), with characteristically no explicit theoretical discussion and reductive views on gender, typical of the time period and cultural contexts within which these academic studies took place. More recent approaches have begun to address the processes and phenomena leading to modification, more akin to Joyce's 'social body' approaches (2005: 139, 151), exploring the role of cranial modification practices in the construction of identities (see, e.g. Lorentz 2007, with references).

To put such studies of Cypriot material in context, bioarchaeological studies with relevance to investigating identity in the ancient Eastern Mediterranean (e.g. studies of food consumption, bodily movement and body modification) are being conducted, but explicit reference to theoretical discussions on archaeologies of identity is mostly lacking, save for a few exceptions (further references in Lorentz in press).

Therefore, the following case studies on real women in ancient Cyprus form a valuable contribution not only towards understandings of specific individual osteobiographies, and of identity, gender and the female embodied experience, but also towards expanding the scope of explicitly theoretically informed bioarchaeology in Cyprus.

Case studies: portraits of real women in ancient Cyprus

In order to reduce the distancing effect of terminology (see also the discussion in the preceding section), the individuals are referred to in the below case studies as ‘women’, rather than as ‘female’, though the latter is clearly the term of choice within standard bioarchaeological treatise.

Being a woman at Neolithic Khirokitia: aesthetics, body modification, visual appearance and social relations

A woman in her thirties or early forties was buried on the settlement now named Khirokitia, but when she was likely to have lived there during the Neolithic times (c.8000– c.6500 BP), it most probably went by a different name. She is not exceptional in that she was buried on the settlement site – many other individuals, including women, men and children were also interred within or between the structures termed *tholoi* by archaeologists. The site of Khirokitia is located near the southern coast of Cyprus, on a promontory flanked by streams. When archaeologists recovered her remains (Angel 1953; Dikaïos 1953), they gave a designation to her cranium and marked it with Khir 45. What is special about this individual, and a few other women buried on the same site, is that the shape of their heads was affected by an extensive, extreme form of intentional modification (antero-posterior type), brought about during infancy, when the cranial bones are still growing, and are malleable.

Common features of antero-posterior headshaping at Khirokitia include the following: shortening of the cranium in the antero-posterior dimension, with occipital flattening (occipital reduction) centering on one of the following three regions: slightly superior to lambda (posterior part of sagittal suture), at lambda, or inferior to lambda (on occipital squama). The most affected cranial elements are always the parietals: their curvature is increased, and there is visible expansion laterally to compensate for the lack of antero-posterior growth space. This kind of headshaping can be brought about by the use of a board or another flat item bandaged to the posterior aspect of the head (it is not necessary to have a corresponding board at the forehead, though this has been used in many cultures), including the use of cradleboards (see skull diagram in Monge and Selinsky, this volume).

The presence of modification itself is not exceptional in that most if

not all individuals buried at Khirokitia, including men, women and children, display culturally modified crania (head shapes), but what is particularly interesting about this woman, together with a few other women (Khirokitia 13, 20, 38, 113 and 122), is that the extent to which her head shape was modified is more extensive than in the other individuals buried on the site. Eight such individuals with extreme modification have been recovered from Dikaio's excavations on the site (66 crania out of the 86 recovered were complete enough to allow assessment of presence or absence of headshaping; Lorentz 2003), and six of those are female, with one possible adult male, and one child of 9.5–9.8 years of age, who may or may not have been female (sub-adult age estimation cannot be reliably performed based on skeletal morphology).

Variation in the degree of severity of cultural cranial modification is marked within the Khirokitia mortuary population and this can be employed to investigate further the possibility of gender differential headshaping. Headshaping has been employed as a marker of socio-cultural difference in several prehistoric and more recent societies, including denotation of differences in gender, status and socio-cultural group affiliation. Aesthetics are also an important consideration as regards headshaping. Within the Khirokitia mortuary population studied, the visually extreme (and the visual impact of headshaping was most likely the key motivating factor for this cultural practice) cases of headshaping are all female, apart from the one possible male, and a child whose sex cannot be morphologically estimated. It also seems that more often than not the female crania display evidence of clear to moderate headshaping, while more males are included in the mildest category of headshaping (Lorentz 2003: 250). Therefore, the presence or absence of headshaping at Khirokitia is not gendered, but its intensity seems to be. The woman 'named' Khir 45 received in infancy a treatment that marked her out, visually drawing attention to her gendered role/s in life, but this treatment was clearly undertaken within a wider context of body modification involving infants of both male and female sex. The absence of related postcranial remains and the lack of contextual detail, not least due to the absence of a key between burial numbers (as recovered in the field), and skeletal numbers (as used by Angel in the laboratory), prevents more comprehensive discussion of further aspects of this woman's life. It may reasonably be assumed, however, given what is outlined above, that the extensive form of modification clearly apparent as to her head shape, would have visually marked her out, making reference to the aesthetic preferences of the time, as well as her particular gendered role/s.

An elite woman at Late Bronze Age Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios: death and burial

This section focuses on a woman who was buried during the Late Bronze Age period at the site of Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios near the southern coast of Cyprus, drawing attention to the treatment of this particular woman at death, as well as illustrating further aspects of Late Bronze Age burial practice relevant to women of high status. The woman in question, named 'Skeleton 1' by the excavators, was found in Tomb 11 dating to Late Cypriot IIA, together with two other women, a 3-year-old child and three infants or fetuses around term (37.3 ± 2.08 weeks to 39.4 ± 2.08 weeks according to Moyer (1989: 64–65); see also Goring 1989) at Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios, an urban centre of Late Cypriot (LC) II period (c.450– c.1200 BCE), flourishing in the Late Cypriot IIC before being abandoned and destroyed (South 1997).

The tomb was found undisturbed, containing a rich array of artefacts (Goring 1989).¹ The woman whose remains constitute 'Skeleton 1' was about 19–20 years of age at death. Her skeleton and dentition display signs of a few minor pathologies only. These include a single carious lesion (on the left mandibular second molar, at the buccal pit), and 'minimal dental calculus' on the bucco-lingual aspects of the mandibular incisors (Moyer 1989: 65), as well as a resorptive lesion on the medial half of the distal articular surface of a proximal hand phalanx. The minor erosive pitting and marginal proliferation observed can be interpreted in the context of degenerative joint disease, for which Moyer suggests a traumatic origin in this case, given the age of the individual and the lack of any such lesions elsewhere in the hand bones (ibid.).

The other two women found within the tomb were also relatively young, one between 21–24 years old, and another about 17 years old at death. The 19- to 20-year-old woman (Skeleton 1) was laid out on a bench carved onto the Western part of the tomb chamber ('the west bench'; Goring 1989: 101). Such benches are a usual feature within Late Bronze Age tombs, and indeed there is 'nothing remarkable about the tomb itself, whose features can be paralleled individually, although not all together, in other Late Bronze Age tombs' (Goring 1989: 98; Keswani 1989). She was buried with an impressive set of jewellery, the components of which were found in situ on and around her skeletal remains, indicating their deposition initially as worn on the body. When deposited in the tomb, she wore six gold earrings, four gold spirals (for hair or ears), at least one necklace, two golden

signet rings, and two silver rings on her toes. All the items worn on the body at the time of deposition to the tomb showed sufficient signs of wear to indicate that these items had also been worn (by her?) during life (Goring 1989: 103). In addition to the jewellery found on or near the remains of this woman and the other two women placed on the east bench, a number of other items were found on the floor of the tomb, 'almost all of a luxurious nature' (Goring 1989: 102), including items of gold, ivory, glass and special types of pottery including Red Lustrous Ware vessels. Based on these finds this tomb has been termed an 'elite tomb' by researchers. Within this context, given the workmanship and decoration on other artefacts and jewellery within the tomb, and the availability of decorative types of earrings during the period in question, it is remarkable that the six gold earrings found on the 19- to 20-year-old woman consisted of simple and plain gold hoops. Goring (1989: 103) interprets this using the weight of these plain hoops, corresponding closely to a weight standard of 10.8g argued to be in use in the Late Cypriot period (Courtois 1984: 114–134). Based on this, Goring goes on to put forward the idea that these plain earrings were not only intended to be worn as adornment, but as signs of wealth and even as units of convertible currency. In the Late Bronze Age Tomb 18 at Enkomi, a comparable set of six earrings has been found, and the weight of further earrings on the east bench, as well as the gold spirals found within Tomb 11 at Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios are consistent with such a theory (Goring 1989: 103–104).

While the 19- to 20-year-old woman was laid out fully articulated and undisturbed on the west bench, the two other young women (Sk 2 and Sk 3) were both placed on the smaller east bench, in secondary arrangements. The remains of the 21- to 24-year-old woman were found scattered on the east bench and on the floor adjacent to the bench, with her cranium and some vertebrae at the North end of the east bench. Not all skeletal elements were represented within the recovered material (Goring 1989: 100). The remains of the c.17-year-old (Sk 3) had gone through substantial rearrangement: while the smaller bone elements of the skeleton lay scattered all over the east bench, and the cranium at the south end of the bench, the larger long bones had been paired and placed along the bench, including the pairing of an upper limb bone with a lower one, and upper leg bone with a lower one (ibid.). The majority of the 3-year-old's remains were found on the floor, with his/her (or another child's of the same age) deciduous (milk) teeth on one of the benches. The three young infants were also found on the floor, their remains mixed with disarticulated fish and bird bones, densely concentrated within a defined, roughly

circular area on the floor. This points to secondary deposition, probably within a single container that has not survived. According to Goring, the tomb appears to be for a selected group, as it contained only young women and children (1989: 102), all presumably of elite status.

There are few undisturbed mortuary contexts of Late Bronze Age date in Cyprus, and this continues to hamper statistical and population level inquiries. The ‘thick description’ of this particular 19- to 20-year-old from Tomb 11 at Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios allows us to employ the available data usefully towards a different purpose, within the context outlined in the introduction to this chapter.

Precariousness of giving birth at Kition around 400 BCE

A highly decorated architectural type marble sarcophagus resembling the shape of a Greek-type temple, recovered from a tomb in Larnaca (Tomb 128), contained not one but two individuals, as discovered during the bioarchaeological analyses of the human remains following recovery by the Department of Antiquities of Cyprus: the remains of a young adult woman, together with the remains of an individual at 38 foetal weeks (Lorentz *et al.* 2011). This sarcophagus (sarcophagus A) was originally deposited within a tomb of rectangular shape, cut into bedrock, together with two other sarcophagi (Georgiou 2009, 2012; Flourentzos 2011), one of anthropomorphic shape (sarcophagus B) and another rectangular, but simpler, sarcophagus (sarcophagus C) with apparently no painted decorations and made of local limestone (Georgiou 2009: 116).

The sarcophagus within which the young female and the foetus/new born were discovered (sarcophagus A) was unfortunately found with its lid broken and artefact assemblage clearly looted. After bioarchaeological analyses (Lorentz *et al.* 2011), it does seem however that the looters did not intentionally set out to remove any of the human remains from the sarcophagus. The features of the sarcophagus make reference to ancient Greek temples, and both the lid and the base of the sarcophagus were richly decorated on all sides, with colours that remain vibrant even today, including finely executed floral and other botanical motifs as well as scenes with anthropomorphic mythological figures. The scientific analyses of the colours show a rich palette and a high level of know-how (Lorentz *et al.* 2011: 115). The sarcophagus is dated to c.400 BCE (Georgiou 2009).

The woman deposited within the sarcophagus, presumably with rich jewellery as indicated by what remains after looting (Georgiou 2012), died at the age of about 20–22 years (Lorentz *et al.* 2011). What remains of the jewellery and other items originally deposited, after extensive looting, includes alabaster vessels, a gold ring, a gold earring (both items display high technical skill in their execution), a silver pin and some faience objects thought to be fragments of a woman's make-up set (Flourentzos 2011: 31–32; Georgiou 2012: 407–408). All aspects of the depositional context, the sarcophagus itself with its raw material and decorations, and what remains of the artefact assemblage originally buried, point to a high-status individual. Georgiou posits that Tomb 128 'belonged to a distinguished family of the Phoenician community of Kition' (2009: 136, 2012: 410).

This high-status young woman was about 160–163 cm tall (± 5 cm) when she died. Her bones and teeth preserve no evidence of significant health stress, though there is some evidence of childhood health stress in the form of enamel hypoplasia and some very moderate bone changes on a limited number of bone elements. The foetal/infant remains within the sarcophagus can be assumed to belong to either a foetus close to term carried by the female when she died, a still-born infant (the woman had delivered the dead baby at or prior to the time of her death), or an infant already born, but deceased at or shortly after birth.

While an acute illness may have led to the death of this woman, the hypothesis that she died of some pregnancy/birthing-related complications may also be forwarded. Birth and the immediate time period that follows are precarious times for both mother and child, and it is a reasonable hypothesis to make that the woman and the infant both died due to complications relating to birth. (See also Budin, "Cyprus," this volume.) In ancient times, the death of the mother may often have led to the death of an otherwise viable newborn too, due to the lack of sufficiently nutritious and immune-system-boosting alternatives to the mother's milk (whether from the biological mother or a wet nurse). The material and contextual evidence for the high status of this woman indicates that she would have likely had access to the best care available in Cyprus at the time during her pregnancy, at the time of birth and/or the time period following birth. This wealthy background of the woman would likely also have enabled her, or her surviving relatives, to provide the best care available to any newborn live infant. While the profession of obstetrics arises only much later, women specializing in assisting in birth (midwives), wet nurses, feeding bottles and even ancient forms

of breast pumps (Obladen 2012) are known from ancient times. All this, however, seems not to have been enough to save the life of this young woman, or that of her baby.

Seamstress from seventh- to eleventh-century Polis Chrysochous: repetitive activity, work, and social status

The woman we focus on from seventh- to eleventh-century CE Cyprus was buried at the site of Polis Chrysochous, on the northwest coast of Cyprus. Her grave (Burial 2005–2; Baker *et al.* 2012: 151) was discovered in an area interpreted by the excavators as a ‘lower-status’ burial area, due to its location outside rather than inside a basilica, and the less elaborate graves (simple subsurface pits with few or no lining stones, rather than the more elaborate ones inside the basilica) located there. The woman, whose remains were discovered with a bone needle next to the right thighbone (femur), and a rounded, small ground stone chipped on one surface only, was in her thirties when she died. The artefacts included in her grave suggested to Baker *et al.* that she may have been a seamstress (i.e. a woman expert at sewing; *ibid.* 155). Baker and colleagues therefore proceeded to investigate the osteobiography of this woman, looking for activity induced skeletal and dental changes that would be consistent with stress caused by the kind of repetitive activity attributed to tailors and seamstresses. However, Baker *et al.* qualify their use of the term ‘seamstress’ by noting that they ‘imply only that she sewed regularly over her lifetime and did not necessarily practice sewing as an occupation’ (*ibid.*).

Several grooves were observed on the distolingual interproximal surfaces of both maxillary lateral incisors (Baker *et al.* 2012: 156). The grooves were less than 1.0 mm in width and were most likely caused by drawing thread or fibre alongside the teeth. The woman also displayed labial-lingual notches on the mandibular incisors, which also project anteriorly and show alveolar resorption and heavy occlusal wear. This malocclusion and wear suggests that she regularly held and pulled material with her front teeth. The grooves suggest cutting thread, or holding thread or pins. The osteoarthritic changes on the mandibular condyles are also consistent with her use of her anterior teeth as tools.

The more developed muscle attachments on her right metacarpals in comparison with those on the left are consistent with a condition known as seamstress’s fingers (Baker *et al.* 2012: 156, with references), with further, related changes on the right clavicle. The

morphological changes of the bones of her legs and feet indicate habitual squatting or kneeling (ibid.). She displays more advanced osteoarthritic changes than would be expected for an individual of her age.

The kind of bone needle found with her would have been suitable for working with heavy or coarse material, rather than more fine work, such as embroidery (Baker *et al.* 2012: 158). Further, the rounded, small ground stone found with her has been interpreted as a utensil to push or hammer a needle through thick material, such as animal hide, or to use in conjunction with a metal or bone awl to puncture holes in such thick materials, in preparation for sewing with needle and thread (ibid. 159).

While the skeletal and dental changes found on the remains of this woman are the first of their kind for the period in question, remains of other women from a later period in Cyprus (fifteenth to sixteenth century CE; the Venetian period) have been found bearing similar dental grooves, notches and wear at the site of Malloura (Harper 2006). The dental grooves, notches and wear found at Polis Chrysochous and Malloura women differ from those found by Erdal (2008) at tenth-century CE Kovuklukaya (Anatolia) running transversely across women's teeth, and interpreted as resulting from wetting fibres when spinning yarn into cord. While higher-status women have also engaged in sewing activities (see the following case study), it is clear from the contextual evidence that this seventh- to eleventh-century woman belonged rather to a group of people with somewhat lower status.

The leprous woman from fifteenth-century Polis Chrysochous: disease, debility and social relations

Our last case study concerns a woman aged between 20–34 years at death, found buried within a basilica at Polis Chrysochous (Burial 11). The burial dates to the early fifteenth century CE. Her body was in a supine, extended position, head to the west, feet to the east, forearms across the abdomen and ankles crossed left over right – a typical Christian burial position of the time (Baker and Bolhofner 2014: 17). A coin minted in Cyprus (reign of Janus, 1398–1432) was recovered from the screening of burial fill (ibid.). Baker and Bolhofner present a detailed description of osseous manifestations evident on the remains of this woman, and a differential diagnosis, concluding that ‘the full array of skeletal manifestations is consistent with lepromatous leprosy,

indicating low resistance to the infection' (2014: 21). How did this disease (leprosy) affect this woman biologically and socially at the particular period (medieval) during which she lived in Cyprus? Baker and Bolhofner outline the biological impairment evident through this woman's remains by correlating the pathology present with clinical evidence relating to leprosy (2014: 21), as well as comment on the social consequences of leprosy in medieval Cyprus, with particular reference to this woman.

Untreated leprosy causes weakening or impairment of normal function, but is not typically fatal by itself (Baker and Bolhofner 2014: 21). However, affected individuals tend to die younger than the general population from which they originate. The woman from Polis Chrysochous suffered from advanced lepromatous leprosy based on the pathology evident, was affected by the disease for more than ten years, and died before reaching the most commonly represented age groups within the Polis mortuary population (middle or old adulthood; *ibid.* 21). The most likely onset of her disease therefore took place in childhood or adolescence, and her debility (weakening or impairment of normal functions) would have progressed through her teens and twenties: red, tender nodules on face, trunk and extremities in early stages; anaemia and difficulty breathing (nasal obstruction from rhinitis) coupled with mouth breathing promoting gingivitis, plaque and calculus. The extensive calculus deposits evident on the woman's teeth were most likely coupled with pronounced halitosis (colloquially known as 'bad breath'; a noticeably unpleasant odour present on the exhaled breath). In the later stages, collapse of her nose (loss of anterior nasal spine in her remains) would have been obvious. Facial paralysis and blindness is possible in advanced cases. Sensory and motor impairment in hands/arms and feet/legs, and extensive pain in face, trunk or limbs would have been likely. Ulcerations in midfoot, flat feet and other features point to deteriorating mobility, progressive loss of sensation and muscle paralysis in her feet. This would have first altered her gait and eventually made it difficult, or even impossible, for her to walk (*ibid.* 22).

What can be said about the social experiences of this woman given her disease? While leprosy brings segregation to the mind of the contemporary reader, there is little evidence for this in Cyprus prior to the Ottoman period (Baker and Bolhofner 2014: 22). Noticeable facial disfigurement is thought to have led to enforced segregation in later Middle Ages in Europe, but more recently historical scholarship indicates variation in the social responses to leprosy in Europe during the Middle Ages, not necessarily involving segregation or ostracism

(ibid., with references). The young woman from Polis Chrysochous clearly displayed facial disfigurement, as well as debility that would have been recognized at the time as leprosy. However, contextual and bioarchaeological evidence suggests that she was not segregated or ostracized, at least not during the whole course of her illness, and certainly not at death: she was buried within the narthex of the basilica, indicating that she most likely was part of the privileged or influential members of the community (Baker and Bolhofner 2014: 23). The disfigurement and impairment clearly evident at the time of her death did not lead to differential mortuary treatment or segregation in her case. Bioarchaeological evidence in the form of a notch and groove at the incisal edge of the right maxillary central incisor indicates her long-term participation in textile work (e.g. sewing, lace making, spinning), corresponding to similar notches and grooves present in around 70 per cent of the Polis Chrysochous women. In order for such notches and grooves to develop on dental enamel, repetitive use of teeth as tools for textile work over many years is necessary – it seems that the young woman would have started to work with textiles relatively young, continuing possibly for as long as she was able. Ethnographic research shows that sewing, lace making and spinning are often done by a group of women, rather than alone, and the young woman from Burial 11 may very well have been part of such groups at some point during her life course.

Cross (1999) notes that the notion of disability is socially constructed, and thus inferences on whether or not this woman viewed herself, or was viewed by others, as disabled during the course of her illness (see Baker and Bolhofner 2014: 21), cannot be made without additional contextual evidence, including potential written sources.

Discussion and conclusions

What can these ‘portraits’ of real, individual women from different time periods of Cypriot past tell us? Focusing on different aspects of activity and experience, including bodily aesthetics and gender differentiation, mortuary practices, birth and its precariousness, work, disease and debility, and social relations and status, we have gained insights into contextualized aspects of life experience both in forms that are specific to women either due to biology (e.g. birth) or due to cultural conventions (e.g. textile work at Polis Chrysochous), but also to those that go beyond gender groupings (e.g. disease and debility, bodily aesthetics, mortuary practices). It is hoped that by focusing on specific and real women from different time periods in ancient Cyprus,

through their actual bodily remains (real bones), a more vivid picture of real lives has been achieved to counter the ‘monochrome’ bioarchaeology at population level. While the latter is crucial in several respects for furthering our understanding of the past, its distancing effect can be countered by complementary focus on real individuals from the past, be they women, men or other genders; young or old; sick or healthy; of high or low status.

Another aspect that arises from these case studies focusing on ancient Cypriot women, when viewed as a group, is the variability of archaeological remains and their preservation and how these aspects affect the kind of data and interpretations that can be gleaned from remains deriving from specific periods or contexts. While it is possible to discuss bodily aesthetics and ornamentation based on, e.g. the case studies on the woman from Neolithic Khirokitia and the young woman from Late Bronze Age Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios, it is less possible to do so regarding the woman with leprosy from Polis Chrysochous – not because of her illness but more due to the lack of relevant contextual, textual or bioarchaeological evidence. Thus our interpretations regarding aspects of women’s life experiences will be necessarily incomplete, whether the focus rests on real individuals or at the level of populations.

The variety of roles and spheres in which women in ancient Cyprus were active (birth giver, worker, high- and low-status women), as well as the various aspects and stages of life it would have been necessary for them to negotiate (birth, disease, debility, death), are also thrown into relief by the case studies when viewed as a whole.

Future research directions could include accumulating further ‘thick descriptions’ or osteobiographies of real women (and real people in general), representing more variety as to their backgrounds and contexts as well as further time periods.² It is also hoped that up-to-date and cutting edge analyses at population level become more possible when the quality of recovery and recording of further discoveries, including human remains, increases in Cyprus. In the meantime, it is hoped that these ‘portraits’ of real women, obtained through their bones, throw enough light on their lives to encourage more researchers to undertake detailed studies of ancient Cypriot people, both as individuals and as part of larger groups and populations.

Notes

- 1 While the age estimates and a short summary of some results of physical anthropological analyses of the human skeletal remains from Tomb 11 have already been published within the Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios monograph series (Moyer 1989), the contextual data and analyses of artefacts have yet to be published and are expected to form a part of Vasilikos Valley Project volume 4: Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios III: Tombs 9, 11–21 (in preparation). Reference is therefore made to Goring 1989. For comparative purposes, a fuller publication of physical anthropological data, with a detailed inventory, would be required.
- 2 See, e.g. Michaelides (2014: 10) for a mention of a fifth- to sixth-century CE woman from Agioi Pente (Yeroskipou) with Pott's disease, the bioarchaeological analysis of which is unpublished.

References

- Agarwal, S. C. and Glencross, B. A. (eds) (2011) *Social Bioarchaeology*. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Angel, J. L. (1953) The human remains from Khirokitia. In P. Dikaios (ed.) *Khirokitia*. London: Oxford University Press, pp. 413–430.
- Baker, B. J. and Bolhofner, K. L. (2014) Biological and social implications of a medieval burial from Cyprus for understanding leprosy in the past. *International Journal of Paleopathology* 4: 17–24.
- Baker, B. J., Terhune, C. E. and Papalexandrou, A. (2012) Sew long? The osteobiography of a woman from Medieval Polis, Cyprus. In A. L. W. Stodder and A. M. Palkovich (eds) *The Bioarchaeology of Individuals*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida.
- Courtois, J.-C. (1984) *Alasia III. Les Objets des Niveaux Stratifiés d'Enkomi: Fouilles C. F.-A. Schaeffer (1947–1970)*. Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations.
- Cross, M. (1999) Accessing the inaccessible: Disability and archaeology. *Archaeol. Rev. Cambridge* 15: 7–30.
- Dikaios, P. (1953) *Khirokitia*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Erdal, Y. S. (2008) Occlusal grooves in anterior dentition among Kovuklukaya inhabitants (Sinop, Northern Anatolia, 10th century AD). *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 18(2): 152–166.
- Flourentzos, P. (2011) *Two Exceptional Sarcophagi from Larnaca*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Department of Antiquities.
- Georgiou, G. (2009) Three stone sarcophagi from a Cypro-Classical tomb at Kition. *Cahiers du centre d'Etudes Chypriotes* 39: 113–139.
- Georgiou, G. (2012) Κίτιον Ταφός 128. *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus, 2010*, pp. 399–435 (in Greek).
- Goldstein, L. (2006) Mortuary analysis and bioarchaeology. In J. E. Buikstra and L. A. Beck (eds) *Bioarchaeology: The Contextual Analysis of Human Remains*. Burlington, MA: Academic Press, pp. 375–387.

- Goring, E. (1989) Death in everyday life: Aspects of burial practice in the Late Bronze Age. In E. Peltenburg (ed.) *Early Society in Cyprus*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 95–105.
- Gowland, R. and Knusel, C. (eds) (2006) *Social Archaeology of Funerary Remains*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow Books.
- Harper, N. (2006) Industrial dental wear from Venetian period Cyprus. Poster presented at the 16th European Meeting of the Paleopathology Association, Santorini, Greece.
- Insoll, T. (ed.) (2007) *The Archaeology of Identities: A Reader*. New York: Routledge.
- Joyce, R. A. (2005) Archaeology of the body. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34: 139–158.
- Keswani, P. S. (1989) *Mortuary Ritual and Social Hierarchy in Bronze Age Cyprus*. PhD dissertation. Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International.
- Lorentz, K. O. (2003) *Minding the Body: The Growing Body in Cyprus from the Aceramic Neolithic to the Late Bronze Age*. Unpublished PhD dissertation. University of Cambridge, UK.
- Lorentz, K. O. (2007) Crafting the head: The human body as art? In J. M. Córdoba, M. Molist, M. C. Pérez, I. Rubio and S. Martinez (eds) *Proceedings of the 5th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East*. Madrid: centro Superior de Estudios sobre el Oriente Próximo y Egipto, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, pp. 415–432.
- Lorentz, K. O. (in press) Grasping identity: Theoretically informed human bioarchaeology in or for the Eastern Mediterranean? In M. Mina, S. Triantaphyllou and Y. Papadatos (eds) *Embodied Identities in the Prehistoric Eastern Mediterranean: Convergence of Theory and Practice*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow Books.
- Lorentz, K. O., Pages-Camagna, S., Coquinot, Y. and Pitzalis, D. (2011) Natural and material sciences applied to the analysis of the Larnaca-Liperti Tomb 128 painted sarcophagi and human remains. In P. Flourentzos (ed.) *Two Exceptional Sarcophagi from Larnaka*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Department of Antiquities, pp. 45–119.
- Michaelides, D. (2014) The significance of the basilica at Agioi Pente of Yeroskipou. In C. A. Stewart, T. W. Davis and A. W. Carr (eds) *Cyprus and the Balance of Empires: Art and Archaeology from Justinian I to the Coeur de Lion*. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 1–16.
- Moyer, J. (1989) Human skeletal remains. In A. South, P. Russel and P. S. Keswani (eds) *VVP 3: Kalavastos-Ayios Dhimitrios II: ceramics, Objects, Tombs, Specialist Studies*. Goteborg, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, pp. 58–69.

- Obladen, M. (2012) Guttus, tiralatte and tétérelle: A history of breast pumps. *Journal of Perinatal Medicine* 40(6): 669–675.
- South, A. K. (1997) Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios 1992–1996. In *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus*, pp. 151–175.
- Stodder, A. L. W. and Palkovich, A. M. (eds) (2012) *The Bioarchaeology of Individuals*. Gainesville, FL: University Press Florida.
- White, C. L. (ed.) (2009) *The Materiality of Individuality: Archaeological Studies of Individual Lives*. London: Springer.
- Zvelebil, M. and Weber, A. W. (2013) Human bioarchaeology: Group identity and individual life histories. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 32(3): 275–352.

MATERNITY IN ANCIENT CYPRUS

Stephanie Lynn Budin

This chapter examines the iconographic and archaeological evidence for motherhood in Cyprus from the Chalcolithic (3800–2300 BCE) through the Archaic Ages (sixth to third centuries BCE). The focus on physical evidence is demanded by the source materials available for this island. Unlike its neighbors to the east and south, Cyprus did not begin using writing until the mid-second millennium, when contacts with the Aegean introduced a script known as Cypro-Minoan onto the island. As is the case with its forbear—Minoan Linear A—Cypro-Minoan is currently not translatable, just as the indigenous language that followed it on the island—Eteocypriot—also cannot yet be read. As such, written documentation of motherhood is not available for much of Cyprus’s early (pre-)history.

By contrast, Cyprus has provided an embarrassment of riches when it comes to the iconography of maternity, especially in the media of stone and terracotta. There are few places in the ancient world where all the physical aspects of motherhood, from “first embrace” through pregnancy, parturition, and nursing, are as well depicted as they are in the iconography of ancient Cyprus. Data from the skeletons of ancient Cyprus are a bit more difficult to analyze. Up to the mid-twentieth century, insufficient attention was paid to this category of evidence, and the majority of osteological studies focused on crania. Since the work of Lawrence Angel at Kourion-Bamboula, however, there has been increasing attention paid to the bones of the ancient Cypriots, revealing some data concerning the perils and practices of early child-care. In addition to information on how women gave birth and how they tended their new-borns, these sources shed light on how the role of “mother” changed with the rise of social complexity and foreign influence.

There are two categories of evidence from southwestern Cyprus that relate to childbirth, both dating to the Middle Chalcolithic (3500–2800 BCE). These are a cache of terracotta and stone figurines depicting females in various stages of pregnancy and parturition within a pottery bowl that appears to represent a house or birthing hut, and the corpus of picrolite (a soft, blue-green stone prevalent in southwestern Cyprus) pendants called cruciform figurines, which depict women in childbirth.

The “birth-hut” cache was discovered at Kissonerga-*Mosphilia* (Paphos district) in 1987 by the Lemba Archaeological Project. Deliberately buried within a domestic structure (Unit 1015), the cache consists of a painted, decorated bowl, cracked stones, ten stone figurines that are vaguely anthropomorphic, a small stool model, and eight terracotta figurines of women in the process of childbirth.¹ Other items in the cache were a triton shell, some pottery, and an anthropomorphic (if monstrous) terracotta vase. All contents of the cache are dated to c.3000 BCE.²

Although rendered with phallic-shaped heads, the terracotta figurines clearly represent women. All have breasts and full buttocks. Where preserved, several have swollen bellies and relatively enlarged hips. All are rendered in a seated or squatting posture (see [Figure 25.1](#)), and one (as preserved) has the head of an infant emerging from between her legs.³ The continuum of increasingly rotund figures climaxing with figurines in the process of childbirth indicates that this series of terracottas represents the stages of pregnancy ending with parturition.

This conclusion has contributed to the interpretation of the other items in the cache. The model stool is identified as a birthing stool, an identification emphasized by the depiction of one parturient terracotta from the cache (KM 1463) sitting upon a similarly rendered stool.⁴



Figure 25.1 Paphos District Museum, Inv # KM 299.

Microscopic analysis has revealed distinct wear patterns on the figurines.⁵ The self-standing images show focused patches of wear, and Diane Bolger has suggested that the terracottas, and the objects in the cache generally, may have been used as educational aids for teaching adolescents (girls?) about the processes of childbirth.⁶ This would account for the depictions of various stages of pregnancy and actual parturition, the stool, and even possibly the cracked stones, which Edgar Peltenburg hypothesizes may have been used to create a sauna-like effect.⁷ The terracotta “house” or “birth-hut” in which these items were discovered is a small-scale replica of a typical house in the Paphos region: round, arched doorway on one side, a radial pattern on the floor, and the walls covered with geometric designs. The doorway had a separately modeled door which was found broken next to the bowl.⁸ In all respects, the model depicts a standard house of the Kissonerga type,⁹ and may indicate that childbirth took place at home.

Of especial interest on one of the terracotta figurines is a painted cruciform figurine pendant upon her neck (see [Figure 25.1](#)).¹⁰ This is

the first datum that suggests that there is a direct link between the cruciform, picrolite figurines, females, and pregnancy. The picrolite images come predominately from the southwestern region of Cyprus, although they are occasionally found in other parts of the island, from mortuary and settlement contexts at Souskiou, Lemba, Kissonerga, Kythrea, Salaminou, and Ayia Irini.¹¹ They range in height from about 3 cm to as large as 20 cm; the majority is in the 4–10 cm range. All examples display the cruciform shape, rendered by a vertical body with horizontally outstretched arms. In some instances, the outstretched arms are replaced by a second body rendered perpendicular to the vertical. All examples have a vaguely phallic, upturned head and a bent-knee, squatting posture (see [Figure 25.2](#)).

Many examples are schematic, even crude, and display little detail other than the squatting posture and basic cruciform rendering. More elaborate examples show full facial details, jewelry (necklaces and bracelets), fingers, and toes. When sexual attributes are rendered, it is in the form of breasts, which appear on approximately 14 percent of the figurines.¹² There is evidence to suggest that the picrolite figurines were worn as pendants. The first datum is the painted example on the terracotta figurine from Kissonerga. The second datum is a cruciform figurine from Yalia ([Figure 25.2](#)), where the figurine itself is depicted wearing an almost identical figure as a pendant. Several examples have also come to light in mortuary settings in which the remains of women and children were accompanied by necklaces composed of dentalium shells and several tiny, picrolite figurines. To date, no such pendants have been associated with male remains.¹³



Figure 25.2 Cyprus, Cyprus Museum, Nicosia, 1934/III-2/2. Drawing by Paul C. Butler, used with kind permission.

The consistently squatting posture, especially as compared with the figurines from Unit 1015, the outstretched arms, and the association with women and children in mortuary settings have all led to the conclusion that the picrolite cruciform figurines are associated with childbirth.¹⁴ The bent knees refer to the squatting posture used in parturition, as the outstretched arms may suppose a midwife or assistant holding the parturient mother from behind. Even more specifically, the representation of cruciform pendants on parturient females, such as those from Kissonerga and Yalia, support Anna a Campo's theory that the figurines were charms or amulets intended to promote successful pregnancy and parturition through sympathetic magic.¹⁵ In support of this hypothesis, microscopic analysis of wear patterns shows that, in contrast to the figurines from Kissonerga, the medium-sized picrolite figurines have all-over wear patterns. This suggests that they were not just worn as jewelry (which would only induce wear on one side), but that they were held by women during parturition, functioning as magical aids to childbirth.¹⁶



Figure 25.3 Cyprus Museum, Nicosia, 1976/54. Drawing by Paul C. Butler, used with kind permission.

Both the pendants and the terracottas are paralleled in larger scale by two statuettes, one without provenance but attributed to Souskiou, the other discovered at Lemba-Lakkous (*Figure 25.3*).¹⁷ The latter is a 36 cm high violin-shaped image with a phallic-shaped head like the picrolite pendants. The arms are stubby but outstretched, and, like the terracottas, her breasts are pendulous and the hips broad. There is a bulge on the belly which probably indicates pregnancy. The strong iconographic similarities to the picrolite figurines may identify the Souskiou and Lemba statuettes as magical items, invoked in matters of childbirth.

A third statuette from Tomb 86 at the cemetery of Souskiou-Vathyrkakas (Cyprus Museum Inv. # SVP 86/20) is 28 cm in height and also of terracotta. This more naturalistic statuette depicts a fully pregnant female with pendulous breasts and hands resting upon the breasts in a gesture that calls to mind lactation.¹⁸ Like the terracottas from Kissonerga, this statuette wears anthropomorphic images (painted) upon her neck, possibly intended to represent the cruciform

birthing pendants. The legs are broken, but appear to have been in a seated/squatting position. The Vathyrkakas statuette is iconographically distinct from the cruciform statuettes and pendants (although apparently wearing one), but its presence in a funerary context emphasizes the proliferation of maternal imagery in Chalcolithic Cyprus

These iconographic data furnish information on the process of parturition. Cypriot Chalcolithic women gave birth in a squatting but upright posture, sitting upon a birthing stool and probably assisted by at least one other woman (?) who held her under the arms from behind. Parturition appears to have taken place in the house, to judge from the house model from Kissonerga. Women wore cruciform birthing pendants during pregnancy and parturition (if not more generally), and the evidence from the pendants suggests that they were regularly actively gripped, possibly during childbirth for amuletic/magical purposes.

What is missing from the maternal iconography are infants and males. Females are shown in the process of giving life, but never in a familial context with either contributing male or resultant offspring. This omission is reflected in the burial practices of the Chalcolithic south-west. Excavations at the site of Lemba-*Lakkous* revealed 59 graves dating from Middle to Late Chalcolithic. With only three exceptions, all were single inhumations of both adults and sub-adults, including infants. Those three exceptions revealed either a single adult with child, or children buried together. There is no evidence of “familial” groupings in the mortuary record.¹⁹ Maternity consisted of an individual woman’s creation and birthing of an individual child.

This view of maternity began to change in the Late Chalcolithic. The cache from Kissonerga was ritually (?) destroyed at the end of the Middle Chalcolithic.²⁰ Picrolite figurines continued slightly longer at Kissonerga and Lemba, but ceased to be produced in the Late Chalcolithic.²¹ The cemeteries began to show evidence of familial units. For example, the Middle-Late Chalcolithic burials at Kissonerga show a combination of individual pit graves (as at Lemba), but also thirteen chamber tombs, seven of which contained multiple inhumations. More specifically, Tombs 505 and 515 contained groups consisting of an adult male, an adult female, and children—an early nuclear family, perhaps.²² Likewise, at Souskiou-*Vathyrkakas*, the tomb containing the pregnant statuette held the remains of an adult, an adolescent, and three small children (no sexes could be determined).²³ The age of mother-as-part-of-family had clearly begun.

Early Cypriot III–Middle Cypriot I (2000–1800 BCE)

The next period marked by maternal iconography is the Early-Middle Bronze Ages, when images in clay embody the role of mother in society. Two categories of iconographic evidence dominate: plank figurines and scenic compositions.

Plank figurines are free-standing, three-dimensional images of females,²⁴ ranging in height from 5 cm to as large as approximately 40 cm. They have an overall rectangular shape, a flat or somewhat oval cross-section, a face with eyes and modeled nose, occasionally ears, and rarely a mouth. The body is generally plank-like with no limbs, although the figurines may possess arms (39 percent), breasts (34 percent), very occasionally feet (although this is extremely rare), and cradleboards containing infants (16 percent).²⁵ Some rare examples are double- and even triple-headed. The face and/or body of the plank figurines are often decorated with geometric patterns, indicating tattoos, clothing, or both. Based on her extensive study of these differentiating characteristics, Anna a Campo has argued that plank figurines depict women from different clans or social groups, and that they may have been used as part of a marriage ceremony whereby the transfer of the female image reflected the transfer of the bride.²⁶

One significant sub-category of plank figurines is kourotrophic, that is, depicted holding an infant, usually in a cradleboard. They range in height from 20 to 30 cm, although there are a few more diminutive versions just under 20 cm.²⁷ They consistently hold the cradleboard to the left shoulder (Figure 25.4), and this iconography is standard even when the kourotrophoi are not free-standing but part of a scenic composition. There are a few variants to this portrayal. One example from Alaminos shows the plank figurine seated and holding the cradleboard to her left breast, which is exposed and, although now broken, originally descended to the infant.²⁸ This is one of only two examples, along with Figure 25.4, which show the kourotrophos as nursing rather than merely holding the infant. Additionally, there are two examples of seated figurines with the cradleboard lying across the figurine's lap.



Figure 25.4 Oriental Institute X.1611. Drawing by Paul C. Butler, used with kind permission.

All currently known provenanced kourotrophic plank figurines come from tombs. However, this does not necessarily mean that kourotrophoi pertain exclusively, or even primarily, to death/afterlife. The number of unprovenanced examples far exceeds those from licit excavations. Furthermore, the discovery of non-kourotrophic plank figurines in domestic contexts,²⁹ as well as plank figurines showing evidence of repairs,³⁰ indicates that these items were used in daily life before being placed in the grave.³¹ When discovered in burial contexts, plank figurines, kourotrophic or not, are found with women's remains. As noted by Naomi Hamilton, "material from the Early/Middle Bronze Age cemetery at Vounous suggests that most if not all figurines were found with female skeletons, while Paraskevi Baxevani's analysis of the Lapithos material also suggests that plank idols occur with females."³²

A related image with significance for the study of maternity in Bronze Age Cyprus is the infant in cradleboard, typically with an arch above the child's head (see [Figure 25.4](#)). In these depictions, only the head and face of the infants are visible, the rest being “tucked” into blankets or swaddling clothes within the cradles themselves. Such items can appear independently of the plank figurines. That cradleboards were actually used in Bronze Age Cyprus is supported by the osteological evidence. A specific type of cranial manipulation known as occipital flattening—whereby the soft occipital bone on the rear of the head is flattened—begins to appear in the Philia facies (the initial stage of the Early Bronze Age) and continues into the MC. Such occipital flattening is consistent with the use of cradleboards. Furthermore, as Kirsi Lorentz notes, “During the Philia phase and the earlier periods of the Bronze Age (EC and MC) anterior-posterior head-shaping occurs in moderate forms only, and is never universal within populations.”³³ This indicates that the cranial manipulation was not intentional, but most likely the result of cradleboard use. (See also Lorentz, this volume.)

The practice of cradleboarding created a physical barrier between the mother and child. Being completely swaddled with only the face exposed, the infant had no direct contact with the mother save for nursing, when the mouth only had contact with the mother's (or possibly wet-nurse's) breast. Such restrictions had benefits for both child and mother. Close, all-body pressure has been shown to have a calming effect both on young animals and humans, while the restrictions imposed by the swaddling bands promote the isometric development of the muscles. From the parental perspective, swaddling minimizes the attention required by infants from their care-takers. As a result, the use of the cradleboard freed up time for the mother/care-taker to engage in other activities while still caring for an infant.

The scenic compositions provide more data. These are modeled clay “sculptures,” either free-standing or attached to the shoulder of vessels. They show scenes of daily life: ploughing, herding, bread- or wine-making, religious/funerary scenes, and male-female pairs. Such vessels were found exclusively in funerary contexts and almost certainly were signs of elite status.³⁴

The only known portrayal of the stages of pregnancy and parturition from the Bronze Age is the so-called Pierides Bowl, a 28 cm tall EC III–MC I Red Polished vessel said to have been discovered at Marki and now in the Pierides Collection in Larnaca (inv. #EB 36).³⁵ The shoulder is decorated with images of humans and animals engaged in actions which might be thematically divided into two

categories: sexual reproduction and food processing. One side of the bowl (side A) shows a couple embracing, identified by Vassos Karageorghis as a male and a much larger female. To the left is a woman with a very swollen belly clearly in the advanced stages of pregnancy. She wears a turban similar to that of the larger female in the previous grouping, and has breasts and incised genitals. At the extreme left is another extremely pregnant woman, this time with very large breasts and a clay pellet upon the incised genitalia. It is evident that this woman is giving birth. Side B has a repeat of the male–female embrace motif, although in this instance the male is rendered with large genitalia. Next to this couple is an infant in a cradleboard. Other figures decorating the rim are gender-neutral humans engaged in what appears to be bread-making (pounders, troughs, an oven).³⁶ If, as is possible, that final item is a tomb rather than an oven, then it is possible to follow the hypotheses of Swiny and Bolger that this scenic composition has an integral theme of the entire life cycle from conception to death.³⁷ The Pierides Bowl is a flashback to the Chalcolithic Age, when the stages of pregnancy and parturition were manifest in the Cypriot repertoire. Unlike the earlier corpus, though, the childbearing women here are accompanied by men—the maternal qualities of the female are complemented by the impregnating powers of the male. In this we may see a reflection of the ideologies prevalent throughout the rest of the Ancient Near East and Egypt, where it was believed that males were the sources of life and fertility, and that women were nurturers of the new lives “given” to them by the male.³⁸

More commonly, the maternal iconography in the scenic compositions is kourotrophic—a single female holding a child in a cradleboard.³⁹ When portrayed individually rather than as part of narrative scenes, they may appear alone or, frequently, facing a single male (identified by phallic bulge). This latter image, quite consistent in the iconographic record, suggests that kourotrophic female plus male were regarded as a paired unit—a manifestation of the nuclear family based on heterosexual pair-bonding, just as on the Pierides Bowl. Another object that places the kourotrophic female into a social, possibly even familial, context is the Pyrgos pitcher (Limassol District Museum LM 1739/7, [Figure 25.5](#)).



Figure 25.5 Pyrgos pitcher. (Limassol District Museum LM 1739/7.)

This 46.5 cm tall, double-spouted Drab Polished Ware jug came to light in Tomb 35/16 + 17 of the Pyrgos necropolis.⁴⁰ On one side of the spouts, a male with clearly rendered phallic bulge and well-incised facial features sits on an elaborately rendered chair. By his feet stands a kourotrophos holding an infant at her left side. At the other side of the seated male sits another kourotrophos with relatively large breasts, fully incised facial features, incised toes, and a large infant in her arms resting upon her lap. The one other character in this grouping is a diminutive, ungendered individual who holds a tiny jug or basket in the left arm. At the other side of the spouts is a male with phallic bulge and clearly rendered facial features who sits upon a stool. All other characters on the jug are engaged in agricultural production, including wine-making.⁴¹ The nature of the two “idle” males is ambiguous—they are more carefully depicted than the majority of other characters, and their male sex is emphasized. Remembering that all scenic compositions were funerary in nature, it is possible that the seated males represent the honored dead to whom

the jug was dedicated. Or, possibly, they are of a more “managerial” class, directing the labor of others. The carefully rendered bodily details on the accompanying *kourotrophoi* may indicate that these women are in the same group as the seated males, and thus imply a familial connection. As such, the jug may display an élite family—phallic males, moms, older child—in the midst of the labors of village life. Once again, the maternal image is seen in a familial context, one “dominated” by a male.

The mortuary evidence for familial units is ambiguous. Excavations of Early Bronze Age cemeteries in Vounous and Lapithos showed that sub-adults (age 15 or below) represented only 7 percent and 5 percent of the total populations respectively. Only one of these children was an infant (neonate or still-born), represented by a single rib in a jar from Tomb 121 at Vounous.⁴² The low number of child bones discovered suggests that adults and children and infants were buried separately—not in familial units. By contrast, Tomb 789 at the MC cemetery at Deneia revealed 15 adults and 31 sub-adults. Of the latter, 6 were only observable by dental remains. Of the other 25, 19 were infants (neonate–1 year), 8 were children aged 1–6, 2 were children aged 7–12, and 2 were adolescents.⁴³ The full range of ages at death shows that adults and children were being buried together, possibly in familial units, although this has not been confirmed. The remains also provide some data on what a mother could expect of a child in the early years. Almost half of the individuals buried in Tomb 789 died within one year of birth. Death within the first month typifies complications resulting from weakened gestation and/or problems with parturition, i.e., the mother herself was insufficiently healthy. Infant death after the first month results from environmental factors, including disease and malnutrition. These factors were clearly high in MC Cyprus, especially complications resulting from various types of anemia in both mother and infant. The next critical point was in the toddler years. While environmental factors were still relevant, the critical factor in this age range was weaning. Evidence from surrounding cultures, such as Egypt (see Feucht, this volume), indicate that breast-feeding lasted for up to three years before the child (gradually) made the transition to solid foods. If the new foods did not provide appropriate nutrients and calories, and if the child’s immune system could not withstand the loss of mother’s milk, mortality ensued. The evidence from Tomb 789 suggests that this was a critical factor in childhood mortality, once again reflecting back on the maternal experience.

Late Cypriot II–III (1400–1050 BCE)

This is when much of the iconographic evidence for maternity dries up on Cyprus.⁴⁴ The period is marked by increased foreign contacts and the adoption of foreign culture. In the terracotta repertoire, this is marked by the introduction, first, of the Levantine-style bird-faced figurines, followed later by the Aegean-influenced normal-faced figurines (see Serwint, this volume). The former are female figurines adopted from Syria, where their history dates back to the third millennium. They are nude, *en face* females with large breasts, exaggerated pubic triangles, elaborate coiffures, and jewelry. Their evolution on Cyprus is apparent since the Middle Bronze Age, when the original plank figurines begin to shed their clothing and become more “spindle-shaped,” foretelling the exaggerated pubic triangles of their Late Cypriot sisters. What is significant about these bird-faced figurines is that they are frequently kourotrophic, in complete contrast with the Syrian tradition from which they derive. This is to say that the tradition of depicting woman with child in Cyprus was so strong that the Cypriots adapted a long-standing icon from the Near East and independently imbued that icon with maternal imagery.

Nevertheless, the bird-faced figurines reveal next to nothing about maternity in LBA Cyprus, in spite of the kourotrophic iconography. One reason for this is that they represent not mortals, but divinities.⁴⁵ As such, they do not depict mortal mothers with human children, but possibly maternal goddesses. The lack of correspondence with mundane reality is also apparent in the unswaddled/cradleboarded depiction of the infants they carry. This runs contrary to the osteological evidence, which indicates that not only was occipital flattening still occurring in the physical record, but so too were two new forms of head-shaping: plagiocephaly (flattening of one side of the skull, usually by attaching a child to a cradleboard frontally) and post-bregmatic (flattening of the top of the skull).⁴⁶ The latter can only be achieved through deliberate cranial manipulation, indicating deliberate head-shaping in this period. For both of these reasons, the potential maternal iconography of the LBA must be rejected as evidence for mortal mothers.

Mortuary evidence indicates that motherhood was just as stressful in the LBA as it was in the MBA. Excavations at Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios (see also Lorentz, this volume) and Episkopi-Bamboula show that a significant percentage of the population died before age five. Of the 34 bodies identified at Ayios Dhimitrios, 9 (26 percent) were of infants and toddlers, and another 5 (15 percent) were aged 5 to 10. Of

the 81 individuals studied from Bamboula, 16 percent were aged neonate–5 years.⁴⁷ The problems of gestation and parturition, insufficient immunity, and weaning continued. Furthermore, data from these cemeteries indicate that the next most common age at death occurred in the early twenties at Ayios Dhimitrios, and the mid-twenties to mid-thirties at Bamboula.⁴⁸ According to C. Jack Moyer:

In all probability this increase in mortality reflects the higher percentage of female deaths attributable to childbearing, where those women with obstetric and gynaecological problems would be selected out of the population. The reason for this increase being seen earlier and more dramatically in the Ay. Dhimitrios series may be . . . an earlier age of marriage and childbearing, or conceivably, differences in the technological understanding of childbearing.⁴⁹

Iron Age

The extreme popularity of Aegean styles at the end of the Bronze Age killed maternal iconography on Cyprus. Kourotraphoi were replaced by normal-faced figurines and, later, by the Minoanizing Goddess-With-Upraised-Arms, neither of which were kourotraphic.

Maternal imagery appears again on Cyprus in the sixth century, when small terracotta, and later limestone, sculptures of women in childbirth emerge on Cyprus.⁵⁰ The sculptures, reaching maximum dimensions of 16 × 21 × 10 cm, show one to three women together in a composition. One woman gives birth, one woman holds the parturient woman from behind, and the third woman serves as midwife, catching the child from between the mother's legs. As Marianne Vandervondelen has noted, all stages of the process of parturition are depicted in the repertoire. One atypical example shows a single woman lying upon a bed in the process of childbirth; another woman's head emerges between her legs, probably intending to show the midwife. More common is the tripartite scheme showing all three women, wherein the assistant sits upon chair, ottoman, or even bed, with the mother upon the lap of the assistant. In some examples, the absence of a midwife allows a glimpse of the mother's vulva, where an infant's head can be seen to emerge. Childbirth while standing appears on a single terracotta. Some examples show the midwife delivering the infant from between the mother's legs, while others show the moments after parturition, when the midwife presents the newborn to the mother.⁵¹ In all examples, the mother has loose hair and clothing, recalling Eileithyia Lysizonos ("Belt-Loosener") of the Greek tradition. All but one of these sculptures came to light in sanctuaries and may have served either as prayers or thanks for safe delivery.

The iconography of the Archaic Age harkens back to the Chalcolithic (although with no potential for continuity). The emphasis is on pregnancy and parturition, with a minimal focus on the infant once born. As was the case at Kissonerga, the parturient female is shown in the company of other females. She is depicted as *creatrix*, *genetrix*, rather than as child-tender, as was prevalent in the Bronze Age.

The mortuary evidence indicates that parturition was still a significant cause of death for Iron Age women. Excavations at the Cypro-Geometric cemetery of Palaepaphos-Skales show that the average age of death for women was 28.5 years, in contrast to 32.4 for males.⁵² This is even lower than the averages for the LBA, suggesting that childbearing grew more perilous.

That motherhood was now firmly conceived of in the context of a larger family unit appears in the remains from a Cypro-Archaic I tomb. Mari Tomb 1 contained the bones of an adult male (over 26 years), an adult female, and a toddler-aged child. The child's bones were discovered amongst the woman's, indicating that the female was probably "holding" the child when laid out. By contrast, the male and female were laid out on opposite sides of the tomb. The tomb contained numerous grave goods, of which the prestige metals items, such as knife and sword, were placed by the male.⁵³ The evidence suggests that the male was identified as a warrior in death, while his "wife" was the mother of his child, the infant her primary attribute. To quote Maria Hadjicosti, "The deposition of the child near her right side accentuates the woman's role as mother, suggesting that motherhood in the Cypro-Archaic I period constituted the primary role of women in the family and society at large."⁵⁴

Notes

- 1 Goring 1991: 153–157; Bolger 1992: *passim*.
- 2 Peltenburg and Goring 1991: 17; Bolger 1992: 146.
- 3 Goring 1991: 156; Peltenburg and Goring 1991: 39. See also Karageorghis 1991: 8–15 and plates II–IV.
- 4 Goring 1991: 157; Peltenburg and Goring 1991: 25.
- 5 Goring 1991: 51–52.
- 6 Bolger 2003: 101–102.
- 7 Peltenburg and Goring 1991: 25.
- 8 Peltenburg and Goring 1991: 12.
- 9 Bolger 1992: 146.
- 10 Goring 1991: 157.

- 11 J. Karageorghis 1977: 22; Bolger 1996: 368.
- 12 A Campo 1994: 137. A Campo has argued that as only 14 percent of the figurines have secondary sex characteristics, this should not detract from their identification as female images. When sexual markers are present, they are consistently female. Such markers are frequently absent on examples that are relatively less detailed, thus lacking faces as well as breasts, although we might assume that the makers and users of the figurines understood them to have had both. Finally, the consistent birthing posture identifies these images as female.
- 13 Peltenburg 1992: 33; Bolger 1996: 368.
- 14 Bolger 1994: 15.
- 15 A Campo 1994: 162.
- 16 Bolger 2003: 101–102.
- 17 Peltenburg *et al.* 1985: Pl. 45.1; Peltenburg 1989: 122; Budin 2003: 115.
- 18 Alphas 2010: Cat. # 27.
- 19 Bolger 2002: 68.
- 20 Peltenburg and Goring 1991: 17–19.
- 21 Bolger 1996: 369.
- 22 Bolger 2002: 72.
- 23 *Ibid.*: 73.
- 24 On the sex of these images, see Budin 2009.
- 25 For typological classifications and details, see Mogelonsky 1988: [chapter 2](#); and a Campo 1994: [chapter 5](#). Statistics from Knapp and Meskell 1997: 196.
- 26 A Campo 1994: 166–168.
- 27 V. Karageorghis 1991: 77–81.
- 28 V. Karageorghis 1991: SC13.
- 29 Frankel and Webb 1996: 188, 2006: 157; Talalay and Cullen 2002: 184–185; Bolger 2003: 90; Steel 2004: 148.
- 30 Frankel and Webb 1996: 188, 2006: 157. See also Knapp 2008: 101.
- 31 Webb 1992: 90.
- 32 Hamilton 2000: 18.
- 33 Lorentz 2003: n.p.
- 34 Mogelonsky 1988: 226; Steel 2004: 142.
- 35 Karageorghis 1991: 120 and Pls. LXXVIII–LXXIX; Bolger 2003: 115–117; Knapp 2008: 90.
- 36 Karageorghis 1991: 120 (SC 8); Bolger 2003: 115–117.
- 37 Swiny 1997: 204–205; Bolger 2003: 117.
- 38 Budin 2014: *passim*.
- 39 See especially Budin 2011: [chapter 5](#).
- 40 Flourentzos 1999: 5; Georgiou 2010: 76.
- 41 Flourentzos 1999: *passim*; Georgiou 2010: 76.
- 42 Keswani 2013: 212.
- 43 Tucker and Cleggett 2007: 131.
- 44 Budin 2011: 266–268.
- 45 Budin 2009.

- 46 Lorentz 2003.
- 47 Moyer 1989: 66.
- 48 Ibid.
- 49 Ibid: 66–67.
- 50 Vandervondelen 2002: 144.
- 51 All examples from Vandervondelen 2002: 144–149.
- 52 Schulte-Campbell 1983: 439.
- 53 Hadjicosti 2002: *passim*.
- 54 Ibid: 140.

References

- A Campo, A. L. (1994) *Anthropomorphic Representations in Prehistoric Cyprus: A Formal and Symbolic Analysis of Figurines, c. 3500–1800 B.C.* Jonsered, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag.
- Alphas, E. (2010) Anthropomorphic vessel. In S. Hadjisavvas (ed.) *Cyprus: Crossroads of Civilizations*. Nicosia, Cyprus: The Government of the Republic of Cyprus, p. 60.
- Bolger, D. (1992) The archaeology of fertility and birth: A ritual deposit from Chalcolithic Cyprus. *JAR* 48: 145–164.
- Bolger, D. (1994) Engendering Cypriot archaeology: Female roles and statuses before the Bronze Age. *Opuscula Atheniensia* XX(1): 9–17.
- Bolger, D. (1996) Figurines, fertility, and the emergence of complex society in prehistoric Cyprus. *Current Anthropology* 37(2): 365–373.
- Bolger, D. (2002) Gender and mortuary ritual in Chalcolithic Cyprus. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monographs volume 3. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 67–86.
- Bolger, D. (2003) *Gender in Ancient Cyprus: Narratives of Social Change on a Mediterranean Island*. New York: Altamira Press.
- Budin, S. L. (2003) *The Origin of Aphrodite*. Bethesda, MD: CDL Press.
- Budin, S. L. (2009) Girl, woman, mother, goddess: Bronze Age Cypriot terracotta figurines. *Medelhavsmuseet. Focus on the Mediterranean* 5: 76–88.
- Budin, S. L. (2011) *Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity, and Gender in the Ancient World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Budin, S. L. (2014) Gender and fertility in the Ancient Near East and Egypt. In N. Sorkin Rabinowitz and J. E. Robeson (eds) *Sex in Antiquity: New Essays on Gender and Sexuality in the Ancient World*. New York: Routledge Press, pp. 30–49.

- Flourantzos, P. (1999) A unique jug with scenic composition from Pyrgos (Limassol District). *JPR* XXI: 5–9.
- Frankel, D. and Webb, J. M. (1996) *Marki Alonia: An Early and Middle Bronze Age Settlement in Cyprus: Excavations 1990–1994*. Jonsered, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag.
- Frankel, D. and Webb, J. M. (2006) *Marki Alonia: An Early and Middle Bronze Age Settlement in Cyprus, Excavations 1995–2000*. Sävedalen, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag.
- Georgiou, G. (2010) Composite vessel. In S. Hadjisavvas (ed.) *Cyprus: Crossroads of Civilizations*. Nicosia, Cyprus: The Government of the Republic of Cyprus, pp. 76–77.
- Goring, E. (1991) Pottery figurines: The development of a coroplastic art in Cyprus. *BASOR* 282/283: 153–161.
- Hadjicosti, M. (2002) Evidence of gender and family relations in a tomb of the Cypro-Archaic I Period. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monographs volume 3. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 133–142.
- Hamilton, N. (2000) Ungendering archaeology: Concepts of sex and gender in figurine studies in prehistory. In M. Donald and L. Hurcombe (eds) *Representations of Gender from Prehistory to the Present*. New York: St. Martin's Press, pp. 17–30.
- Karageorghis, J. (1977) *La grande déesse de Chypre et son culte*. Paris: E. de Boccard.
- Karageorghis, V. (1991) *The Coroplastic Art of Ancient Cyprus*. Volume I. Nicosia, Cyprus: A. G. Leventis Foundation.
- Keswani, P. (2013) Burial practices in 3rd-millennium Cyprus: A chronological overview. In E. J. Peltenburg (ed.) *ARCANE: Cyprus*. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, pp. 161–229.
- Knapp, A. B. (2008) *Prehistoric and Protohistoric Cyprus: Identity, Insularity, and Connectivity*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Knapp, A. B. and Meskell, L. (1997) Bodies of evidence on prehistoric Cyprus. *CAJ* 7(2): 183–204.
- Lorentz, K. O. (2003) Cultures of physical modifications: Child bodies in ancient Cyprus. *Stanford Journal of Archaeology*, Volume 2, Spring. Accessed February 2015 at: http://web.stanford.edu/dept/archaeology/journal/newdraft/2003_Journal/lorentz/paper.html.
- Mogelonsky, M. K. (1988) *Early and Middle Cypriot Terracotta Figurines*. PhD dissertation, Cornell University, New York.
- Moyer, C. J. (1989) Human skeletal remains. In I. Todd (ed.) *Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios II: ceramics, Objects, Tombs, Specialist Studies*. Göteborg, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, pp. 58–69.
- Peltenburg, E. J. (1985) *Lemba Archaeological Project I: Excavations at*

- Lemba-Lakkous, 1976–1983. SIMA 70(1). Göteborg, Sweden: Paul Åströms Forlag.
- Peltenburg, E. J. (1989) The beginnings of religion in Cyprus. In E. J. Peltenburg (ed.) *Early Society in Cyprus*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 108–126.
- Peltenburg, E. J. (1992) Birth pendants in life and death: Evidence from Kissonerga Grave 563. In G. Ioannides (ed.) *Studies in Honour of Vassos Karageorghis*. Nicosia, Cyprus: A. G. Leventis, pp. 25–36.
- Peltenburg, E. J. and Goring, E. (1991) Terracotta figurines and ritual at Kissonerga-Mosphilia. In R. Lafineur and F. Vandenaebroeck (eds) *Cypriote Terracottas*. Brussels-Liège, Belgium: Université de Liège, pp. 17–26.
- Schulte-Campbell, C. (1983) The human skeletal remains from Palaepaphos-Skales. In V. Karageorghis (ed.) *Palaepaphos-Skales: An Iron Age cemetery in Cyprus*. Konstanz, Germany: Universitätsverlag Konstanz GMBH, pp. 439–451.
- Steel, L. (2004) *Cyprus Before History: From the Earliest Settlers to the End of the Bronze Age*. London: Duckworth Press.
- Talalay, L. and Cullen, T. (2002) Sexual ambiguity in plank figures from Bronze Age Cyprus. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monographs volume 3. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 181–195.
- Tucker, K. and Cleggett, S. (2007) Human remains from Tomb 789. In D. Frankel and J. M. Webb (eds) *The Bronze Age cemeteries at Deneia in Cyprus*. Sävedalen, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, pp. 131–136.
- Vandervondelen, M. (2002) Child birth in Iron Age Cyprus: A case study. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monographs volume 3. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 143–156.
- Webb, J. M. (1992) Funerary ideology in Bronze Age Cyprus: Towards the recognition and analysis of Cypriot ritual data. In G. Ioannides (ed.) *Studies in Honour of Vassos Karageorghis*. Nicosia, Cyprus: A. G. Leventis, pp. 87–99.

WOMEN AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY IN PREHISTORIC BRONZE AGE CYPRUS

Jennifer M. Webb

Introduction

The developmental trajectory of Cyprus in the Early and Middle Bronze Age (c.2450–c.1750 BC) is rather different to that of surrounding cultures.¹ While elsewhere many societies were progressing towards urbanisation, those in Cyprus remained at the village level and there is no evidence for writing, complex administrative systems, or major inequalities in wealth or status. Without written records, our sources of evidence for the lives of women are three-fold: excavated domestic buildings (houses or households) and their contents; mortuary data; and the iconographic record, the latter primarily in the form of terracotta figurines and modelled scenes. Each of these will be discussed, before turning to look at what they and other avenues of enquiry, including technology and ritual, might together tell us about the ‘everyday lives’ of ‘real’ women in prehistoric Bronze Age Cyprus.

At all stages the success of the exercise will turn on the visibility of gender and the fact that we can only proceed if we know who was doing what. It is generally assumed that women in pre-state societies were engaged in domestic production while men practised animal husbandry, ploughed, hunted, fought, and processed metals. Is such a division of labour visible in the archaeological record of prehistoric Cyprus? Can we locate women (or men) without relying on such initial premises (e.g. without assuming that grindstones and spindle whorls are indicative of women’s activities, and metalwork and weaponry of men’s activities)? This question is by no means unique to Cyprus or indeed to prehistory.

Houses and households

The study of household organisation and production is essential for an engendered prehistory. It allows us to focus on ‘everyday’ behaviour and repeated small-scale processes which constitute the lives of individuals. Households are of course variously constituted at different times in the domestic cycle, but they consistently combine residential and economic aspects and are the level at which people interact most directly with each other. Recognition of household units is therefore critical to understanding gender roles and relationships.

Until the 1980s, no settlements of the Early or the Middle Bronze Age had been extensively investigated in Cyprus. That situation has now changed, although domestic exposures remain limited in number and extent. Our information comes primarily from three settlements: Marki,² Alambra³ and Sotira.⁴ Of these, Marki provides the largest exposure and the observations which follow are derived principally from this site. Occupation at Marki began in c.2400 BC and continued until c.1800 BC. The excavated architecture belongs to over 30 individual house compounds in use at various times across nine phases of occupation (Figure 26.1). These allow some observations about the social structure of households, daily work routines and interpersonal relationships.

A discrete house compound with two, three, or more rooms located at the rear of a courtyard was the standard house form at Marki. There is, however, an evolution from open, shared spaces in the earliest years of occupation to a more segregated, enclosed system in later periods. In the earliest years, courtyards were open or surrounded by light fences and contained animal pens, work stations and cooking and storage facilities, suggesting that many activities, including the preparation and consumption of food, were shared between related households. Over time, however, walls enclosed courtyards on three sides and by c.2000 BC courtyards were fully walled with access via narrow doorways or passages. Interior space was also progressively subdivided, there was a greater reliance on prescriptive access routes and the location of some facilities changed. Animal pens were moved outside the residential area. Ovens and storage bins were relocated to interior rooms, screen walls were built to conceal hearths from exterior view (Figure 26.2) and decorated table ware, much in evidence in the earliest periods, virtually disappeared. Together, these changes suggest a growing concern with household privacy and security and a decrease in routine social interaction between households. Both are likely to have been linked to an increasing focus

on private property and the control of resources, the latter perhaps including women and children.

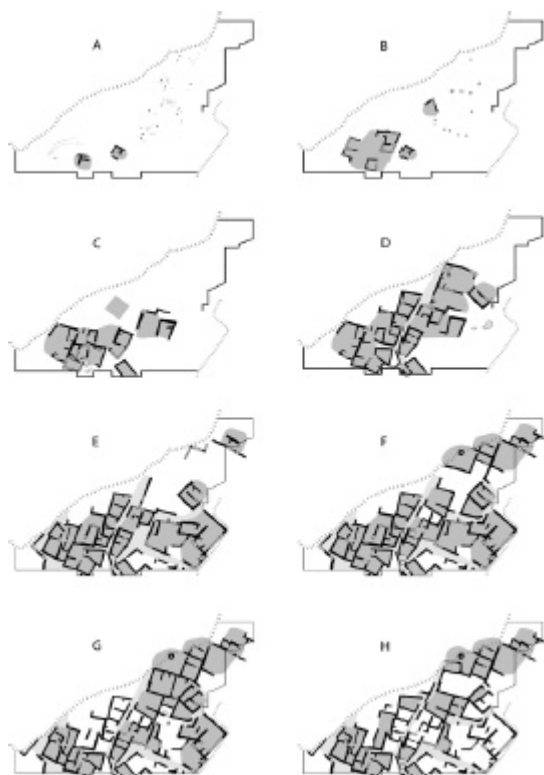


Figure 26.1 The evolution of domestic architecture from foundation to abandonment in the excavated area at Marki (nb final phase not shown). (Frankel and Webb 2006: text fig. 11.3.)

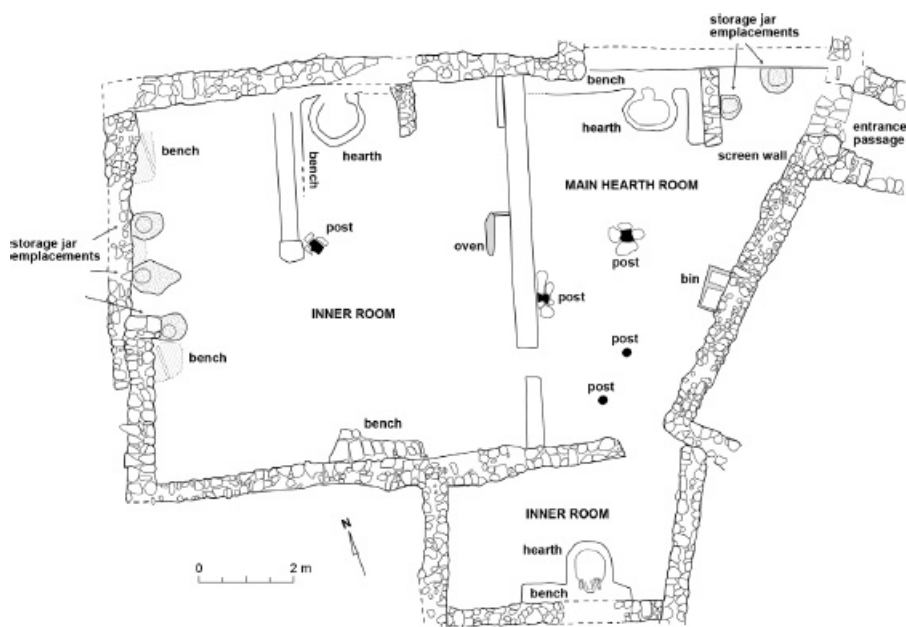


Figure 26.2 A Middle Bronze Age house at Marki, showing hearths, benches and other interior fittings. (Adapted from Frankel and Webb 2006: fig. 3.22.)

The majority of artefacts likely to have been recovered in or near their place of last use at Marki were found in roofed spaces and in particular in hearth units. They suggest that a wide range of activities and most social interaction took place in hearth rooms, with other interior spaces reserved for storage and sleeping. Discarded objects include spindle whorls and loomweights, mortars and pounders, grinding equipment, pecking stones, weights, work surfaces, pins, needles, scrapers and chisels, and bowls, jugs, juglets, baking pans and cooking pots. These imply that the processing and small-scale storage of cereals and other foods, spinning and weaving, woodworking and stone tool production were carried out indoors, along with cooking and eating. Interior fittings, such as hearths, benches and bins, are typically low, rising only 15 to 20 cm above the floor. Many domestic activities must therefore have been carried out by people kneeling or crouching. Chairs, tables and other furniture depicted on contemporary models, together with equipment such as looms, may also have found a place in these interior spaces or, in the summer months, have been set out in the courtyards.

In sum, the evidence allows us to infer that households were primarily organised to meet the needs of individual residential units. While we do not know how these were constituted, we may safely

assume that most were based on family groups. While there is some evidence for the production of copper ingots and possibly also finished artefacts at Marki, most households appear to have been engaged in subsistence tasks. The faunal record suggests a sustainable agricultural system, with cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, equids, and hunted deer, in conjunction with wheat, barley, olives, pulses, and grapes. The high incidence of grain harvesting (sickle blades) and processing equipment (grinding stones) shows a heavy reliance on cereal cultivation. While harvesting may have been done by both men and women, the iconographic record (see below) suggests that processing, which involved both pounding in mortars to release the husks and grinding, is likely to have been the exclusive domain of women. The importance of a successful grain harvest is underscored by the fact that at Marki today the average growing season rainfall is close to the minimum needed for cereal and pulse crop cultivation. While it may have been higher in antiquity, there must always have been a significant risk of failure, particularly as the population of the village grew to around 400, placing ever greater demands on the surrounding fields.

Domestic architecture at Sotira and Alambra suggests a similar focus on subsistence production. There is also some evidence for copper-working and, at Sotira, for domestic production of ornaments of picrolite, a blue-green stone found in the nearby riverbed. These communities may, then, have been rather more diverse than at first appears. Indeed current excavations at a number of sites are producing evidence for the targeted exploitation of regional resources, possibly even reaching an 'industrial' level during the Middle Bronze Age. These include workshop-level textile and possibly olive oil, perfume and beer production, as well as the mining, smelting and casting of copper.⁵ There is no reason to doubt, though we have no way of proving, that these activities involved men, women and children. While we have much to learn about the organisation of labour, it seems likely that not all women were restricted to domestic tasks and that the range of contexts within which women operated increasingly expanded beyond the household during the course of the Middle Bronze Age.

A word needs also to be said about pottery production. Long thought to have been made within each household, it now appears more likely that pottery was manufactured by a small number of skilled potters in each village and, in the case of more elaborate or specialised vessels, in regional workshops.⁶ A second long-held assumption, that women were the principal makers of pottery in small-scale pre-industrial societies, has also recently been challenged, with a cooperative rather than individual model possibly involving

men and women now proposed.⁷ certainly, the gender of potters in any single instance in the past must be argued rather than assumed and for the moment the available evidence from Early and Middle Bronze Age Cyprus leaves this question unresolved.

The mortuary data

In Cyprus, identifying gender-specific artefacts in burial contexts is often difficult, because of the poor preservation of skeletal remains, limited osteological analyses and the distortion of burial/artefact associations through re-use, flooding, and the looting of tomb chambers. Where appropriate evidence does exist, however, the burial record suggests highly structured relationships between people and object types: spearheads, daggers, axes, razors, and tweezers are found exclusively or predominantly with men; and needles and spindle whorls with women. There are, however, few if any differences in tomb size and type and most tombs contain both male and female burials.

The great majority of people were buried with ceramic and other grave goods in extra-mural cemeteries. There is a bias towards the inclusion of males over females in some cemeteries, but the imbalance is slight.⁸ There are, however, a small number of intramural burials at Marki and most of these are of women and young children.⁹ They appear both as simple inhumations with few or no grave goods and as disarticulated or partial bodies suggestive of secondary deposition. In two cases, women were buried with a grinding stone near the head and in one with several cooking pots. In one instance a woman in her late twenties was found with the partial remains of three children, aged about 6, 8 and 10, perhaps indicative of a family unit. While this does suggest some gender- and age-based differential treatment with regard to burial, other social factors may of course have been at play and, while they may also suggest a generally lower status for women (leading to exclusion from the external cemeteries), as yet the evidence is too slight to say.

As is the case more generally in prehistoric populations, men lived longer on average than women and many if not most women are likely to have died as a result of complications associated with childbirth. (See also Budin, "Cyprus," this volume.) Infant mortality rates were also high, although again no higher than in other prehistoric populations. In one large tomb at Deneia, for example, 31 of 46 individuals whose remains were recovered were sub-adults, of whom 19 were foetal to 1 year old and another 10 under the age of 12

at the time of death.¹⁰ These mortality rates suggest that village communities are likely to have contained relatively small numbers of older women and, more specifically, few grandmothers.

The iconographic record

The iconographic record, while it has its own set of interpretative challenges, offers a rich set of insights into who was doing what in prehistoric Bronze Age Cyprus. There are two major sources of evidence: anthropomorphic figurines and ‘scenic compositions’ modelled in the round, either attached to vessels or forming freestanding models.

Anthropomorphic figurines

Anthropomorphic figurines, most of which take a highly stylised plank-shaped form, appear in some parts of the island towards the end of the Early Bronze Age (Figure 26.3a). Initially known only from burials, their more recent recovery in settlements leaves no doubt that they were used during life. As with most prehistoric figurine assemblages, the function and identity of these objects are uncertain.¹¹ Incised patterning suggests clothing, jewellery and headgear, while face marks may be indicative of social status. Some view them as depicting specific human individuals, others as representations of a fertility deity or miniatures of large-scale statues found in sanctuaries. Their gender, also, is a source of much debate.¹² Most scholars accept that they depict females, but this is by no means a universal view and they have also been seen as deliberately obscuring aspects of sex and gender in order to reinforce ideologies of corporate identity.¹³ While it is impossible to resolve these issues, where sex is indicated the majority do show females or females with infants. Their appearance at a time when the privatisation of the household appears, at Marki at least, to have reached its maximum extent may reflect a growing desire to control the reproductive potential of females and the source of future labour in an intensive agricultural economy. Almost everything about these figures, however, is contested and the link between them and the lives of real Bronze Age women remains elusive.

Modelled scenes: women and work

These lively compositions show specific activities and indeed suggest

that certain tasks were consistently allocated to women.¹⁴ Women are represented as lovers or partners; as mothers (or child-minders); and as a source of productive labour. This last category includes numerous depictions of cereal grinding, pounding, and baking (Figure 26.3b). While the sex of the figures is not always indicated, where it is the participants in these activities are exclusively female. Men, on the other hand, are shown looking after animals, ploughing, milking, wine-making, and perhaps engaged in copper production. Women also typically appear in communal scenes, together with other women and children.

The repeated portrayal of women in food processing activities and the lack of overlap between male and female tasks infer a sexual division of labour, in which men and women had consistent gender identities which were systematically related to their productive roles. Within the household these divisions probably served as a dimension of economic production and reproduction, with men engaged in agricultural work and animal husbandry and women in the transformation of agricultural produce into commodities for consumption and storage, as well as in a wider array of activities required for the maintenance of the family unit. If we integrate these images with the artefacts and facilities found at Marki and elsewhere, it seems that we can locate most of these female activities within the household and populate our houses with women grinding, baking, giving birth and minding children.

It may also be that in those scenes where sex is not explicitly indicated, the participants were identified as male or female by virtue of the tasks they are engaged in, i.e it is possible that certain activities were so categorically gendered that the depiction of sexual characteristics was unnecessary. If this was the case, these modelled scenes may not only reflect gender categories, as these were understood by the people who made these pots, but have actively served to reproduce a gender-based division of labour within these village communities.

We should remember, however, that these scenes show women engaged in tasks considered significant enough to be depicted on these vessels. In some cases also, they show males and females as paired units in what appear to be life-cycle events, including pregnancy (Figure 26.3c) and childbirth. Both suggest a focus on the nuclear family. As Budin¹⁵ has noted, kourotrrophic imagery and independent images of children also reveal a specific concern with reproduction and lineage. However, even if we see these compositions as valuing women's work and their reproductive role, there is no denying the

depiction of categories of difference, with subsistence tasks correlated with sex-linked divisions and gender roles.

Attempts to 'read' gender relationships by reference to such representations are, however, problematic. While a division of labour is characteristic of small-scale agrarian societies, it does not necessarily translate to opposition and separation within the household or in other areas of social relations. In some such societies, the interdependent role of men and women in production results in a conceptual union between male and female rather than the identification of opposed gender groups. In others, sex-based divisions in economic production were accompanied by significant differences in access to resources and other socio-economic asymmetries. The question is which, if either, was the case in Cyprus?

Modelled scenes: women and community

An extraordinary terracotta model found in a tomb on the north coast of Cyprus, known as the Vounous Model, may throw some light on this question.¹⁶ It shows 18 figures variously positioned within a bowl. A large man sits on a chair at the centre, surrounded by six male figures standing in a circle and another six seated on benches against the wall. At the rear are two animal pens, each with two bulls. There is only one woman, who holds a baby and stands beside one of the animal pens. The nature of the scene has been vigorously debated, with suggestions ranging from a funerary ritual to a depiction of village life. Whatever the case, there is no denying that it is a man's world. One recent approach sees the model as reflecting a re-ordering of gender relations from the Chalcolithic to the Bronze Age in Cyprus, with a significant loss of status for Bronze Age women. The female participant, on this view, stands at the base of a hierarchical construct, symbolising prosperity and fertility, while the other figures engage in the 'adult world of decision-making males'.¹⁷ A fundamental change in gender constructs in the early years of the Bronze Age is also argued by Bolger¹⁸ who proposes that the patriarchal family emerged at this time. certainly, the Vounous Model suggests significant asymmetries in the social roles of men and women in at least some communities in Cyprus by about 2000 BC.

Modelled scenes: women and ritual

The story, however, is likely to have been more complex. Several lines of evidence suggest that women played an important role in at least

some ritual performances. At Karmi, a tomb with exceptional features may have served as a mortuary shrine.¹⁹ On the right wall of the large entrance shaft, an anthropomorphic, almost certainly female figure is carved in relief (Figure 26.4a). On the façade which gives access to the burial chamber, three carved pilasters are topped with V-shaped incisions, possibly intended as schematic representations of horned animal heads. These features may be compared with terracotta models which show a female figure standing before three panels topped by horned animal heads²⁰ (Figure 26.4b). While the precise meaning of these scenes is beyond us, they hint at a connection between women and funerary ritual and suggest that women may have had particular responsibilities towards the ancestral dead.

There is some evidence, also, for special places within settlements, perhaps linked with life-cycle events and involving women. At Sotira one of the main features of a unit identified by the excavator as a 'cult place' was a waist-high grinding platform with two sets of grinding stones *in situ* and room for two more.²¹ Nearby was a finely carved stone mortar. These arrangements recall a specific scene depicted on the modelled vessels, in which four women stand or kneel before a platform grinding grain using equipment identical to that found at Sotira, beside a large mortar in which a substance is pounded by a figure with a long pestle (presumably to dehusk the grain prior to grinding) (Figure 26.3b). At Marki and elsewhere, grinding stones were found individually and always set at floor level. Multiple grinding on a raised bench was clearly not routine domestic practice. This allows us to suggest that the modelled scenes show preparations for a singular event, for which cereal was processed on a special bench using a multiple grinding system. This, in turn, provides some grounds for suggesting that women played an important role in seasonal or life-cycle events involving related groups or perhaps the whole community.

Finally, the symbolic importance of the domestic hearth is suggested by the form and decoration of clay hearth surrounds, some of which recall the facial features of contemporary female figurines (Figure 26.3d). This appears at the very least to acknowledge the role played by women and women's work (in this case, cooking) in the maintenance of the family unit.

Women and technology

If women were primarily engaged in food processing and child-rearing, we can by extension assume that they were the primary

practitioners of technologies within these domains. We may also assume that the transfer, adaptation, and transmission of these technologies were largely if not exclusively in the hands of women.

This is of particular interest in the Cypriot context. Prominent amongst the changes visible on the island at the beginning of the Early Bronze Age are innovations in cooking practices and textile production. The appearance of these new domestic technologies is, indeed, a key element in a wider argument which proposes that major transformations in material culture in the mid-third millennium were brought about by the arrival in Cyprus of extended family groups, including women. As these technologies are also encoded with cultural information, this also allows us to identify their point of origin, particularly in the case of textile production.²² Prior to the second millennium, four major zones of textile development can be distinguished on the basis of loom and fibre types and the position of the whorl on the spindle. Across Anatolia and Europe, the vertical warp-weighted loom and low-whorl spindles (with whorls mounted below the mid-point) were in common use; while in Egypt and the Near East the horizontal ground loom and high-whorl spindles (with the whorl above the mid-point) were the norm. In Cyprus, terracotta whorls first appear at the beginning of the Early Bronze Age. They have typological antecedents in Anatolia and appear to have belonged to a low-whorl spinning tradition. Clay loomweights also show that the vertical warp-weighted loom was introduced to the island at the beginning of the Early Bronze Age. This leaves little doubt that this intrusive technology was introduced by women from a low-whorl, vertical loom tradition, i.e. most probably from Anatolia.

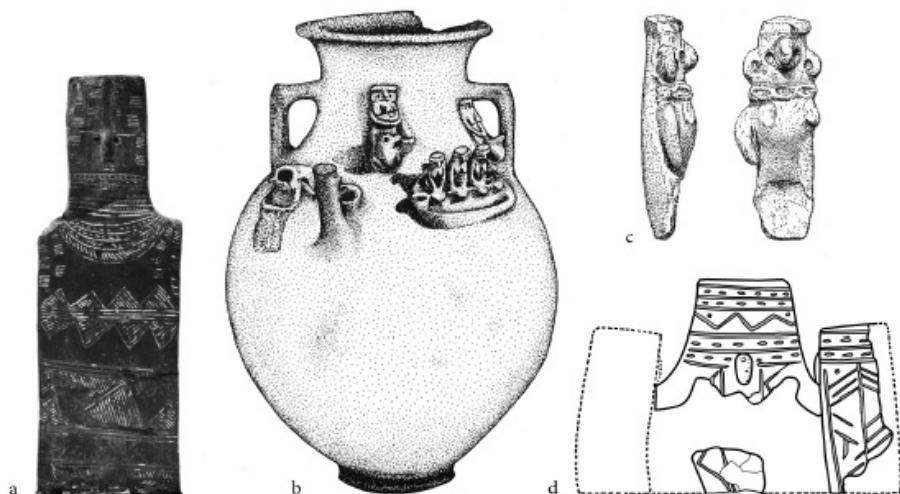


Figure 26.3 a. Terracotta ‘plank-shaped’ figurine (Webb and Frankel 2013: fig. 8.3); b. Jar in the Musée National de Céramique, Sèvres (inv. no. MNC 10690) with modelled decoration showing women working at a grinding bench (Morris 1985: fig. 493); c. Figure of a pregnant woman broken from a vessel (Webb and Frankel 2013: fig. 8.16); d. Hearth surround with features resembling those on ‘plank-shaped’ figurines (Frankel and Webb 2006: fig. 2.5).

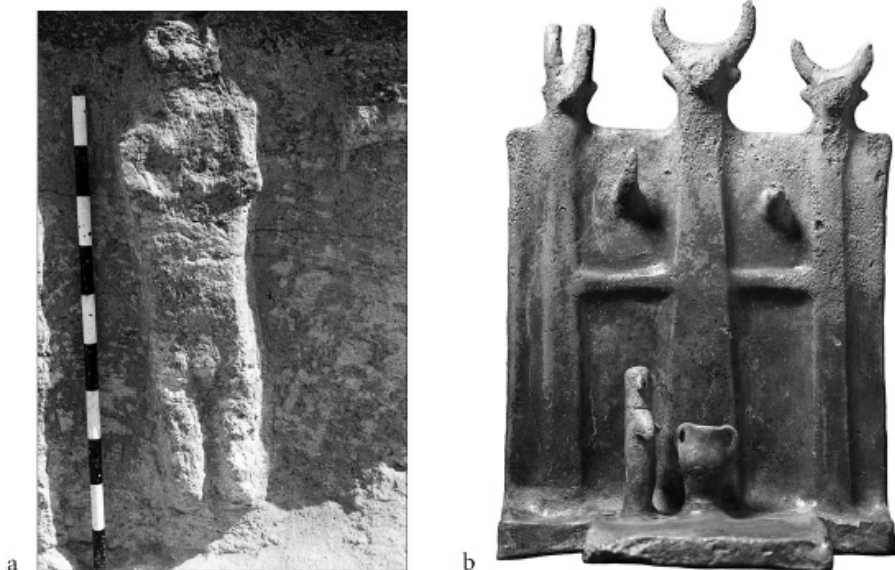


Figure 26.4 a. Figure carved on the wall of a tomb at Karmi (Webb *et al.* 2009: fig. 3.39); b. Terracotta model showing a woman participating in a ritual scene (Cyprus Museum inv.

Other domestic technologies introduced to Cyprus at this time include the use of braziers and hearth surrounds, which also served as supports for newly introduced cooking pots. These innovations in cooking and heating suggest the introduction also of new ways of preparing food and a significant expansion in the range of foods utilised. This is most clearly seen in the case of cooking pots used for the preparation of stews, porridges and other dishes requiring long, slow cooking over minimal heat. These direct fire-boiling vessels enabled the Cypriots, for the first time, to convert milk into yogurt and cheese, prolonging the use-life and nutritional value of one of their principal agricultural products.

The subsequent development of these technologies can also be assumed to have been in the hands of women. These concern some of the most fundamental aspects of living and must have impacted significantly on the health of individuals and communities. This is again most evident in the case of cooking pots, which underwent considerable evolution in the generations following their introduction, resulting in greatly increased efficiency. The sophistication of these vessels could surely not have been achieved without continuous feedback between potters and cooks. The role of women as users and perhaps also makers of these vessels and in the intergenerational transmission of their associated technologies must in large part explain the process and quality of these achievements. As wives, mothers, weavers, cooks, and perhaps potters, women were responsible for the transfer of domestic technologies. In tracing these, we gain some understanding of their role as active agents of transmission, innovation and acculturation.

Putting it together

Where does this leave our search for the real women of prehistoric Bronze Age Cyprus? While not losing sight of the fact that the evidence is patchy and problematic, we can offer some suggestions.

The enclosure of the household and the increasing distinction between public and private space suggested by the archaeological evidence are likely to have been accompanied by increasingly sharply defined gender identities within and beyond the domestic sphere. Gender-based divisions in production and perhaps in ritual performance are also indicated by the iconographic data. Citing both

ethnographic and archaeological studies, Bolger²³ has linked these to the shift at the beginning of the Early Bronze Age from simple to intensive agriculture and to a corresponding breakdown of communally based modes of production in favour of household/family units. certainly the emergence of restricted lineage-based lines of descent and private ownership of land and other resources are likely to have been linked with the increased isolation of the household and changing ideas about appropriate female behaviour, including the need to establish paternity and pass on property to 'legitimate' heirs. While we can indeed link female tasks with interior space and, at Marki, trace an evolving system which sought increasingly to isolate house compounds, regulate social interaction and restrict visual penetration, it seems unlikely, however, that this involved gender segregation or seclusion. Hearth rooms at Marki appear to have been used for domestic activities involving both male and female members of the household, and the modelled compositions show men and women in pair-bonded units or engaged in complementary production tasks.

Cross-cultural generalisations about women's work needing to be compatible with their role as mothers and housekeepers, i.e. carried out close to home and not requiring too much uninterrupted time or effort, do seem to be largely supported by the iconographic data. The mortuary evidence also suggests that gender roles were tightly structured and widely accepted. Within this highly partial picture, however, relationships were no doubt diverse and complex, with women playing important roles within families and at communal and funerary events. certainly most and perhaps all women are likely to have spent many hours of each day grinding wheat or barley for the daily bread, but the repeated depiction of this activity on the modelled vessels reminds us not to underestimate the value of women's work within societies dependent on the productive input of both women and men. The trajectory visible in the domestic architecture at Marki should also be viewed alongside evidence from elsewhere for increasing workshop production of regional commodities during the Middle Bronze Age, likely leading to a greater diversity of tasks and gender roles. Thus relationships were not static and life was not the same for all women across the island. Nevertheless, the male-dominated Vounous Model and a rise in the number of male burials with weapons towards the end of the Middle Bronze Age indicate increasing levels of stratification and status negotiation in which, as the evidence stands, women appear to have played little or no part.

Notes

- 1 For recent reviews, see Webb 2014a; Frankel 2014.
- 2 Frankel and Webb 2006.
- 3 Coleman *et al.* 1996.
- 4 Swiny *et al.* 2003.
- 5 See Bombardieri 2013; also Webb and Frankel 2013.
- 6 See, recently, Webb 2014b.
- 7 Bolger 2013.
- 8 Keswani 2004: 30–33, 51–53.
- 9 Frankel and Webb 2006: 283–285.
- 10 Tucker and Cleggett 2007.
- 11 See Bolger 2003: 93–122, with references.
- 12 See, recently, Budin 2011: 236–242.
- 13 Talalay and Cullen 2002.
- 14 For a comprehensive study of these scenes, see Karageorghis 1991; also Morris 1985.
- 15 Budin 2011: 235.
- 16 Most recently, Steel 2013.
- 17 Peltenburg 1994: 160.
- 18 Bolger 2003.
- 19 Webb *et al.* 2009: 128–134, 242–245.
- 20 Karageorghis 1991: 142–144.
- 21 Swiny 2008.
- 22 For an extended argument, see Webb 2002.
- 23 Bolger 2003: 37–39, 62.

References

- Bolger, D. L. (2003) *Gender in Ancient Cyprus: Narratives of Social Change on a Mediterranean Island*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.
- Bolger, D. L. (2013) Gender, labor and pottery production in prehistory. In D. Bolger (ed.) *A Companion to Gender Prehistory*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 161–179.
- Bombardieri, L. (2013) The development and organisation of labour strategies in prehistoric Bronze Age Cyprus: The evidence from Erimi *Laonin tou Porakou*. In A. B. Knapp, J. M. Webb and A. McCarthy (eds) *J. R. B. Stewart: An Archaeological Legacy* (SIMA 139). Uppsala, Sweden: Åströms Förlag, pp. 91–102.
- Budin, S. L. (2011) *Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity, and Gender in the Ancient World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

- Coleman, J. E., Barlow, J. A., Mogelonsky, M. K. and Schaar, K. W. (1996) *Alambra: A Middle Bronze Age Settlement in Cyprus. Archaeological Investigations by Cornell University 1974–1985* (SIMA 118). Jonsered, Sweden: Åströms Förlag.
- Frankel, D. (2014) Cyprus during the Middle Bronze Age. In M. L. Steiner and A. E. Killebrew (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of the Levant (c.8000–332 Bce)*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 482–494.
- Frankel, D. and Webb, J. M. (2006) *Marki Alonia: An Early and Middle Bronze Age Settlement in Cyprus. Excavations 1995–2000* (SIMA 123.2). Sävedalen, Sweden: Åströms Förlag.
- Karageorghis, V. (1991) *The Coroplastic Art of Ancient Cyprus I. Chalcolithic–Late Cypriot I*. Nicosia, Cyprus: A. G. Leventis Foundation.
- Keswani, P. S. (2004) *Mortuary Ritual and Society in Bronze Age Cyprus*. London: Equinox Publishing Ltd.
- Morris, D. (1985) *The Art of Ancient Cyprus*. Oxford, UK: Phaidon.
- Peltenburg, E. (1994) Constructing authority: The Vounous Enclosure model. *Opuscula Atheniensia* 20: 157–162.
- Steel, L. (2013) The social world of Early-Middle Bronze Age Cyprus: Rethinking the Vounous Bowl. *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 26(1): 51–73.
- Swiny, S. (2008) Of cows, copper, corners and cult: The emergence of the Cypriot Bronze Age. *Near Eastern Archaeology* 71: 41–51.
- Swiny S., Rapp, G. and Herscher, E. (2003) *Sotira Kaminoudhia: An Early Bronze Age Site in Cyprus*. Boston, MA: ASOR.
- Talalay, L. E. and Cullen, T. (2002) Sexual ambiguity in plank figures from Bronze Age Cyprus. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 181–195.
- Tucker, K. and Cleggett, S. (2007) Human remains from Tomb 789. In D. Frankel and J. M. Webb (eds) *The Bronze Age cemeteries at Deneia in Cyprus* (SIMA 135). Sävedalen, Sweden: Åströms Förlag, pp. 131–136.
- Webb, J. M. (2002) New evidence for the origins of textile production in Bronze Age Cyprus. *Antiquity* 76: 364–371.
- Webb, J. M. (2014a) Cyprus during the Early Bronze Age. In M. L. Steiner and A. E. Killebrew (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of the Levant (c.8000–332 Bce)*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 347–360.
- Webb, J. M. (2014b) Pottery production and distribution in Prehistoric Bronze Age Cyprus: The long road from measurement to

- meaning. In J. M. Webb (ed.) *Structure, Measurement and Meaning: Studies on Prehistoric Cyprus in Honour of David Frankel* (SIMA 143). Uppsala, Sweden: Åströms Förlag, pp. 213–227.
- Webb, J. M. and Frankel, D. (2013) *Ambelikou Aletri. Metallurgy and Pottery Production in Middle Bronze Age Cyprus* (SIMA 138). Uppsala, Sweden: Åströms Förlag.
- Webb, J. M., Frankel, D., Eriksson, K. O. and Hennessy, J. B. (2009) *The Bronze Age cemeteries at Karmi Palealona and Lapatsa in Cyprus: Excavations by J. R. B. Stewart* (SIMA 136). Sävedalen, Sweden: Åströms Förlag.

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ROLES PLAYED BY THE WOMEN OF ALASHIYA

Louise Steel

The wind drove me to the land of Alashiya. The inhabitants of the town came out to kill me. I pushed myself between them to the place where Hatiba, the princess of the town, was. I found her after she came forth from one house of hers and was entering into another. I greeted her and said to the people standing near her: "Is there no one amongst you who understands the language of Egypt". One amongst them said: "I understand". I said to him: "Tell my mistress, I have heard as far (away) as Thebes, the place where Amun is, 'In every town wrong is done, (but) that in the land of Alashiya right is done'. Does one now do wrong daily here?" She said: "Oh, what is this that you have said?" I said to her: "If the sea rages and the wind drives me to the place in which you are, would you let them receive me so as to kill me, although I am the messenger of Amun? They will look for me to the end of days. As for the crew of the prince of Byblos which they seek to kill, will not its lord find ten crews with you and kill them himself?" She had the people summoned and they were pulled up. She said to me: "Be at ease!"¹

This famous account relates to the shipwreck of the Egyptian priest, Wenamun, on the coast of Alashiya and provides us with the earliest known account of a high-status woman of Cyprus who appears to have wielded some degree of political power and influence. The text dates to the Twenty-First Dynasty (Third Intermediate Period), which places it after the widespread political and economic breakdown throughout the East Mediterranean at the end of the Late Bronze Age (LBA). It provides a fleeting and tantalizing glimpse into life on the island during the final stages of the Bronze Age – an unsettled period, a time when strangers from overseas were viewed with suspicion, but during which life in the coastal towns persisted with at least some degree of central governance. Whether this brief and essentially external account reflects an ancient Cypriot reality is unclear – but it is nonetheless intriguing that one of the few named individuals from Alashiya is a woman, Hatiba, and, moreover, she was clearly someone of some influence and standing within her community. Whether we can extrapolate from this a wider understanding of the social and

economic roles of the women of (LBA) Alashiya is another matter. In this chapter, I will review some of the archaeological evidence in an attempt to situate Hatiba within her wider social context.

Nature of the evidence

Gender archaeology has long been a fruitful area of enquiry² but, with only a few exceptions, has had limited impact on our understanding and interpretations of the Late Cypriot (LC) period (1450–1050 BC).³ Engendering the past is not simply a case of writing women into the archaeological narratives, but should also consider the social relations of both men and women and how these individuals were integrated within the social, economic and ideological structures of past societies. One of the problems we face when trying to establish gender roles in ancient communities is essentialist assumptions, namely unquestioningly imposing certain roles, activities, and practices onto an ancient population according to assumed universals of male/female biology and experience. Instead we should explore a diversity of social roles in different cultural contexts. The men, women and children of LBA Cyprus continue perennially to be “faceless blobs”.⁴ It is the aim of this chapter to briefly attempt to people the LC past and to explore a multiplicity of female lived experiences; for the purposes of this exercise, however, their male counterparts will largely remain in the shadows.

In contrast to the surrounding regions of the Near East, and even the limited evidence from the Aegean, we do not have the luxury of ancient texts to explore people’s daily lives on Cyprus, as the small corpus of Cypro-Minoan texts remains undeciphered. There is a single mention of an Alashiyan woman and her female apprentices amongst the ration lists from Ugarit⁵ but, other than indicating her integration within the Ugaritic royal economic sphere, there is no additional information concerning her occupation. The many other references to Alashiya in the texts from neighbouring regions⁶ are silent on the activities, occupation and status of women from the island of copper. While we cannot read contemporary Cypriot documents, we can draw upon a rich archaeological record to tease out the social and economic roles of women on Cyprus during the LBA. Our primary evidence is the settlement archaeology, in particular dating to the LC IIC–IIA period (thirteenth to twelfth centuries). Much of the work to date has focused on the large ashlar structures in the coastal towns rather than on daily life within urban and rural households.⁷ Nonetheless, there is evidence which will enable an assessment of the LC domestic arena. In addition, there is a veritable wealth of funerary evidence from across

the island which covers the entire LC period. Despite this valuable resource, only a small percentage of the burials have been aged and sexed, which inevitably has some impact on developing narratives of women's lives. The final strand of evidence comprises representations of women, although these are not as rich as those available for the preceding Middle Cypriot (MC) period or those from the Aegean and Near East. (See Serwint, this volume.)

Although the sources available for exploring women's lives might seem restricted in comparison to the surrounding regions, we do have a wealth of archaeological evidence which can give us unique insights into women's material experiences – we can explore the things they made, used, wore, exchanged, lost, and broke on a daily basis, the spaces they lived, loved, worked, and slept in, and the tombs where they were finally laid to rest. Thinking about this material through the lens of social archaeology (encompassing materiality, agency, and practice), with reference to comparative data from contemporary cultures and judicious use of ethnoarchaeological analogy, should help us to elucidate the social and economic roles of the women of Alashiya. We should be aware, however, of the problems of indiscriminately applying ethnographic and historical analogies to the archaeological record and defining female roles and activities according to essentialist gender stereotypes.

Representations

Representations are increasingly being used by archaeologists to explore gender in ancient communities. These images allow us a glimpse of how ancient populations viewed themselves; even so, making sense of their possible meanings is fraught with difficulties and the extent to which they might give an insight into the social and economic roles of women is unclear. The range of LC representational material in fact is frustratingly limited. Most plentiful are clay figurines.⁸ There are also a handful of bronze figurines dating to the thirteenth to twelfth century BC,⁹ a single instance of a four-sided bronze stand depicting women at a window, a small number of anthropomorphic bottles depicting women carrying water jars on their heads, a few pieces of Mycenaean pictorial pottery,¹⁰ occasional carved ivories and a few pieces of glyptic. Some of these images derive from cultural contexts external to the island and yet they were readily consumed within Cypriot lifeways suggesting that they were in some way relevant and meaningful to the island's communities. I would argue that these images reiterated certain social perceptions of women and that as a corollary they might help us explore women's

social and economic lives. We shall examine the potential significance of these objects for exploring the lives and experiences of women within and beyond the household and consider them in relation to other aspects of the LC material world.

Social and economic roles within the household The LBA was a period of great social change characterized by a move away from isolated village communities towards centrally organized urban settlements involved in international maritime exchanges. Underlying assumptions are that society became more hierarchically organized, production increasingly moved into the hands of specialists rather than within household (or household workshops), and that there was increasing elite control over production and exchange.¹¹ These transformations undoubtedly resulted in a radical change in household structures and social (gendered) relations¹² and raised questions of how economically productive women were and whether their role(s) as mother/nurturer shifted.

Representations from the earlier MC villages suggest that marriage and motherhood were important female social roles,¹³ but it is not clear whether we can demonstrate their continued significance into the LC period; moreover, we should be careful of unthinkingly attributing biologically imposed essentialist roles without considering the LC cultural context. certainly, the materiality used to negotiate family relations and the biographies of individuals shifted as the population moved into the coastal urban centres. Current evidence suggests that representations of couples and pregnant women disappear from the Cypriot imagined, creative world, which might imply a shift in cultural values and perhaps the daily experience of women. The continued value attached to motherhood, or at least the nurturing of infants, is illustrated, however, by the uninterrupted popularity of the *kourotrophos*, albeit adapted and modified within a new Levantine-inspired iconography – the bird-faced figurine. Interestingly, Budin¹⁴ suggests that these were not images of mortal women, but were in fact goddesses. This interpretation need not preclude the significance of these figurines for female biographies; they might well be viewed as intrinsically feminine objects, perhaps reflecting personal piety and aspirations to fulfilling a specific role within society, or possibly good luck charms to help a woman through the dangers of childbirth and the uncertainties of rearing children to adult health (see Lorentz and also Budin, this volume).¹⁵ The figurines were used in life within the household and were dedicated in sanctuaries; occasionally some were buried with the dead.¹⁶ These objects might give us some insight into LC perceptions of family life, gendered social roles and the importance of assuring the next

generation. They illustrate how ideological beliefs impacted on the daily lives of (some) women, reiterating the importance of their role as nurturer (although not necessarily life-giver/mother) and reinforcing this through the sacred associations of the divine figurines, many of which were dedicated at religious sites.¹⁷ Their inclusion in a small number of high-status tombs¹⁸ further emphasizes the importance of women for ensuring the continuity of family/household wealth.

Female (and child) labour would have been a significant economic resource, and women's domestic activities represent a worthwhile line of enquiry. The allocation of tasks according to gender is well documented in the ancient Near East¹⁹ and we might be able to extrapolate some of this evidence to Cyprus, based on the material arrangement within domestic spaces. Typically, LC houses were freestanding structures built around a central courtyard; from the distribution of finds this appears to have been the primary domestic work area.²⁰ Hearths, ovens, storage pits, pithoi and grinding equipment indicate that this was a space where food was stored, processed, cooked and possibly consumed. Both Fisher²¹ and Bolger²² have emphasized the apparent privatization of the LC household space and domestic activities. Conversely, we might consider the courtyard as a lively communal space where women from neighbouring households could gather, work together and perhaps keep an eye on the children – a place where they shared their workload while they also engaged in the important business of gossiping, sharing knowledge, and cementing social ties (see also Meyers, “Daily Life,” this volume).²³

The archaeological evidence and reference to contemporary practices in the Near East and Aegean suggest a variety of probable female domestic economic roles. The materiality of their daily experience was shaped by a range of ground stone tools, such as grinders, rubbers and pestles, used for processing and preparing foodstuffs. The very large number found on any LC site is staggering, but it is worth noting that these objects would have been prized household possessions. Dalley²⁴ notes that at Mari (on the Euphrates) every girl received various millstones when she married; we might then consider whether there were similar practices on Cyprus and if these implements were in fact the economic property of the woman of the household. The primary food processing set was the saddle quern and rubber (Figure 27.1b), which were used together to grind grains and pulses. The querns were substantial objects and would be set up semi-permanently within the courtyard.²⁵ Ethnographies suggest an average of between three and five hours a day would be devoted to

grinding grain²⁶ and preparing the daily bread, indicating this to be both a major economic activity within the household and also a primary lived experience for the female member(s) of the household whose responsibility this was. Although a time-consuming and arduous task, this, together with other aspects of food production, would undoubtedly have been a very social and socialized activity. Fendin,²⁷ for example, highlights the importance of singing to accompany and mimic the rhythmic process of grinding and so help to pass the time.

Spindle whorls and loom weights (Figure 27.1a) were typical items of household material culture, indicating that textile production was another important household activity. This is usually assumed to be for domestic consumption;²⁸ nonetheless given the economic importance of textiles in the ancient world we should not discount production of woven cloth for exchange as part of a household industry. Smith²⁹ contends that LC domestic textile production was primarily a female activity, at least the combing of wool and the spinning and weaving of wool and flax; this might therefore indicate that women could achieve some degree of economic independence through their successful management of this household industry. The possible involvement of women in commercial transactions might be illustrated by the Middle Assyrian textile industry, in which the women of the household exercised a great deal of economic control (see also McCarthy, this volume).³⁰ As whorls were portable, spinning could be practised on the move, within different rooms in the house. Evidence from Apliki and Kition *Chyropolitissa* indicate that the warp-weighted looms would be set up in the courtyard, situating weaving, this most important of economic activities, at the heart of the household. As with the grinding of grain, the sounds and rhythm of working the loom and spinning yarn would be picked up by accompanying rhyme or song, further highlighting the sociality of domestic production.³¹

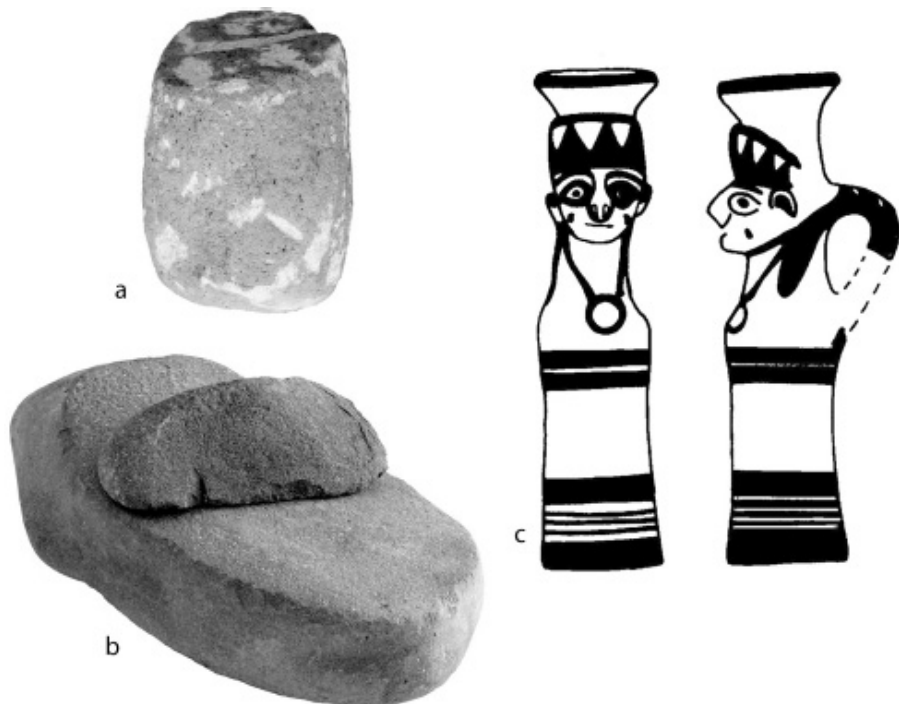


Figure 27.1 Women's work. a. loom weight from Aredhiou *Vouppes* (photo S. Thomas); b. grinding set from Aredhiou *Vouppes* (photo S. Thomas); c. water carrier (after Karageorghis 1993, fig. 56).

Surprisingly, water procurement is missing from the many gender studies of the ancient Near East,³² no doubt due to its intangibility; however, we might expect this activity to have played a key role in female social lives. Within agricultural and settled communities, water-carrying increasingly became a female domestic role, providing the daily drinking, cooking and washing needs of the household,³³ but also providing an opportunity for socializing. Bourdieu, for example, notes how the collection of water provided girls of the Kabyle villages with an important extra-household social arena in which they could meet to “exchange news and carry on their gossip”.³⁴ A few anthropomorphic bottles depicting women carrying jars (of water?) on their head are attested from the end of the LBA (Figure 27.1c), and support the idea that water-carrying was a female task.³⁵

Within increasingly hierarchically organized, urbanized communities, water is viewed as an economic asset and the focus of property rights; consequently, in such contexts, Strang³⁶ contends that water management and technological investment in securing water

supplies are primarily male concerns, while women continue to physically collect and carry household water supplies. In this respect, it is interesting to note the apparent privatization of water supplies within LC urban households, with cisterns and wells being dug inside some of the buildings.³⁷ Some households, however, would have been dependent on nearby waterways or communal, public wells, such as those identified at Kourion *Bamboula* and Hala Sultan Tekke.³⁸ The apparent privatization of water therefore might reflect its economic importance and the need to control access; equally, we might view it as a means by which the movement of women beyond the household could be controlled, which has significant implications for female autonomy and status.

Beyond the household

We should also explore the possibility that women played a significant role as economic, political and religious agents outside the household. Near Eastern texts, for example, illustrate the substantial economic and occasionally political power wielded by some women, while ration lists provide an important source of information for women's occupations beyond the household, most commonly as textile workers but also other female occupations, including musicians, scribes and doctors.³⁹ There is likewise plentiful evidence for specialization of craft activities in the towns of LBA Cyprus, much of which was located within the centralized ashlar buildings, in particular within the sacred precincts. As much as these structures were economic hubs, they were also the focus of social gatherings and religious performance. The urban temples and sanctuaries provide an abundance of material evidence,⁴⁰ but the nature of these religious performances and the potential gendered roles of the participants have yet to be explored in any detail. While textual and representational sources from surrounding cultures indicate that women were significant actors in ritual performance (see Michel (Levant) and Boëlle (Aegean), this volume), on Cyprus we are entirely reliant on interpreting the material residues of cult. The following discussion explores possible areas of female activity within the LC sanctuaries, both as supplicants or worshippers and as practitioners of cult.

The temples were undoubtedly colourful, vibrant, bustling places full of sounds and scents, all part of the texture of the embodied practices enacted therein; these included music and song, processions, burning of incense, ceremonial feasting and banquets.⁴¹ Processions to seated musicians/singers playing the lyre is a repeated motif on the four-sided bronze stands,⁴² providing us with a visual referent to these

occasions. A slightly later image (transitional Bronze-Iron Age) is the (male?) figure playing a lyre seated inside a clay model shrine.⁴³ The stands (tripod and four-sided) themselves would have been integrated within embodied practices in the sanctuaries, supporting containers of substances such as water, wine or incense.⁴⁴ There is no reason to preclude female participation from these activities. Occasional bird-faced figurines holding a musical instrument in their left arm⁴⁵ suggest that it was not impossible to the LC mindset for women to be musicians, a notion which gains further support from the Mari archives, which refer to female singers, and up to 56 lady musicians are listed on one ration list.⁴⁶ Moreover, some LC women certainly had access to the drinking equipment used in ceremonial banqueting, and there is some evidence that they specifically chose their own personal Mycenaean kraters for decorative motifs that reflected their identities, social roles, and high status.⁴⁷ We might therefore allow for their participation in temple feasts. Many women (and men) were more probably involved in provisioning these occasions, preparing food and drink in the temple kitchens, serving the participants, and supervising the provision of eating and drinking equipment.

One of the more intriguing objects with possible religious connotations is a four-sided bronze stand decorated with the “women at the window” motif (Figure 27.2), found in Enkomi Tomb 97. This image, better known from the later Neo-Assyrian palaces, has been interpreted as a reference to temple prostitution, a practice apparently related to the notion of sacred marriage associated with the Near Eastern cult of Ishtar.⁴⁸ Other LC images of women in buildings are known on Mycenaean pictorial vases, namely the Window Krater from Kourion *Bamboula* and the Shrine Krater from Kalavassos *Ayios Dhimitrios*,⁴⁹ the latter of which is certainly a religious scene. Although this imagery appears to belong to an Aegean tradition, we might consider that it was reinvented in the LC context as a metaphor for temple prostitution. The overt sexuality of a female deity worshipped on Cyprus, illustrated by the emphasis on the sexual attributes and nudity of the bird-faced figurines,⁵⁰ might support the notion that sex (although not necessarily as a commercial transaction) may indeed have been an accepted aspect of religious action within some at least of the urban temples, revealing a possibly unexpected social role for some women.

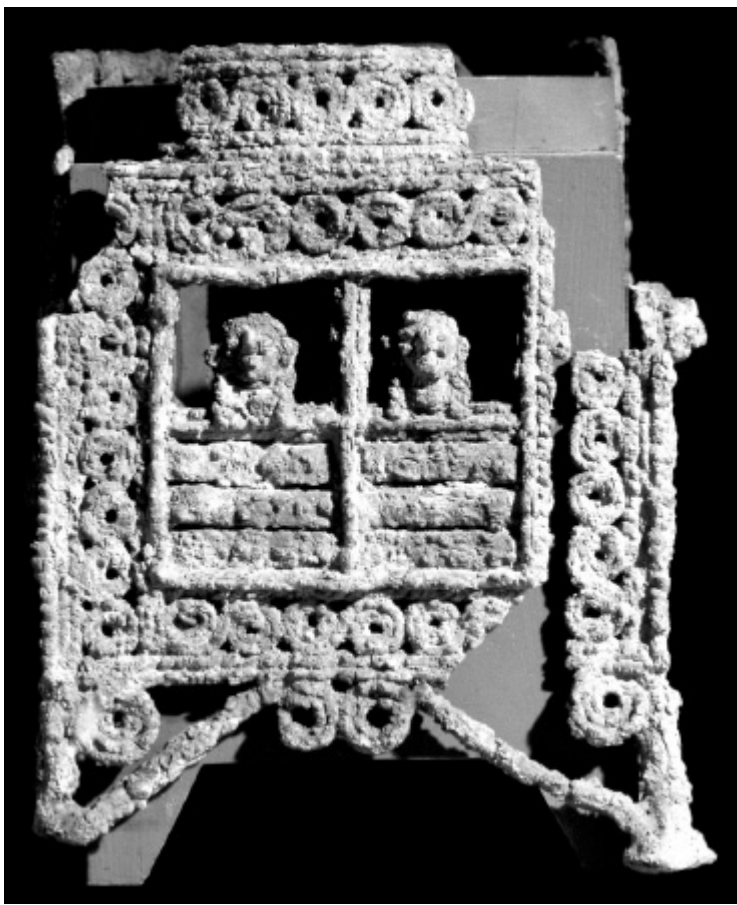


Figure 27.2 Bronze four-sided stand from Enkomi Tomb 97. (Courtesy of the BM.)

Nonetheless, we should note that the notion of sacred prostitution in fact is controversial, reflecting in part exoticizing orientalist notions of eastern women as sexual beings who are hidden from view and exist for male pleasure.⁵¹ Indeed, whether or not the sexual act, or prostitution (sex within an economic transaction) were part of the sacred landscape of the ancient Near East has been much debated in recent years, primarily based on readings of the Near Eastern texts.⁵² While the sacralization of sex has been identified as a characteristic of Cypriot religious practices during the Iron Age, based on the reading of a fourth-century inventory of temple workers from Kition *Bamboula*, which apparently listed sacred prostitutes alongside the more mundane bakers, barbers, scribes and specialist craftsmen,⁵³ this in fact is a misreading of the Phoenician, *klbm*, which is more correctly translated as “dog”.⁵⁴ The textual evidence from the ancient Near East therefore is at best tenuous, suggesting alternative readings of the

“women at the window” motif would be preferable. The women depicted on the Shrine Krater from Kalavassos have been interpreted as divine, or possibly priestesses in their sanctuary.⁵⁵ Plausibly, the figures on the bronze stand had similar religious connotations – the imagery on other bronze stands falls within the sacred sphere (musicians, processions, sphinxes) and the women’s hairstyles recall those of the rare bronze figurines from Cyprus, further suggesting divinity. Rather than temple prostitution, therefore, the women at a window/woman in a shrine motif relates to LC cosmologies, and at a push perhaps to female practitioners of cult.

The temples were also a hive of economic activity and supported a large number of workers, including attached specialists who produced symbolically charged objects for the religious elite. Industrial workshops have been identified adjacent to Temple 1 at Kition; the Northern Workshops were associated with metalworking⁵⁶ and the Western Workshops were home to large-scale textile production.⁵⁷ It is perhaps an essentialist given that these were gendered spaces: men working in the metal workshops while women provided the labour for textile production. Even so, there is a possibility that women might have completed some of the tasks at least in the metal workshops. In copper-smelting experiments at the Iron Age metallurgical site of Ayia Varvara *Almyras*, for example, it was reported that women were consistently better at working the bellows, a task which involved co-ordination, stamina and an intuitive understanding of the processes inside the furnace rather than great physical strength.⁵⁸ There is perhaps no reason, other than our own cultural stereotypes, to exclude women from such a task in the LC context. By analogy with contemporary practice in the Aegean and Near East, Smith⁵⁹ suggests that both men and women worked in the textile workshops, women spinning and possibly weaving, while men were responsible for fulling and dyeing the textiles and possibly also weaving.

Life after life

Archaeologists have interpreted funerary evidence as a window onto ancient cultural systems.⁶⁰ There is now an increasing emphasis on the emotions, motives, and politics of the living⁶¹ and an understanding that ancient burials might not give a direct view onto the status, wealth and identity of past populations. Even so, burials do provide us with a direct link to an ancient people and can help us refine our understanding of past social relations and how these were articulated materially. The LC burial record provides us with a wealth of information for exploring the social role(s) of women. There are,

however, limitations with this material, in particular the re-use of tombs for multiple burials, sometimes over generations, ancient and modern tomb looting, and the lack of osteological analyses for tombs excavated in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For these reasons, therefore, discussion will focus on just one tomb group, where we do have detailed age/sex information, to explore whether women were able to acquire wealth in their own right and also to examine the relationship between women and children.

Kalavassos Tomb 11 is a rare example of an unplundered LC tomb that has been excavated and recorded meticulously (see, also, Lorentz, this volume).⁶² It is of particular interest for our understanding of female social roles as it housed the remains of three young adult women (aged between 17 and 24), a young child (aged 3) and three infants.⁶³ Moreover, this tomb stands out for its considerable wealth and the accumulation of symbolically charged objects. These include two Mycenaean kraters, two bull rhyta, a large quantity of gold jewellery including two signet rings inscribed with Cypro-Minoan (Figure 27.3), Red Lustrous spindle bottles and flasks, two ivory cosmetic palettes, and two glass vessels.⁶⁴

The wealth of the burials raises important questions concerning property ownership, wealth, status, and gender. Plausibly these burials demonstrate a woman's ability to acquire, own, and dispose of property in her own right; alternatively the valuables buried with these women reflect familial (male) wealth. Careful analysis of the grave goods might elucidate LC property customs, the economic value attached to women of marriageable age and might highlight the status, wealth and authority that women in LC society could achieve. Moreover, given their association with infant burials, the provision of a remarkable array of valuables and sumptuary items undoubtedly demonstrates the importance of women for ensuring the continuity of the family line and inheritance of property.⁶⁵ This is reiterated by the apparent segregation of wealthy high-status female burials, frequently associated with child/infant burials in other sites across the island.⁶⁶ This custom emphasizes the importance of women for ensuring the continuity of familial wealth and lineages through marriage and childbirth, something we have previously noted with the *kourotrophos* figurines. Interestingly, however, the maternal, nurturing role is not reflected in the materiality of the burials and does not appear to be an important or valued aspect of female personhood.

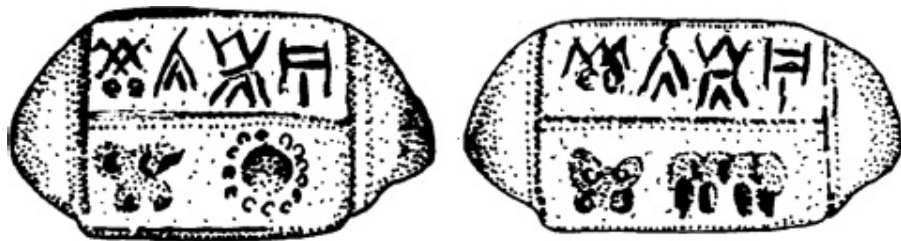


Figure 27.3 Gold signet ring from Kalavasos Ayios Dhimitrios. (After Ferrara 2013, figs. 165–166.)

The young woman buried on the west bench of the tomb was adorned with an array of gold jewelry, including six plain hoop earrings, four hair spirals and two signet rings, as well as two silver toe rings. These pieces all had signs of wear, which clearly indicates they had been worn in life and so reflect the woman's lived experience. The plain hoop rings and hair spirals all correlated to a standard unit of weight, leading Goring⁶⁷ to conclude that they represented convertible currency and were perhaps bridal or dowry wealth. This would imply that the gold represented family wealth, rather than property controlled by the woman herself which has negative connotations for the position of women in society,⁶⁸ suggesting they were unable to procure the wealth in their own right. The signet rings,⁶⁹ both marked with the same inscription (possibly a name), are intriguing items which portray a different picture of women's access to and control of economic wealth and status symbols. Inscribed jewellery is rare in LC contexts,⁷⁰ suggesting these were unusual and highly valued objects which would confer great status on their owner. In this respect, it is all the more remarkable that the young woman from Kalavasos had two such rings. Masson suggested that the inscription was her husband's name, reinforcing the gendered assumption that women in the ancient Near East were illiterate and were not property owners in their own right. Seals and signets in fact were personalized items conveying concepts of ownership, power, and authority. As these were worn by the woman, there is every reason to assume that she would have used this object in her own right to authorize transactions and mark her property, perhaps giving us our first glimpse of a woman of substance, such as Hatiba in the archaeological record. It might also give us a hint of female literacy, at least the ability of a woman to read and possibly write her own name.

Final comments

By its very nature, this has been a brief overview of the women of Alashiya; there are of course many strands of evidence still to explore, not least the social and economic role of women in the rural hinterland.⁷¹ Likewise, women's contribution to economic production in the fields, pottery workshops, and market places are other potentially fruitful areas of enquiry; also the role(s) they plausibly played in funerary rituals. The overall picture of women's lived experiences in the towns is unlikely to be radically different from that of the surrounding regions: they managed households, provided food, water and clothing for their families, and they ensured the family lineage. Women also appear to have been significant actors in religious life, another area which merits more detailed enquiry. Returning to our starting point, what then of Hatiba of Alashiya? Her high status, wealth (with multiple domiciles), and authority are hinted at in the mortuary arena examined above; we have seen hints of wealthy women who potentially owned and controlled their own property, were possibly literate and who surely wielded some economic power and authority.

Notes

- 1 Ockinga 1996: 49.
- 2 For example, Gilchrist 1999; Sørensen 2000.
- 3 See Bolger and Serwint (eds) 2002; Bolger 2003; Steel, in press.
- 4 See Tringham 1991: 93–94.
- 5 Walls 1996: 39.
- 6 See Knapp (ed.) 1996.
- 7 For recent exceptions, see Fisher 2014: 399–416; Steel, in press.
- 8 Knapp 2009: 138–141, fig. 1; Budin 2009: 83–85, fig. 14.
- 9 Budin 2009: 84, fig. 15.
- 10 Steel 2006.
- 11 Fisher 2014: 399.
- 12 Bolger 2003: 49–50.
- 13 Ibid: 115–117; Budin 2011: 226, 243–244.
- 14 Budin 2011: 261, fig. 37; see also Budin, this volume.
- 15 By the earlier Iron Age, around the ninth century BC, these very real concerns for the welfare of mother and child are articulated through the dedication of images of Bes (an Egyptian god and protector of women in childbirth) at the temple of Kition; Smith 2009, 2nd ed. 2014: 146.
- 16 Knapp 2009: 139–140.
- 17 Found in cult assemblages at Kouklia, Enkomi, Idalion and near Myrtou *Pigadhes*, see Webb 1999: 211.
- 18 Keswani records figurines in tombs at the coastal sites of Enkomi, Hala Sultan Tekke, Kourion *Bamboula* and in the inland settlements of Angastina, Ayia

Paraskevi and Katydhata. Keswani 2004, tables 5.9b–d.

- 19 See discussion in Bolger 2003: 51–53; Meyers 1998, 2003.
- 20 Fisher 2014: 403–405.
- 21 Ibid: 407.
- 22 Bolger 2003: 49.
- 23 Meyers 2003: 428–429, 435–436.
- 24 Dalley 1984: 109.
- 25 Fisher 2014: 405.
- 26 Hayden pers. comm. May 2014.
- 27 Fendin, 2006: 161.
- 28 Smith and Tzachili 2012: 148.
- 29 Smith 2002: 286–287.
- 30 Thomason 2013.
- 31 Nosch 2014: 92–95.
- 32 For example Meyers 2003; Bolger 2003.
- 33 Strang 2014: 95.
- 34 Bourdieu 1966: 222.
- 35 Steel in press, n. 123 also notes possible ritual connotations of these water carriers.
- 36 Strang 2014.
- 37 Bolger 2003: 49.
- 38 Steel in press, n. 73.
- 39 For example see Dalley 1984: 104–110; Marsman 2003: 407–408.
- 40 Webb 1999; Smith 2009, 2nd ed. 2014.
- 41 Steel 2004.
- 42 Mikrakis 2012, figs. 1–2.
- 43 Ibid., figs. 9–10.
- 44 Ibid: 374.
- 45 Budin 2011: 261.
- 46 Dalley 1984: 109–110.
- 47 Steel 2002: 110–111; Steel 2013: 215–216.
- 48 Serwint 2002: 331. Serwint also highlights a similar woman at the window shrine model from Idalion, dating to the Cypro-Archaic period, fig. 7.
- 49 Steel 2006: 150, 152. An alternative perspective might view these women peering from the window as a metaphor for the privatization of space and the need to keep women within the house (see discussion of control of water resource above).
- 50 Budin 2011: 259.
- 51 See, for example, Said on Flaubert’s writings: Said 1978, reprint 2003: 187–188.
- 52 See, for example, Assante 1998; Budin 2008 who argue against sacred prostitution and Morris 2007, who uses the textual evidence to support sacred prostitution.
- 53 Masson and Sznycer 1972: 27–28, 162. Delcor (1979: 162) contested that the

term referred specifically to male (rather than female) prostitutes.

- 54 Budin 2008: 46–47.
- 55 Steel 1994.
- 56 Karageorghis and Kassianidou 1999.
- 57 Smith 2002: 301–304; Smith and Tzachili 2012: 149.
- 58 Fasnacht *et al.* 2000: 104.
- 59 Smith 2002: 286, 304.
- 60 See brief overview, in Keswani 2004: 6–9.
- 61 Keswani 2005: 341.
- 62 South 1997: 63–65.
- 63 Goring 1989: 101, fig. 13.1. See also discussion by Lorentz, this volume.
- 64 Ibid: 102–103. Gold signet rings: Masson 1989: 39, fig. 61: 1, 2; Red Lustrous ware: South and Steel 2007: 9–10, fig. 7.
- 65 See discussion of figurines above. For an interesting discussion of female control of wealth and property in Early Iron Age Greece, see Langdon 2003.
- 66 Bolger identifies the custom of female burial segregation at Akhera and Morphou *Toumba tou Skourou* 2003: 171–173.
- 67 Goring 1989: 103–104.
- 68 Bolger 2003: 173.
- 69 Langdon 2003: 39.
- 70 The only other piece with a Cypro-Minoan inscription is a silver ring from an unsealed context at Enkomi; Ferrara 2013: 83, fig. 164.
- 71 See Steel, in press.

References

- Assante, J. (1998) The kar.kid/harimtu, prostitute or single woman: A reconsideration of the evidence. *Ugarit Forschungen* 30: 5–96.
- Bolger, D. (2003) *Gender in Ancient Cyprus: Narratives of Social Change on a Mediterranean Island*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.
- Bolger, D. and Serwint, N. (eds) (2002) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*, CAARI Monographs 3. Boston, MA: ASOR.
- Bourdieu, P. (1966) The sentiment of honour in Kabyle society. In J. Peristany (ed.) *Honour and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, pp. 191–242.
- Budin, S. L. (2008) *The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Budin, S. L. (2009) Girl, woman, mother, goddess: Bronze Age Cypriot terracotta figurines. In *Findings and Results from the Swedish Cyprus Expedition 1927–1931: A Gender Perspective*. Medelhavsmuseet. Focus on the Mediterranean 5. Stockholm, Sweden: Medelhavsmuseet, pp. 76–88.

- Budin, S. L. (2011) *Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity, and Gender in the Ancient World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Dalley, S. (1984) *Mari and Karana: Two Old Babylonian Cities*. London, New York: Longman.
- Delcor, M. (1979) Le personnel du temple d'Astarte à Kition d'après une tablette phénicienne (CIS 86 A and B). *Ugarit Forschungen* 11: 147–164.
- Fasnacht, W., Peege, C. and Hedley, I. (2000) Agia Varvara-Almyras. Final excavation report. *Report of the Department of Antiquities*. Cyprus, pp. 101–116.
- Fendin, T. (2006) Grinding processes and reproductive metaphors. In A. Andrén, K. Jennbert and C. Raudvere (eds) *Old Norse Religion in Long-Term Perspectives: Origins, Changes and Interactions*. Lund, Sweden: Nordic Academic Press, pp. 159–163.
- Ferrara, S. (2013) *Cypro Minoan Inscriptions II: The Corpus*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Fisher, K. D. (2014) Rethinking the Late Cypriot built environment: Households and communities as places of social transformation. In A. B. Knapp and P. Van Dommelen (eds) *The Cambridge Prehistory of the Bronze and Iron Age Mediterranean*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 399–416.
- Gilchrist, R. (1999) *Gender and Archaeology: Contesting the Past*. London: Routledge.
- Goring, E. (1989) Death in everyday life: Aspects of burial practice in the Late Bronze Age. In E. Peltenburg (ed.) *Early Society in Cyprus*. Edinburgh, UK: University of Edinburgh Press, pp. 95–105.
- Karageorghis, V. (1993) *The Coroplastic Art of Ancient Cyprus II: Late Cypriote II – Cypro-Geometric III*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Leventis Foundation.
- Karageorghis, V. and Kassianidou, V. (1999) Metalworking and recycling in Late Bronze Age Cyprus: The evidence from Kition. *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 18(2): 171–188.
- Keswani, P. S. (2004) *Mortuary Ritual and Society in Bronze Age Cyprus*. London and Oakville, CT: Equinox.
- Keswani, P. S. (2005) Death, prestige, and copper in Bronze Age Cyprus. *American Journal of Archaeology* 109(3): 341–401.
- Knapp, A. B. (ed.) (1996) *Sources for the History of Cyprus II. Near Eastern and Aegean Texts from the Third to the First Millennium BC*. Altamont, NY: Greece and Cyprus Research center.
- Knapp, A. B. (2009) Representations: Female figurines and social identity on Protohistoric Cyprus. In *Findings and Results from the*

- Swedish Cyprus Expedition 1927–1931: A Gender Perspective. Medelhavsmuseet. Focus on the Mediterranean 5. Stockholm, Sweden: Medelhavsmuseet, pp. 137–144.
- Langdon, S. (2003) Views of wealth, a wealth of views: Grave goods in Iron Age Attica. In D. Lyons and R. Westbrook (eds) *Women and Property in Ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean Societies*. Cambridge, MA: centre for Hellenic Studies, Harvard University, pp. 1–27.
- Marsman, H. J. (2003) *Women in Ugarit and Israel. Their Social and Religious Position in the Context of the Ancient Near East*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Masson, E. (1989) Vestiges écrits trouvés sur le site de Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios. In A. South, P. Russell and P. S. Keswani (eds) *Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios II. ceramics, Objects, Tombs, Specialist Studies*. SIMA 71/3. Göteborg, Sweden: P. Åströms Förlag, pp. 38–40.
- Masson, O. and Sznycer, M. (1972) *Recherches sur les Phéniciens à Chypre*. centre de Recherches d'Histoire et de Philologie 2, Hautes Études Orientales 3. Geneva: Librairie Droz.
- Meyers, C. (1998) *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Meyers, C. (2003) Women's culture in agrarian households of the iron age. In W. G. Dever and S. Gitin (eds) *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and the Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palaestina*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, pp. 425–444.
- Mikrakis, M. (2012) The originality of ancient Cypriot art and the individuality of performing practices in protohistoric Cyprus. In M. Iacovou (ed.) *Cyprus and the Aegean in the Early Iron Age: The Legacy of Nicolas Coldstream*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, pp. 371–392.
- Nosch, M. L. (2014) Voicing the loom: Women, weaving and plotting. In D. Nakassis, J. Gulizio and S. A. James (eds) *KE-RA-ME-A: Studies Presented to Cynthia W. Shelmerdine*. Prehistory Monography 46. Philadelphia, PA: INSTAP, pp. 91–101.
- Ockinga, B. G. (1996) Hieroglyph texts from Egypt. In A. B. Knapp (ed.) *Sources for the History of Cyprus II. Near Eastern and Aegean Texts from the Third to the First Millennium BC*. Altamont, NY: Greece and Cyprus Research center, pp. 42–50.
- Said, E. W. (2003 [1978]) *Orientalism*. London: Penguin Books.
- Serwint, N. (2002) Aphrodite and her Near Eastern sisters: Spheres of influence. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite:*

- Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monographs 3. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 325–350.
- Smith, J. S. (2002) Changes in the workplace: Women and textile production on Late Bronze Age Cyprus. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monographs 3. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 281–312.
- Smith, J. S. (2009) *Art and Society in Cyprus from the Bronze Age into the Iron Age* (second edition 2014). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, J. S. and Tzachili, I. (2012) Cloth in Crete and Cyprus. In G. Cadogan, M. Iacovou, K. Kopaka and J. Whitley (eds) *Parallel Lives: Ancient Island Societies in Crete and Cyprus*. British School at Athens Studies 20. London: British School at Athens, pp. 141–155.
- Sørensen, M. L. S. (2000) *Gender Archaeology*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- South, A. K. (1997) Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios 1992–1996. *Reports of the Department of Antiquities Cyprus*, pp. 151–176.
- South, A. K. and Steel, L. (2007) Red lustrous wheelmade ware from Kalavassos. In I. Hein (ed.) *The Lustrous Wares of Late Bronze Age Cyprus and the Eastern Mediterranean*. Vienna, Austria: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, pp. 179–190.
- Steel, L. (1994) Representations of a shrine on a Mycenaean chariot krater from Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios, Cyprus. *Annual of the British School at Athens* 89: 201–211.
- Steel, L. (2002) Wine, women and song: Drinking ritual in Cyprus in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monographs 3. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 105–119.
- Steel, L. (2004) A goodly feast . . . a cup of mellow wine: Feasting in Bronze Age Cyprus. In J. Wright (ed.) *The Mycenaean Feast*. Princeton, NJ: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, pp. 161–180.
- Steel, L. (2006) Women in Mycenaean pictorial vase painting. In E. Rystedt and B. Wells (eds) *Pictorial Pursuits. Figurative Painting on Mycenaean and Geometric Pottery*. Acta Instituti Atheniensis Regni Sueciae LIII. Stockholm, Sweden: Swedish Institute at Athens, pp. 47–55.
- Steel, L. (2013) *Materiality and Consumption in the Bronze Age Mediterranean*. London, New York: Routledge.
- Steel, L. (in press) Exploring Aredhiou: New light on the rural communities of the Cypriot hinterland during the Late Bronze Age. *American Journal of Archaeology*.

- Strang, V. (2014) Lording it over the goddess: Water, gender, and human-environmental relations. *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 30(1): 85–109.
- Thomason, A. K. (2013) Her share of the profits: Women, agency and textile production at Kültepe/Kanesh in the early second millennium BC. In M-L. Nosch, H. Koefoed and E. Andersson Strand (eds) *Textile Production and Consumption in the Ancient Near East: Archaeology, Epigraphy, Iconography*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 93–112.
- Tringham, R. (1991) Households with faces: The challenge of gender in prehistoric architectural remains. In J. Gero and M. Conkey (eds) *Engendering Archaeology*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, pp. 93–131.
- Walls, N. (1996) Ugaritic documents from Ugarit. In A. B. Knapp (ed.) *Sources for the History of Cyprus II. Near Eastern and Aegean Texts from the Third to the First Millennium BC*. Altamont, NY: Greece and Cyprus Research center, pp. 36–40.
- Webb, J. M. (1999) *Ritual Architecture, Iconography and Practice in the Late Cypriot Bronze Age*. SIMA Pocketbook 75. Jonsered, Sweden: P. Åströms Förlag.

WOMEN AND THE ART OF ANCIENT CYPRUS

Nancy Serwint

Introduction

As is the case with all cultures in the ancient Near East, women were visible in artistic representations in Cyprus during antiquity. The several authors who are contributing to the discussion of women in ancient Cyprus in this volume are providing focused commentary on specific topics and chronological phases. This chapter will rather serve as a synopsis of the presence of women in the artistic repertoire of the island over a discrete period of time and will assess the causal factors of that presence. The focus will be the early history of Cyprus and extending through the Bronze Age. Beginning in the prehistoric period, the evidence for the confluence of women and art was already present and consistently became enriched over time. The longevity of the span of Cyprus's past both complicates any summary that considers visual expression vis à vis the material culture but also makes the discussion more productive, because of the intricacy of cultural change throughout this phase of the island's past.

Any consideration of the involvement of women in the day-to-day living in ancient Cyprus has to commence with the acknowledgment of the part that gender studies have played in allowing for meaningful interpretation. The literature on gendered approaches in evaluating the material culture of the ancient world continues to grow, although a concerted treatment of the roles that women had assumed in daily life is a relatively recent phenomenon that has only emerged with force within the last 30 years or so—the span of a generation. The impetus of gendered approaches to considering the past in the social sciences was key in instigating similar inquiry within the discipline of Cypriot studies (see Bolger and Serwint 2002: 3–8; Bolger 2003: 1–20; for cogent summaries of the development of gender studies focusing

on antiquity and the Greek and Roman worlds, in particular, see Joyce 2008: 6–15 and Foxhall 2013: 1–23 with bibliographies). It was the work of Diane Bolger especially who initiated investigation of the roles women assumed as gleaned from the early material record in Cyprus (Bolger 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 2003, 2008, 2012) that served as an incentive for further exploration by various scholars whose work has focused on the prehistoric period. Consequently, the exploration of gender issues and the narrative of the contributions made by women in ancient Cyprus is particularly keen for this period in the history of the island. A. Bernard Knapp's comprehensive analysis of the social and economic development of the island during the prehistoric and protohistoric periods likewise has ramifications for how gender differences emerged in early Cypriot society and were expressed in art (Knapp 2013).

There is one proviso, and an important one, which must be raised in considering gender roles and social relations in Cyprus and that involves the evidence available for scrutiny. Unlike other cultures in the Mediterranean world where written sources have been critical for an understanding of how women functioned in society, the dearth of literary and epigraphic sources for stretches of time in ancient Cyprus has posed significant challenges in how to assess the past accurately. Prior to the use of the Cypriot Syllabary beginning in the eleventh century BC, scholars have not been able to rely on textual sources (i.e., the earlier Cypro-Minoan syllabary) for information on life in ancient Cyprus (see Bazemore 1998, 2002; Smith 2002; Cannavo 2011; Steele 2013). Because no written sources inform on the prehistoric period in Cyprus, the importance of the archaeological record is particularly acute (for a particularly helpful compendium of Greek and Latin sources for later periods, see Wallace and Orphanides 1990). Further difficulties arise in the interpretation of the material evidence with analysis of the same objects by different scholars sometimes resulting in widely divergent assessments. Suffice it to say that establishing the reality of gender relations from the reading of particular artifacts is no easy undertaking, and quite likely the complications of the task mirror the complexity of the ancient world and the intricacies in which people engaged their world.

Chronological phases of early Cypriot culture

Aceramic Neolithic

It is with the Late Aceramic Neolithic period (c.7000/6800–c.5500/5300 BC; Knapp 2013: 120) that the first representations of

females are documented for Cyprus. It is especially at Khirokitia, where the material culture offers a good deal of information as to how people negotiated their lives that human figurines in stone and clay have been discovered (Dikaïos 1953; Le Brun 1984, 1989a, 1989b, 1994, 1997, 2002; Knapp 2013). The andesite and diabase stone representations, lacking sexual characteristics but phallic in form, were crafted schematically and belie the naturalism seen in an extraordinary baked clay head, thought to be that of a woman and now in the Cyprus Museum (Dikaïos 1953: 299–300, pls. 98, 144: 1063).

Another noteworthy female representation from the same site is a squatting stone figure with female genitalia (Dikaïos 1953: 297, pl. 95). Excavations at Kholetria *Ortos* recovered what appears to be a clay female figurine with enlarged abdomen and prominent buttocks (Simmons 1996: 38, fig. 3), while at Kritou Marottou *Ais Giorkis*, a fragmentary limestone female figurine shows an incised pubic triangle and genitalia (Simmons 2012: 95–96, fig. 11). That nuclear families inhabited the circular structures at Khirokitia where women were primarily responsible for food production at the household level, has been argued from ethnographic parallels, and female burials have been assessed as slightly more prestigious than those of males (Le Brun 2002). Bolger (2003: 60) maintains that there is no evidence for a division of labor along gender lines at this time. How the female representations should be interpreted remains questionable, and their paucity compared to the numbers recovered from the Levant, Anatolia, and southeast Europe is striking (Nakamura and Meskell 2009; Knapp 2013: 131).

ceramic Neolithic

Given the problematic dating for the ceramic Neolithic, the range from 5200/5000 to 4100/4000 BC, covers the 1,000-year span postulated for the period and accommodates the advent of several pottery wares and the construction of rectangular or sub-rectangular structures at many sites (Knapp 2013: 158–194). Human representations remain rare and continue to be schematic, obviating the secure identification of sex, such as with the small picrolite figurine from Kandou *Kouphovounos* (Mantzourani 1994) and the stone phallic-shaped images and an andesite human-headed figure from Paralimni *Nissia* (Flourentzos 2008: figs. 22–24). Clearly dimorphic is the limestone seated stone figure from Sotira *Arkolies* (Figure 28.1) with both female and male genitalia suggested in different views of the object (Swiny and Swiny 1983), while less

explicit, but evoking the duality of male/female sexual forms, is a limestone figure from Sotira *Teppes* (Dikaïos 1961: 201, pls. 91.106, 102.106) and another from Ayios Epiktitos *Vrysi* (Peltenburg 1982: 124, fig. 5:15). Meaning is difficult to substantiate, although the representation of genitalia is evocative of fertility. That both male and female sexual forms are included in the Neolithic figurative repertoire and, at times, within the same object, would imply the contribution of both sexes (Christou 2012).

Chalcolithic

Cruciform figures

It is during the Chalcolithic period (4000/3900–2500/2400 BC; Knapp 2013: 27, table 2) that not only does the number of female figurines increase, but so does the range of materials of manufacture and a greater specificity of representation (Morris 1985: 122–133; Karageorghis 1991: 1–43). Clay (as pottery fabric) and a variety of stone that includes limestone, chalk, calcarenite, and diabase are all utilized (Vagnetti 1974, 1991; Goring 1991; A Campo 1994; Bolger 2003: 86). It is the use of blue/green picrolite, derived from water-worn pebbles carried down by the Karyotis and Kouris rivers from Mt. Olympus in the Troodos, which becomes prevalent at this time (Peltenburg 1991; Vagnetti 1991; Xenophontos 1991). Variation in size ranges from 5–6 cm upwards to generally 15 cm (see Karageorghis 1991: 7–40 for examples of larger sculptures), and limestone and calcarenites tend to be used for larger objects or where picrolite was not available (Vagnetti 1974, 1991). A new type appears—the cruciform figurine—that is used for free-standing figures ([Figure 28.2](#)) as well as pendants for jewelry; noteworthy is the necklace of dentalium shells and picrolite pendants found in a burial at Souskiou-*Vathyrkakas* (Peltenburg 2006). The bodies remain schematic, although there is variation in facial details (e.g., incised, relief, no detail; Vagnetti 1974, 1991; A Campo 1994), and clay figurines reflect various designs that have been interpreted as jewelry, tattoos, makeup, clothing, and hair (Goring 1991; Bolger 2003: 86). Sexual dimorphism is still apparent with many figurines having elongated, phallic-like necks and heads atop bodies that are female (as indicated by breasts and pudenda; Goring 1991). The context of figurines of known provenance includes domestic and funerary, and some may be associated with ritual deposits (Kissonerga-*Mosphilia*, Kissonerga-*Mylothkia*, Kalavasos-*Agious*, Lemba-*Lakkous*, and Souskiou-*Vathyrkakas*; Bolger 2003: 87; Goring: 1991). Many of the figures

characteristically show the human form in a seated or squatting posture that has been interpreted as the birthing position (Morris 1985: 122; Goring 1991; Peltenburg 1992; Bolger 2002: 105), and a terracotta figurine from the Kissonerga-Mosphilia ceremonial hoard clearly shows a woman giving birth, with the head and arms of the baby emerging from between her legs (Figure 28.3). It is the Kissonerga ritual deposit, with its 50 fragmentary objects including a building model found in an ashy fill along with fire-cracked stones that provides important information as to how female figurines may have functioned during the Chalcolithic period (Peltenburg *et al.* 1991; Peltenburg and Goring 1991). Of the 20 stone and pottery figurines, in addition to the one showing a woman giving birth, several others depicted females with birthing stools, while others showed women with swollen bellies, indicating advanced pregnancy. Wear patterns on several of the female figurines suggest that they might have been held, perhaps as didactic objects or as tactile elements of a ritual that occurred during pregnancy or even parturition (Goring 1991: 158–160; Bolger 1992, 1996, 2003: 105). The sharp angles of the fractures indicate they were deliberately broken before being carefully deposited. The fact that the figurine giving birth wears a painted pendant around her neck representing a cruciform female figurine parallels a picrolite figurine from Yialia, adorned with a similar pendant in relief and further corroborates an association with childbirth (Dikaïos 1934: 16, pl. 6:1; Karageorghis 1976: fig. 25; Vagnetti 1991: 141, fig. 1).

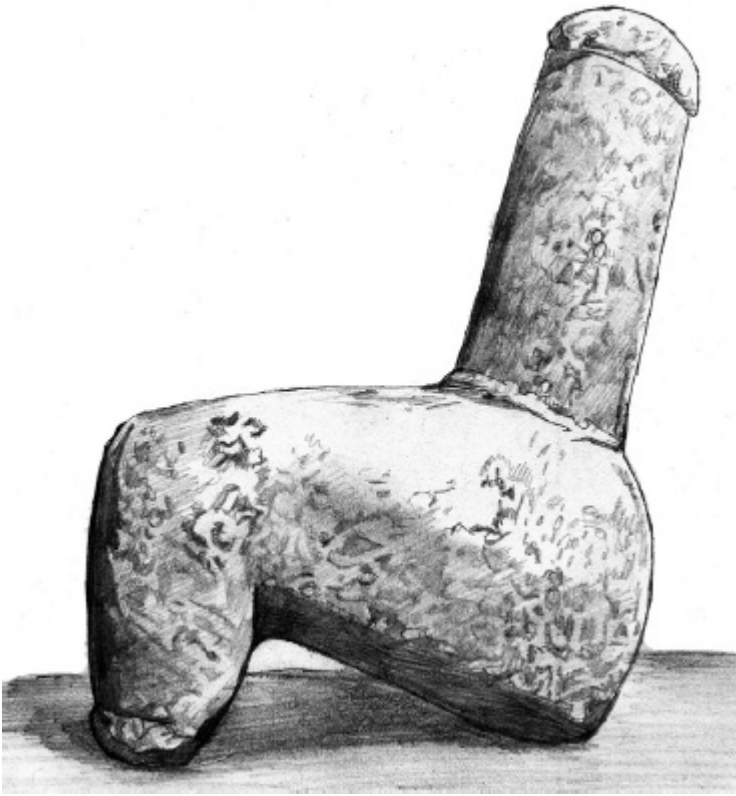


Figure 28.1 Seated figure from Sotira *Arkolies*. Limestone. Cyprus Museum, No. 1981/VIH-19/1. (Drawing by Paul C. Butler, used with kind permission.)

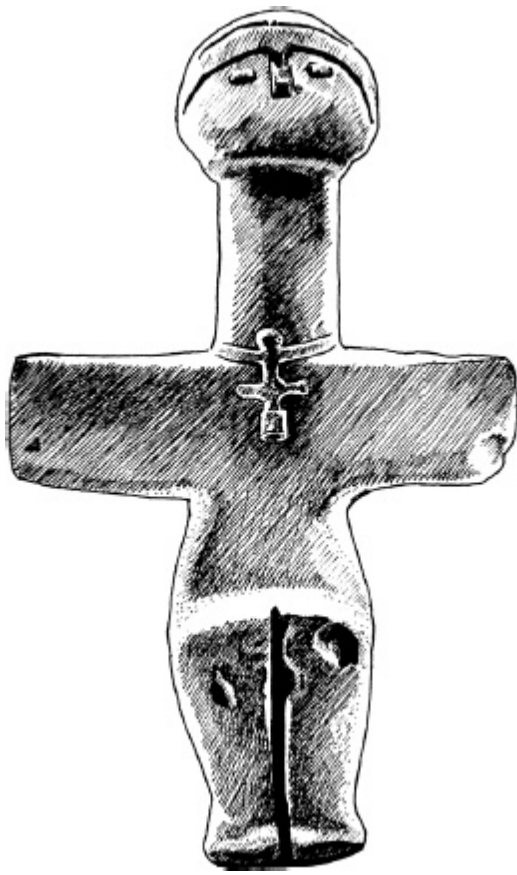


Figure 28.2 Cruciform figurine from Yialia. Picrolite. Cyprus Museum, No. 1934/III-2/2. (Drawing by Paul C. Butler, used with kind permission.)

Why childbirth should become such an important female role to be represented in artistic representations at this time, has drawn considerable scholarly debate (for various positions and bibliography see Bolger 2003: 86–105, 114–115; Knapp 2013: 237–243). Increasing levels of social organization are acknowledged (Knapp 2013: 195–262 with additional biography) with the period seeing expansion of some settlements, increasing population numbers, an intensification of agriculture, the first examples of cold-hammered copper objects, diversity of pottery types, and an expansion of picrolite production. Social diversification has been suggested by the presence of larger structures at some sites, such as Building 200 at Kissonerga-*Mylouthkia* (Peltenburg 2003: 268–272) as well as a greater differentiation in individual households' capacity for storage at Kissonerga-*Mosphilia* (Knapp 2013: 209 and Peltenburg and Bolger 1998: 242–243), although this was not the norm at all Chalcolithic settlements. Social

differentiation has also been postulated for certain burials at Souskiou-Vathyrkakas (Peltenburg 2006) and Souskiou-Laona (Crewe *et al.* 2005), suggesting the emergence of families or lineages of elite status (Manning 1993: 43); however, there does not appear to have been the domination of singular individuals or groups. It is not contested that when cruciform figurines have been recovered from mortuary contexts they have been primarily associated with juvenile and adult female graves (Knapp 2013: 225), perhaps suggesting a greater primacy accorded to children.



Figure 28.3 Birthing figurine from Kissonerga-Mosphilia. Terracotta. Cyprus Museum, No. KM1446.

The various interpretations given to what the Chalcolithic figurines represent cover the range from associations with a fertility cult and the worship of a female goddess (Karageorghis 2005: 66–67), to representations of distinct individuals (Knapp and Meskell 1997; Knapp 2013: 237–243), to ritual objects connected with pregnancy

and childbirth (Bolger 1992, 2003: 102–107; also see A Campo 1994: 83–88; Budin 2011: 222–226; and Budin, “Cyprus,” this volume). The presence of sexual dimorphism in many of the figurines continues an earlier stylistic tradition and remains suggestive of male and female participation in reproduction. certainly, the deliberate representation of the posture of giving birth and the depiction of the actual birth of a child on select clay figurines denote a primary female role as life giver. The distinct posture that is used for the representation of females on pendants, figurines, and figures in various materials found within domestic, funerary, and ritual contexts, and worn and used during life and interred after death, may well imply the hazards of childbirth and the risks of infant mortality, but assuredly the agency of the female in giving birth is paramount.

Bronze Age

Plank figures

The frequency of anthropomorphic figurines declines dramatically at the end of the Middle Chalcolithic period and only resumes at the end of the early Cypriot period (c.2000 BC; Bolger 2003: 90), although a White Painted IA figure from Marki-Alonia suggests limited production during the Philia phase (Frankel and Webb 2000; Karageorghis 1991: 44). A new figural type appears that is characterized as a flat plank schematically representing the human form ([Figure 28.4](#)) (Morris 1985: 135–162; Mogelonsky 1988; Karageorghis 1991: 44–101; A Campo 1994: 98–114, 143–154, 164–172, 199–208). Rectangular in shape, with the head rising from a flattened torso, with or without shoulders, the legs are very rarely depicted and the arms are sometimes rendered plastically or as linear incisions across the torso. The head is typified by a protruding nose; ears can be depicted and sometimes pierced for earrings; and the mouth is usually not shown. A single head is assuredly the norm, but sometimes figurines are crafted with two or three necks on a single body, with each head displaying separate facial features. The flat shape precludes the figures as self-standing neither were they pierced for suspension. The poses are static with display always in a frontal disposition. Clay is the common medium with execution in Red Polished ware and later in White Painted ware, although stone examples are known but lack the detail of their terracotta counterparts. The terracotta figures range in size from 10 to 70 cm, while several stone examples measure upwards to 81 cm (Karageorghis 1991: 49; A Campo 1994: 199–208). As the type is well-established, the figures change little over time from the early

Cypriot (c.2000 BC) into the Middle Cypriot (c.1700 BC), and a chronological development has not been posited.

Most of the clay figures carry a complexity of white lime-filled incisions that render details of facial features (hair, eyebrows, eyes, ears, and sometimes mouths), although the emphasis of the incised decoration is on the jewelry (chokers, necklaces, and headbands) and garments (shawls, waistbands, and dress details) that take the form of geometric and linear motifs.

Sexual characteristics are relatively absent. Out of the published corpus of 78 figures, male and female genitalia are nearly non-existent. Even though only 38 percent evidence small breasts (Morris 1985: 161; A Campo 1994; Talalay and Cullen 2002), there is a general consensus that females are intended for most plank figures regardless of whether breasts are indicated or not (A Campo 1994: 148; Budin 2011: 238–242). Typologies have been identified on the basis of variations in form and attributes (Morris 1985: 136–162; Mogelonsky 1988). Several categories are significant: singular, multi-necked, parental, and cradle-board figures. Singular representations are just that—a crafted figure that depicts a schematically rendered human form. A small group of figurines is represented with a single body supporting two, or sometimes three vertical necks; certainly, the form connotes multiple beings. Parental figures take the form of an adult who holds in its arms a swaddled infant who, at times, is represented bound to a hooded cradle-board; in several examples, a mother is presumed because of the presence of breasts, and in one case the baby is nursing. Cradle figures denote a type that represents a figure lying on a stiff cradle-board, with some infants shown tightly bound or wrapped.



Figure 28.4 Plank-shaped figurine from Cyprus, cesnola Collection.
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 74.51.1534.
(Drawing by Paul C. Butler, used with kind permission.)

The meaning and function of Bronze Age plank figures has been actively debated with interpretations including representations of the Great Goddess or aspects of her cult, charms to induce fertility or guarantee successful births, companions for the dead, and miniature depictions of wooden *xoana* cult representations from contemporary sanctuaries (see Talalay and Cullen 2002: 185–186 and Budin 2011: 243–245 for discussions of various proposals and bibliography). Because two-thirds of the plank corpus derives from tombs while the remainder are from unknown contexts, a mortuary role has been proffered; however, it must be pointed out that for this period in Cypriot archaeology, excavation efforts have focused on tombs. An important proviso must be stressed that plank figures have been

associated with less than 10 percent of all Bronze Age burials (Webb 1992). More recently, plank figures from several settlement sites have been reported, and interpretation of the evidence strongly suggests that plank figures were not exclusively manufactured for burials (Talalay and Cullen 2002: 184). Although some figures show infants associated with adults, most do not, so the argument that the figures were intended to induce fertility or reinforce parenting roles (Bolger 2003: 115) may not serve as the only explanation for their meaning. The relative absence of sexual characteristics likely continues the earlier trend in Cypriot figural art of sexual ambiguity, and the omission of breasts and genitalia might suggest that the sex of the figure may not have been important for its meaning. Most recent critiques of function and meaning of prehistoric figurines have argued that a binary characterization of gender and male/female dichotomies may inhibit more constructive ways of considering what human figural representations meant to society (Hamilton 2000). Equally important is that meaning is integrally tied to contemporary social structures, and consideration of the sociopolitical context is essential to understanding function (Orphanides 1990; Talalay and Cullen 2002: 188–190; Bolger 2003: 90–122). The Cypriot prehistoric Bronze Age witnessed an immense leap in social complexity (Knapp 2013: 263–347) evidenced by the introduction of the plough and cattle, the further exploitation of copper resources and the development of metallurgy, the presence of imported goods, the reality of emerging elites with lavish grave goods, and the emphasis on group and family identities suggested by collective and/or successive burials (Talalay and Cullen 2002: 188–189). The absence of figurines with characteristics indicative of fertility and parturition and the presence of plank figures of *kourotrophoi* type signal a shift in conceptual thinking that focuses less on child bearing and more on child rearing (for detailed study of the type, see Budin 2011: 229–245). A most interesting suggestion has been raised that the incised decorative elements on plank figures reveal an extravagance of dress worthy of emerging elites or indicative of a special occasion, and the attention given to distinctive facial markings might signal personal individuality or a particular female status, such as being married or marriageable (A Campo 1994: 145–149, 164–172; Talalay and Cullen 2002: 185–189). That plank figures were multivalent in meaning and their function was dependent on context (domestic, funerary, or sacral) certainly broadens their interpretation, but does not limit their importance.

Scenic compositions

During the Early and Middle Cypriot periods, potters/coroplasts

crafted Red Polished ware deep bowls, jugs, jars, and models that included figures either in the round or in relief (Morris 1985: 264–290; Karageorghis 1991: 117–169; Ribeiro 2002). The figures are represented in a variety of groupings and engaged in various activities, with the genre termed “scenic compositions”. Although rare as a type, when the provenance of a vessel is known, it is a funerary one. The scenes vary in content, but it is thought that they depict vignettes of daily life, with the following suggested: bread making, milking deer, grinding grain, food preparation or clothes washing, pottery crafting, and metal production (Morris 1985: 264–290). Difficulties in interpretation result from the fact that the figures are fashioned on a small scale with little detail; oftentimes, sexual characteristics are lacking or unclear; and the identification of gender has also been made on the basis of non-anatomical details, such as costume, headgear, and jewelry.

Identification of this type of scene has led to the determination of whether males or females were involved. This is problematic, because scenes could be interpreted in various ways; for example, individuals whose sexual characteristics are not indicated and who are gathered around a trough, could be viewed as involved in bread making or levigating clay (Karageorghis 1991: 123–127 and Ribeiro 2002). Surely, the identification of scenes has been colored by modern scholars’ bias of what are considered as accepted gender roles. Where females are represented, either by breasts or genitalia—and both details are exceedingly rare—the scenes they are involved with are giving birth or being heavily pregnant (SC5, Morris 1985: 277–278, fig. 490), at a trough—and here one figure with breasts is positioned with five other heavily damaged figures (SC7, Morris 1985: 278–279, fig. 492), and holding a baby (SC9, the Vounous Bowl; Morris 1985: 281–283, fig. 494). The suggestion has been offered that the absence of sexual characteristics in scenic compositions may be due to the fact that the artist was trying to represent pre-pubescent children whose own biological sex was not yet developed (Ribeiro 2002). Another way of regarding the absence of sexual characteristics is that the biological sex was not considered relevant to certain kinds of activities. The implications of a greater social complexity and emerging elites in Early and Middle Cypriot Bronze Age society has been treated in discussions of scenic compositions as reflections of further development of a stratified society that includes gender roles in day-to-day activities as well as religious ritual (Peltenburg 1994; Bolger 2003: 134–140; Knapp 2013: 333–337; also Budin 2011: 248–258). Assuredly, the scenic compositions do offer important information, whether or not we can ascertain who is doing what and

accurately posit the nature of female involvement.

Late Bronze Age figurines

Another type of female representation emerges in the Late Bronze Age (Late Cypriot II–III; Morris 1985: 166–174; Karageorghis 1993: 3–14) that differs significantly from earlier depictions of women. Rather than resembling a flat plank, the body is crafted more naturalistically and curvaceous (Figure 28.5). The figures are nude and primarily female with breasts, the pubic triangle, and often the vulva carefully rendered as opposed to the rather sexless earlier plank representations. Standing and facing frontally, although a few seated examples have been found, the figures generally have arms that bend with hands often positioned under the breasts, sometimes at waist level, or holding a child or other object against the chest (Morris 1985: 166–167; Karageorghis 1993: 1–3). Torsos are triangular with breasts and navel indicated. The pubic triangle is depicted and filled with oblique incisions or slight stippling. Separately rendered legs extend and narrow downwards with feet usually pointed and toes sometimes delineated. Two major types have been identified, primarily on how the face has been articulated. One group (Figure 28.5) (“Bird Faced”—Type A as termed by Karageorghis 1993: 3–10; “Earring Figures” as named by Morris 1985: 166–167, 170–174) is characterized by a chinless face that is dominated by a bird-like beaked nose, button eyes impressed with a circle, and a mouth (when it is indicated at all) formed by a shallow horizontal gash. Ears tend to be large and perforated for the addition of separately fashioned multiple pairs of earrings. Figures of this group have broad abdomens and wide hips. Like their counterparts of the other type, elongated necks are often decorated with parallel lines, here incised, likely to represent several necklaces. A second category (“Normal Face”—Type B per Karageorghis 1993: 10–13; “Headgear Figures” by Morris 1985: 166–170) reflects triangular-shaped faces that are less schematic. With flat tops to the head, possibly representing abbreviated headgear, this type has downward pointing ears that are not pierced. Narrower in the hips, the pubic triangle is painted as well as incised, and neckbands are also indicated by paint. Downward pointing feet with toes preclude both types having been positioned as standing. Primarily fashioned in Base Ring ware, characterized by a gray core with a light brown surface, both hollow and solid figures are known.



Figure 28.5 Late Bronze Age figurine from Cyprus. The British Museum, London, GR 1897.4–1.1087 (Terracotta A11). (Drawing by Paul C. Butler, used with kind permission.)

The differences in type are significant enough to warrant discussion, although scholarly consensus is lacking. Beaked-nose figurines had a longstanding pedigree in the Near East, and their presence in Cyprus is credited to that source, likely facilitated by commercial exchange with eastern trading partners (Badre 1980; Karageorghis 1982: 100; *contra* Merrillees 1988). The other more naturalistically rendered female type reflects facial characteristics that have been identified with Aegean influences (Karageorghis 1982: 101). Found in both tomb contexts and in settlements, the function of both types has generated a diversity of opinion. The intensity of copper production with export of the metal throughout the Aegean and the Levant, development of large urban centers with monumental architecture, mortuary practices that reflect disparities in social status, and assumed agricultural

surpluses further fostered the entrenchment of sociopolitical authority of the elite on the island (Knapp 2013: 348–349), and certainly the Late Cypriot female figurines need to be considered from a perspective that accounts for how women operated within a society that had become increasingly more complex and economically disparate.

Religious associations ascribed to the figurines attribute a connection with an indigenous female deity or mother goddess (Karageorghis 1977; Karageorghis and Karageorghis 2002). Similarities with nude goddess imagery in Syria are marked (Budin 2003: 177–179, 2011: 262), and the development of religious sanctuaries in Cyprus prior to the LCIII period with details of key Cypriot sanctuaries at Kition and Enkomi reflecting Near Eastern influence (Webb 1999) are further arguments that there was a receptivity on the island to eastern religious ideology. That female figurines were used in funerary rituals as either deities or concubines has been suggested (Karageorghis 1977: 72–78; Morris 1985: 166; Orphanides 1983: 46), and the observation that the gesture of hands beneath the breasts might be one of mourning merits consideration (Morris 1985: 166). The relative paucity of figurines found in ritual contexts and only in sanctuaries associated with female deities at this time (Begg 1991: especially catalogue; Webb 1999: 211) might indicate the limited use of figurines in religious rites. This has led to the suggestion that such figurines might be better interpreted as markers of personal piety rather than indicative of established ritual (Budin 2011: 265). Just as the Early-Middle Cypriot plank figures likely functioned differently depending on their context, Late Bronze Age female figurines might similarly follow suit and surely defy a single interpretation.

An exceptional contemporary female representation that shares much stylistically with the Late Cypriot Base Ring figurines treated above is the so-called Bomford figurine ([Figure 28.6](#)), a bronze depiction of a nude female, 9.9 cm in height and standing on a bronze ingot (Catling 1971: 15–32; Bolger 2003: fig. 4.8). Lacking a provenance, she has been much discussed in relation to the Ingot God figure from Enkomi, found within a sanctuary in Quartier 5E (Schaeffer 1971: 506–510; Webb 1999: 102, 2001: 77–80), who is nearly four times the size of the Bomford figurine and also stands on an ingot, while brandishing a spear. That the Ingot God played a part in ritual activities has been argued from the evidence for animal sacrifices within the structure (Webb 2001: 78), and early on he was regarded as a divinity who guarded the copper resources of the island (Schaeffer 1965: 56–57). Based on stylistic affinities with Late Cypriot female terracotta figurines and her association with an ingot, the

Bomford figurine was published as the female counterpart of the Ingot God, and she was envisioned as the deity responsible for the fruitfulness of the copper mines and the production of that metal (Catling 1971; Kassianidou 2005: 127). The Bomford figurine and two other fragmentary female bronze figurines, one from the Bairaktar quarter of Nicosia and the other from Kouklia *Teratsoudhia*, have often been associated with an earlier indigenous Cypriot goddess who had power over fertility, and fecundity is a dialogue that has been variously treated (Karageorghis 1977; Karageorghis and Karageorghis 2002) along with the complexity of the Cypriot goddess's subsequent development vis à vis the impact of foreign external influences (Papantoniou 2013 with critical bibliography, and Budin 2003: 103–197). Reservations about the divine status of the Bomford figurine have been raised (Knapp 2013: 394) as well as the association of Late Bronze Age female figurines with a fertility goddess (Budin 2002; Knapp 2013: 393). The point is well taken that the interpretation of Cypriot Late Bronze female figurines as agents of fertility, because sexual characteristics are present, clouds the issue of how sexuality equates with fertility...or even has to. Traditionally, such a distinction has not been considered for the vast majority of prehistoric female figurines, although kourotrophic and birthing figures have allowed for more explicit interpretation. Near Eastern literary and written sources record the specific sexual nature of the goddesses Athtart (Astarte, Ashtart) and Inanna/Ishtar (Budin 2002; Serwint 2002). Aspects of their divine characteristics would surely make their way to Cyprus at the beginning of the Late Bronze Age when archaeological evidence documents significant expansion of trade between Cyprus and the Levant (Knapp 2013: 397–432) and when the iconography of these goddesses made a profound impact on the representation of female figurines on the island.



Figure 28.6 The Bomford figurine. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, AN1971.888. (Drawing by Paul C. Butler, used with kind permission.)

Conclusion

The span in time from the Neolithic through the Bronze Age includes a substantial corpus of representations that detail the female. What is so significant about the depictions are the marked stylistic changes that occur over the course of nearly 6,000 years. Interesting is the fact that one of the earliest female forms, the clay female head from Neolithic

Khirokitia, evidences an uncanny naturalism; that naturalism will not be repeated until much later and not until the Iron Age. In the meantime, artistic representations of women range from abbreviated to schematic, suggesting that the physical form of the object also contributed to its meaning. The Aceramic Neolithic period also witnessed the crafting of several other female figures that were independent objects, and although fragmentary, it does not appear that they were intended to be paired or part of a larger composition. Nudity and the genitalia are depicted for the few that have been recovered, and the rarity of the type precludes any consensus as to meaning.

Figurines that date to the ceramic Neolithic continue to be rare, but what is new to the repertoire are figures in stone that are evocative of female and male genitalia morphed into a single object. The dimorphic representations are powerful (and extremely creative) displays of the sexual parts of the human body that ultimately contribute to human fertility. Whether that was the intention of the representation, can certainly not be established.

During the Chalcolithic period in Cyprus, a remarkable array of objects was crafted that represent the female body as cruciform, and details of their morphology as well as their context, inform, at least for some, as to their likely function. The seated birth position confirms that the female act of childbirth was considered significant at this time to warrant recording in a range of stone and terracotta images. The decision to utilize picrolite, a material restricted in its availability and unique in its coloristic and physical properties, also supports the scholarly consensus that as social complexity evolved, the emergence of an elite commenced that was the result of control of lucrative products (copper and picrolite) and was further reinforced by the possession of unique items (picrolite figures). That depictions of childbirth went beyond mere representation is substantiated by the wear patterns found on many of the figures, and the *Kissonerga-Mosphilia* object cache offers clear evidence for ritual.

With the Bronze Age, the development of a variety of figural representations that either focus on or include the female expands. The range in typology and style signals additional creative impetus, the incentive for which was surely the further development of social organization on the island and the resulting impact on female gender roles. Significant, too, was an array of external artistic and ideological influences that had a profound effect on how Cypriot female representations looked and what they meant. Plank figurines, scenic compositions, and the Late Bronze Age figural representations all are

provocative in what they could tell us about the society that created them and the people that put them to use. But here is the difficulty. As brilliant as the figural array of the female form is for the prehistoric period of Cyprus, the meaning and function of those objects continues to elude. Lack of or incomplete provenance, fragmentary artifacts, disparity of contexts, and the absence of textual sources all require an evaluation of archaeological evidence that often is open to interpretation and nearly always is considered from personal bias. Critical has been the consideration of ethnographic parallels that may help substantiate what an object means. Perhaps one of the best lessons learned from study of the ethnographic record is that anthropomorphic figurines are capable of bearing a variety of meanings; their function can change over time; and their use can very much be dependent upon context. The resulting diversity of attributed meanings, albeit confusing and often contradictory, may well reflect what was also the reality of prehistoric Cyprus.

References

- A Campo, A. L. (1994) *Anthropomorphic Representations in Prehistoric Cyprus: A Formal and Symbolic Analysis of Figurines, c.3500–1800 B.C.* Jonsered, Sweden: P. Åströms Forlag.
- Badre, L. (1980) *Les Figurines Anthropomorphes en Terre Cuite à l'Âge du Bronze en Syrie.* Paris: P. Geuthner.
- Bazemore, G. B. (1998) The role of script in ancient society: The Cypriote syllabic inscriptions, a study in grammatology. Vol. 1. PhD dissertation. University of Chicago, IL.
- Bazemore, G. G. (2002) The display and viewing of the syllabic inscriptions of Rantidi sanctuary. In J. S. Smith (ed.) *Script and Seal Use on Cyprus in the Bronze and Iron Ages.* Boston, MA: Archaeological Institute of America, pp. 155–212.
- Begg, P. (1991) *Late Cypriote Terracotta Figurines: A Study in Context.* Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology and Literature, Pocket-book 101. Jonsered, Sweden: P. Åströms Forlag.
- Bolger, D. (1992) The archaeology of fertility and birth: A ritual deposit from Chalcolithic Cyprus. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 48(2): 145–154.
- Bolger, D. (1993) The feminine mystique: Gender and society in Prehistoric Cypriot studies. *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus*, pp. 29–42.
- Bolger, D. (1994) Engendering Cypriot archaeology: Women's roles and statuses before the Bronze Age. *Opuscula Atheniensia* 20(1): 9–

- Bolger, D. (1996) Figurines, fertility, and the emergence of complex society in Prehistoric Cyprus. *Current Anthropology* 37(2): 365–373.
- Bolger, D. (2002) Gender and mortuary ritual in Chalcolithic Cyprus. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monographs 3. ASOR Archaeological Reports 7. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 67–96.
- Bolger, D. (2003) *Gender in Ancient Cyprus: Narratives of Social Change on a Mediterranean Island*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.
- Bolger, D. (ed.) (2008) *Gender through Time in the Ancient Near East*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.
- Bolger, D. (ed.) (2012) *A Companion to Gender Prehistory*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Bolger, D. and Serwint, N. (eds) (2002) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monographs 3. ASOR Archaeological Reports 7. Boston, MA: ASOR.
- Budin, S. (2002) Creating a goddess of sex. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monographs 3. ASOR Archaeological Reports 7. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 315–324.
- Budin, S. (2003) *The Origins of Aphrodite*. Bethesda, MD: CDI Press.
- Budin, S. (2011) *Images of Women and Child from the Bronze Age*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Cannavo, A. (2011) Histoire de Chypre à l'époque archaïque. Analyse des sources textuelles. PhD dissertation. Université Lumière Lyon 2.
- Catling, H. (1971) A Cypriot bronze statuette in the Bomford Collection. In C. F. A. Schaeffer (ed.) *Alasia I. Nouvelles Missions en Chypre 1946–1950*. Paris: Klincksieck, pp. 15–32.
- Christou, S. (2012) *Sexually Ambiguous Imagery in Cyprus from the Neolithic to the Cypro-Archaic Period*. BAR International Series 2329. Oxford, UK: Archaeopress.
- Crewe, L., Lorentz, K., Peltenburg, E. J. and Spanou, S. (2005) Treatments of the dead: Preliminary report of investigations at Souskiou Laona Chalcolithic cemetery 2001–2004. *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus*, pp. 41–67.
- Dikaïos, P. (1934) Two Neolithic steatite idols. *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus*, p. 16.
- Dikaïos, P. (1953) *Khirkitia*. Monograph of the Department of Antiquities, Government of Cyprus, No. 1. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Dikaïos, P. (1961) *Sotira*. Philadelphia, PA: University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.

- Flourantzos, P. (2008) *The Neolithic Settlement of Paralimni*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.
- Foxhall, L. (2013) *Studying Gender in Classical Antiquity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Frankel, D. and Webb, J. M. (2000) Excavations at Marki-Alonia, 1999–2000. *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus*, pp. 65–94.
- Goring, E. (1991) Pottery figurines: The development of a coroplastic art in Chalcolithic Cyprus. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 282/283: 153–161.
- Hamilton, N. (2000) Ungendering archaeology: Concepts of sex and gender in figurine studies. In M. Donald and L. Hurcombe (eds) *Representations of Gender from Prehistory to the Present. Proceedings of the Conference on Gender and Material Culture held at Exeter University, July 1994*. Studies in Gender and Material Culture. New York: MacMillan, pp. 17–30.
- Joyce, R. A. (2008) *Ancient Bodies, Ancient Lives: Sex, Gender, and Archaeology*. New York: Thames & Hudson.
- Karageorghis, J. (1977) *La grande déesse de Chypre et son culte*. Lyon, France: Maison de l'Orient.
- Karageorghis, J. (2005) *Kypris: The Aphrodite of Cyprus*. Nicosia, Cyprus: A. G. Leventis Foundation.
- Karageorghis, J. and Karageorghis, V. (2002) The great goddess of Cyprus or the genesis of Aphrodite in Cyprus. In S. Parpola and R. M. Whiting (eds) *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, pp. 263–282.
- Karageorghis, V. (1976) *The Civilization of Prehistoric Cyprus*. Athens, Greece: Ekdotike Athenon.
- Karageorghis, V. (1982) *Cyprus from the Stone Age to the Romans*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Karageorghis, V. (1991) *The Coroplastic Art of Ancient Cyprus. Vol. 1: Chalcolithic—Late Cypriote I*. Nicosia, Cyprus: A. G. Leventis Foundation.
- Karageorghis, V. (1993) *The Coroplastic Art of Ancient Cyprus. Vol. II: Late Cypriot II—Cypro-Geometric III*. Nicosia, Cyprus: A. G. Leventis Foundation.
- Kassianidou, V. (2005) Was copper production under divine protection in Late Bronze Age Cyprus? Some thoughts on an old question. In V. Karageorghis, H. Matthäus and S. Rogge (eds) *Cyprus: Religion and Society from the Late Bronze Age to the End of the Archaic Period. Proceedings of an International Symposium on Cypriote Archaeology*, Erlangen, 23–24 July 2004. Möhnesee, Germany: Bibliopolis, pp.

- Knapp, A. B. (2013) *The Archaeology of Cyprus: From Earliest Prehistory through the Bronze Age*. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Knapp, A. B. and Meskell, L. (1997) Bodies of evidence on prehistoric Cyprus. *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 7(2): 183–204.
- Le Brun, A. (1984) *Fouilles récentes à Khirokitia (Chypre)—1977–1981*. Recherches sur les Civilisation, Memoire 41 (Études Néolithiques). Paris: ADPF.
- Le Brun A. (1989a) *Fouilles récentes à Khirokitia (Chypre)—1983–1986*. Recherches sur les Civilisation, Memoire 81 (Études Néolithiques). Paris: ADPF.
- Le Brun A. (1989b) Le traitement des morts et les representations des vivants à Khirokitia. In E. J. Peltenburg (ed.) *Early Society in Cyprus*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 71–81.
- Le Brun A. (1994) *Fouilles récentes à Khirokitia (Chypre)—1988–1991*. Recherches sur les Civilisation. Études Néolithiques. Paris: ADPF.
- Le Brun, A. (1997) *Khirokitia: A Neolithic Site*. Bank of Cyprus, Cultural Foundation Guide Book. Nicosia, Cyprus: Bank of Cyprus, Cultural Foundation.
- Le Brun, A. (2002) Neolithic society in Cyprus: A tentative analysis. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monographs 3. ASOR Archaeological Reports 7. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 23–31.
- Manning, S. (1993) Prestige, distinction and competition: The anatomy of socio-economic complexity in 4th–3rd millennium B.C.E. Cyprus. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 292: 35–58.
- Mantzourani, E. (1994) Το ανθρωπομόρφο ειδώλιο από το νεολιθικό Καντού-Κουφόβουνος (The Neolithic anthropomorphic images of Kanto-Kouphobounos). *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus*, pp. 31–38.
- Merrillees, R. (1988) Mother and child: A late Cypriote variation on an eternal theme. *Mediterranean Archaeology* 1: 43–56.
- Mogelonsky, M. K. (1988) Early and Middle Cypriote terracotta figurines. PhD dissertation. Cornell University, New York.
- Morris, D. (1985) *The Art of Ancient Cyprus*. Oxford, UK: Phaidon.
- Nakamura, C. and Meskell, L. (2009) Articulate bodies: Forms and figures at Çatalhöyük. *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 16(3): 205–230.
- Orphanides, A. (1983) *Bronze Age Anthropomorphic Figurines in the cesnola Collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art*. Studies in

- Mediterranean Archaeology, Pocket-book 20. Göteborg, Sweden: P. Åströms Forlag.
- Orphanides, A. (1990) The meaning and function of the Bronze Age terracotta anthropomorphic figurines from Cyprus. *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus*, pp. 45–50.
- Papantoniou, G. (2013) The “Cypriot goddess” at the transition from the Bronze to the Iron Age: A “Cypro-centric” approach. In A. B. Knapp, J. M. Webb and A. McCarthy (eds) *J. R. B. Stewart, an Archaeological Legacy*. Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology 139. Uppsala, Sweden: P. Åströms Forlag, pp. 161–173.
- Peltenburg, E. J. (1982) *Recent Developments in the Later Prehistory of Cyprus*. Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology and Literature, Pocket-book 16. Göteborg, Sweden: P. Åströms Forlag.
- Peltenburg, E. J. (1991) Local exchange in Prehistoric Cyprus: An initial assessment of picrolite. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 282/283: 107–126.
- Peltenburg, E. J. (1992) Birth pendants in life and death: Evidence from Kissonerga grave 563. In G. C. Ioannides (ed.) *Studies in Honour of Vassos Karageorghis*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Society of Cypriot Studies, pp. 27–36.
- Peltenburg, E. J. (1994) Constructing authority: The Vounous enclosure model. *Opuscula Atheniensia* 20: 157–162.
- Peltenburg, E. J. (ed.) (2003) *Lemba Archaeological Projects, Cyprus III:1. The Colonization and Settlement of Cyprus: Investigations at Kissonerga-Mylouthkia, 1976–1996*. Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology 70: 4. Sävedalen, Sweden: P. Åströms Forlag.
- Peltenburg, E. J. (ed.) (2006) *The Chalcolithic cemetery of Souskiou-Vathykakas, Cyprus: Results of the Investigations of Four Missions, from 1951 to 1997*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Department of Antiquities of the Republic of Cyprus.
- Peltenburg, E. J. and E. Goring (1991) Terracotta figurines and ritual at Kissonerga-Mosphilia. In F. Vandenabeele and R. Laffineur (eds) *Cypriote Terracottas. Proceedings of the First International Conference of Cypriote Studies*, Brussels-Liège-Amsterdam, 29 May–1 June 1989. Brussels-Liège: A. G. Leventis Foundation, Vrije Universiteit Brussel-Université de Liège, pp. 17–27.
- Peltenburg, E. J. and Bolger D. (1998) Lemba Archaeological Project II.IA. Excavations at Kissonerga-Mosphilia 1979–1992. *Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology* 70: 2. Jonsered, Sweden: P. Åströms Forlag.
- Peltenburg, E. J., Betts, A., Bolger, D., Croft, P., Elliott, C., Goring, E., Murray, M. A., Ridout-Sharp, J. S. and Thomas, G. (1991) Lemba

- Archaeological Project II.2. A ceremonial Area at Kissonerga. *Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology* 70:1. Göteborg, Sweden: P. Åströms Forlag.
- Ribeiro, E. (2002) Altering the body: Representations of pre-pubescent gender groups on Early and Middle Cypriot “scenic compositions”. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monographs 3. ASOR Archaeological Reports 7. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 197–209.
- Schaeffer, C. F. A. (1965) An ingot god from Cyprus. *Antiquity* 39: 56–57.
- Schaeffer, C. F. A. (1971) *Alasia I. Nouvelles Missions en Chypre 1946–1950*. Paris: Klincksieck.
- Serwint, N. (2002) Aphrodite and her Near Eastern sisters: Spheres of influence. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite. Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monographs 3. ASOR Archaeological Reports 7. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 325–350.
- Simmons, A. H. (1996) Preliminary report on multidisciplinary investigation at Neolithic Kholetria Ortos. *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus*, pp. 29–44.
- Simmons, A. H. (2012) Ais Giorkis: An unusual early Neolithic settlement in Cyprus. *Journal of Field Archaeology* 37(2): 86–103.
- Smith, J. S. (ed.) (2002) *Script and Seal Use on Cyprus in the Bronze and Iron Ages*. Boston, MA: Archaeological Institute of America.
- Steele, P. M. (ed.) (2013) *Syllabic Writing on Cyprus and Its Context*. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Swiny, H. W. and S. Swiny (1983) An anthropomorphic figurine from the Sotira area. *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus*, pp. 56–59.
- Talalay, L. C. and T. Cullen (2002) Sexual ambiguity in plank figures from Bronze Age Cyprus. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monographs 3. ASOR Archaeological Reports 7. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 181–195.
- Vagnetti, L. (1974) Preliminary remarks on Cypriote Chalcolithic figurines. *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus*, pp. 24–34.
- Vagnetti, L. (1991) Stone sculpture in Chalcolithic Cyprus. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 282/283: 139–151.
- Wallace, P. W. and Orphanides, A. G. (eds) (1990) *Sources for the History of Cyprus. Vol. I: Greek and Latin Texts to the Third century A.D.* Albany, NY and Nicosia, Cyprus: The Institute of Cypriot Studies, University at Albany, State University of New York; and Cyprus College.

- Webb, J. M. (1992) Funerary ideology in Bronze Age Cyprus: Toward the recognition and analysis of Cypriote ritual data. In G. C. Ioannides (ed.) *Studies in Honour of Vassos Karageorghis*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Society of Cypriot Studies, pp. 87–99.
- Webb, J. M. (1999) *Ritual Architecture, Iconography and Practice in the Late Cypriot Bronze Age*. Jonsered, Sweden: P. Åströms Forlag.
- Webb, J. M. (2001) The sanctuary of the Ingot God at Enkomi: A new reading of its construction, use and abandonment. In P. M. Fischer (ed.) *Contributions to the Archaeology and History of the Bronze and Iron Ages in the Eastern Mediterranean: Studies in Honour of Paul Åström*. Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut: Sonderschriften Band 39. Vienna, Austria: Österreichisches Archäologisches Institut, pp. 69–82.
- Xenophontos, C. (1991) Picrolite, its nature, provenance, and possible distribution patterns in the Chalcolithic Period of Cyprus. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 282/283: 127–138.

WOMEN IN THE CITIES OF CYPRUS

Rulers and urban dwellers from the Late Bronze Age to the Hellenistic period

Joanna S. Smith

At the core of women's lives on Cyprus are their roles in families, including ruling families, in religion, and as artisans. Across time, the importance of women in relationship to their families is a constant, while their definition as authority figures in religion and politics takes on clearer shape. Each of the following sections about family, rulers, temples, and workshops explores women's lives from the development of urban centers in the Late Bronze Age (c.1650–c.1050 BCE), to the several city-kingdoms of the Iron Age (1050–310 BCE), and the rule of Cyprus as a whole by the Ptolemies of Egypt in the Hellenistic period (310–58 BCE). A focus on urban life brings textual information, a diverse representational repertoire, and a variety of living spaces, including workshops and sanctuaries, into discussion.

Prior to the Late Bronze Age, people lived in close clusters of built structures.¹ Yet, it is only in the Late Bronze Age that some settlements can be described as urban² due to the more complex and seemingly private division of space into residences, workshops, cult spaces, and administrative buildings that relate to greater social differentiation.³ Urban contexts also reveal something about the broader populace, because people in larger settlements were connected to those living in smaller settlements and all people drew on resources from the countryside, mountains, and the sea.

This discussion draws on texts, images, and archaeology. In using each source, it is important to be aware of potential ambiguities. For example, texts preserve specific names and titles. Yet, words can have more than one meaning. Also the meaning of a text depends on its writer. There is little evidence that Cypriot women were literate and

most texts cited here were written or commissioned by men. Physical features such as prominent breasts can help to identify whether an image represents a woman or a man. Even so, sometimes the iconography of mortal women overlaps with that of female deities. Skeletal remains are especially useful for identifying women in the archaeological record. Determining who used artifacts and built spaces requires careful study of the full assemblages of objects uncovered in excavation as well as comparative analysis with the archaeology, texts, and images from analogous culture areas.

Ancient texts derive from two main sources. First, there are texts written by ancient authors that sometimes were written long after the time periods discussed in the texts. Greek texts by Isokrates, Diodorus Siculus, Pausanias, and other authors have been preserved by people who copied and recopied these texts, usually in ink on papyrus. Scholars have pieced these texts together, sometimes from several different versions and fragments.

Second, there are inscriptions in several different scripts and languages that were inscribed on various materials, especially stone, clay, and metal.⁴ These preserve original ancient texts, sometimes found in or near their original locations of display, as in a sanctuary; or burial, as in a tomb; or storage, as in an archive. In the Late Bronze Age, the inscriptions of Cyprus were written in a script that scholars call Cypro-Minoan, which remains undeciphered. Readable texts from Late Bronze Age Cyprus are few; they are short and written in languages such as Egyptian, as on scarab seals. More discursive readable texts found outside of Cyprus refer to a place called Alashiya, which may be part or all of Cyprus. The discussion here refers to texts about Alashiya from the Near East and Egypt that were written on clay tablets in the semitic languages of Akkadian and Ugaritic. If the equation of Alashiya with Cyprus stands, these documents provide valuable insights into the people and government of the island during a period when Cypriot texts remain silent.

In the Iron Age, in the Cypro-Geometric (c.1050–c.800 BCE), Cypro-Archaic (c.800–c.475 BCE), and Cypro-Classical (c.475–c.310 BCE) periods, there were three languages in common use on the island. Greek was the most widely spoken language around the island. It was written in the Cypriot syllabic script and, by the sixth century BCE in the Greek alphabet as well. Phoenician was also spoken, especially in the city of Kition. Phoenician alphabetic texts have been found all across the island. Another language was written in the syllabic script of Cyprus. Scholars call this undeciphered language Eteo-Cypriot and it is thought to be an indigenous language used mainly in the city of

Amathus. Both the syllabary and the Phoenician alphabet were written sporadically in the Hellenistic period. However, during this period of Ptolemaic rule of the island the Greek alphabet was the official script.

Family

Burials and grave markers are especially telling about women's roles and their importance for family groups. From the Late Bronze Age through the Hellenistic period, the dead were most often placed in chambers dug into the earth in which several bodies were interred. These multiple or family burials can span several generations. Starting in the seventh century BCE of the Cypro-Archaic period, people placed inscribed stone grave markers inside the dromos or passageway that led down into the tomb chamber or within the tomb chamber itself. These flat slabs usually name the deceased in relationship to other family members. Figurally carved grave stelae on Cyprus date back to the start of the sixth century or possibly the end of the seventh century BCE. Some of these also bear inscriptions. Many of these sculpted grave markers would have been placed above ground, similar to the way in which grave markers were displayed in Greece, instead of inside the tomb.⁵

Usually chamber tombs are found outside residential areas. In the Late Bronze Age, however, people dug some tombs in the heart of urban space. Thus, even though there are no funerary inscriptions for the period, the locations of burials point to the relative importance of some women and their families. Overall, women are generally less well represented than men in tombs of this period; however, women are often present in tombs of high status, which suggests that women were of particular social importance for the establishment and maintenance of early urban centers such as Enkomi.⁶ Some of these high-status tombs were deliberately damaged and covered over as settlements such as Maroni grew and changed over time.⁷ Others, as in the case of Tomb 11 at Kalavassos,⁸ were carefully preserved even as streets were laid and new buildings went up around them.⁹

Most women who were important for these early urban polities will remain anonymous. One woman buried in Tomb 11 wore two finger-rings inscribed with the same sequence of Cypro-Minoan characters,¹⁰ which one day may be read as a name. Even though the names of the women in that burial are unknown, the contents of the burial further describe them relative to the wealth and property of their family, because they were buried with their dowries.¹¹ Another possible

dowry does suggest the name of a woman who once lived at the Late Bronze Age urban center of Hala Sultan Tekke. Someone buried a small bag of jewelry that contained gold pendants, gold earrings, and gold and precious stone beads as well as a finger-ring inset with a scarab inscribed with an Egyptian woman's name, Nebuwy.¹²



Figure 29.1 Limestone grave stele from Marion of a seated girl identified in a Greek Cypriot Syllabic inscription as Aristila from Salamis, daughter of Onasis c.420 BCE. Height 92.2 cm. Polis Chrysochous, Cyprus, The Local Archaeological Museum of Marion and Arsinoe (MMA 276), formerly Nicosia, Cyprus, Cyprus Museum, (1957/III-18/1). (Photograph by William A. P. Childs.)

The practice of inscribing names on grave stelae preserves many

more names from the Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic periods. Women are named in association with their families, as wives, daughters, sisters, and mothers. The majority of funerary inscriptions in the Cypriot syllabic script come from the city-kingdom of Marion located in the modern town of Polis Chrysochous.¹³ The earliest inscriptions there date to the seventh century BCE in the Cypro-Archaic I period; one of these is an epitaph for a daughter.¹⁴ As was the custom with many funerary inscriptions, this epitaph was placed inside the tomb. It was in a shaft cut into the side of the dromos that led to the tomb chamber. On the floor of the chamber were the remains of a single child.¹⁵

Most figurally carved grave reliefs that bear inscriptions also come from Marion. Among these are also the only three inscribed funerary relief sculptures for women.¹⁶ The earliest of these is a Cypriot limestone grave relief of Aristila ([Figure 29.1](#)). It was carved c.420 BCE by a Cypriot in a Greek style that recalls Attic grave reliefs.¹⁷ Aristila sits, facing to the right, and looks down at a bird whose feet and tail she holds in her left hand. The bird may represent the unrealized promise of her youth and unmarried state. Above her right shoulder and behind her head is a three line inscription in the Cypriot syllabary that reads, “Aristila, of Salamis, [daughter] of Onasis.”¹⁸ For women, common descriptors that accompany the names of their family members are placenames. Just as Aristila was from Salamis and buried at Marion, other women came from families that had traveled far either to or from Cyprus. For example, at Salamis on Cyprus there is a grave stele of the third century BCE for Kleainete, daughter of Timosthenes of Chalcis in Euboea, Greece.¹⁹ And there at Chalcis in Euboea there is an epitaph for Apollonia, daughter of Apollophanes of Kition on Cyprus.²⁰

Ancient texts most often refer to women in their roles as wives and mothers. For example, the fourth-century BCE Greek orator, Isokrates, commented on the value of women and marriage on Cyprus. In one of his two orations aimed at Nikokles, a fourth-century BCE king of Salamis, Isokrates speaks of the value of taking a wife as a partner in all aspects of life and how one should cherish the relationship of marriage. With respect to Nikokles, he mentions how all his children should be able to claim parentage of the same mother and father so as to trace their lineage back to his father, king Evagoras, whom Isokrates held in high esteem.²¹

Grave reliefs also attest to the strong bond between husband and wife. For example, an epitaph in Greek for Laodameia was erected at Kourion by her husband Herodes in the late Hellenistic period. The

fragmentary inscription is unusually long for Cyprus, with eight lines, and describes their life together.²² A strong bond between husband and wife is also found in the visual form of inscriptions from a sixth-century BCE tomb at Marion. The tomb contained two Cypriot syllabic inscriptions that once were part of sarcophagi that stood side-by-side. One reads, “Timowanassa, the wife of Onasagoras, I am” and the other reads “Onasagoras, [son] of Stasagoras, the school-master, I am.”²³ The carving of these two inscriptions is distinctive; the signs are neatly carved and yet unusually curvilinear in shape, being examples of what the excavators described as “ornate epigraphy.”²⁴ Such cursive writing was more typical of writing in ink on animal skins, in the form of parchment or leather. The word for school-master (*diphtheraloiphos*) literally means one who writes on skins. One can imagine this *diphtheraloiphos*, Onasagoras, carefully inscribing this pair of sarcophagi for himself and his wife.

The figural compositions of grave reliefs also attest to the relationship between husband and wife. Women appear in a third of all figural grave monuments before the Roman period. In half of these the woman is the focus of the composition, which suggest some measure of importance for these women;²⁵ she either sits or stands and sometimes an attendant or her children accompany her. In the other half of these reliefs, women appear alongside their husbands. Examples taken from among the 12 figural grave reliefs found at Golgoi that depict women show how the relationship between husband and wife changed visually from the fifth into the third century BCE.

On a relief of the second half of the fifth century BCE, a man reclines on a couch and a woman, thought to be his wife, is shown at a much smaller scale sitting at the far end of the couch. The man clasps her left forearm in his right hand.²⁶ By contrast, in a relief of the early fourth century BCE, a man reclines and a woman, presumably his wife, is shown also reclining, just behind him, and at the same scale. She reaches down with both hands to hold a standing child and the child reaches up toward the man’s left hand. He reaches out toward another woman, also of the same scale, who is seated at the far end of the couch.²⁷ At the end of the fourth or the beginning of the third century BCE one relief shows a man and a woman at the same scale. They both sit. He faces forward and she is in a three-quarters view. He extends his right hand, palm upward, and she has placed her right hand on his.²⁸ From the same period is a grave relief with a small panel at the top in which a man reclines with a servant standing at the far end of the couch. A woman at a much larger scale, presumably his wife, sits in a much larger panel below.²⁹

These reliefs attest to the increasing visibility and perhaps also the greater social influence of women on Cyprus as the island became part of the Hellenistic world. In the Cypro-Archaic and Cypro-Classical periods, inscribed monuments were commissioned by men even if they were for women.³⁰ In the Hellenistic period, women could commission sculptures of family members, and inscriptions attest to a greater public face for women.³¹ For example, at Salamis, the wife [name broken off] of Leukos honored her father in a Greek inscription from c.180 to c.150 BCE.³² At Palaepaphos in the third quarter of the third century BCE, Agemona and her children erected a statue of her husband Olympiodorus, son of Philokles.³³ Other texts document Zeuxo of Kyrene, the wife of Polykrates, governor of Cyprus, and their daughters who sent chariots to be raced at the Panathenaea. Their chariots won prizes and they may even have attended the games.³⁴ One Greek epitaph of the end of the third century BCE, allows Simale, daughter of Hipparchos, to speak across time and tell us not just about her family, but also that she was “remarkable for my beauty.”³⁵

Women gained a degree of independence that speaks to the greater individuality characteristic of the art and culture of the Hellenistic period. They continued also to be keepers of both family and community traditions. For example, in 254 BCE at Idalion, a grandmother named Batshalom commissioned statues of her three grandsons and dedicated them to the god, Rashap Mikal. The inscription is in Phoenician and in it she marked time both according to the new Ptolemaic regime on Cyprus and by looking back to earlier traditions of the community by keeping time with respect to the old and no longer extant kingdom of Kition.³⁶

Rulers

Defining who governed Late Bronze Age Cyprus is difficult. There are no certain representations of rulers. Readable textual references concerning people who governed all or part of the island come from outside Cyprus and all concern Alashiya.³⁷ Wives of the king of Alashiya are mentioned in historical texts without reference to named individuals. A generalized group of “wives” occurs mainly in formulaic introductions to letters in the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BCE.³⁸ Only one of these documents also mentions a single woman. This is in a fourteenth-century letter to the king of Egypt, in which the king of Alashiya writes in the formulaic introduction, “for me all goes well. For my household, my wives, my sons, my magnates, my horses, my chariots, and in my country, all goes very well.”³⁹ The truth of such introductions is rare; in this letter, the king goes on to

mention that all is not well in the land of Alashiya. The “hand of Nergal” is in his country and the men of his country have been killed. Because of this plague, a young wife of his has died.

Only the fictional⁴⁰ eleventh-century BCE Egyptian *Story of Wenamun* names an Alashiyan female member of a royal family.⁴¹ When Wenamun arrives at Alashiya, he is attacked and then he meets Ḫataba, a princess as “she came forth from one house of hers and was entering into another.”⁴² This description places their meeting in a settlement, possibly an urban one. The royal residential architecture is complex enough to deserve mention in the story and may be a palace. Ḫataba does not speak Egyptian, but after Wenamun’s words are translated, she grants him safety. The earlier parts of the story do mention other people and places with some historical accuracy, but whether Ḫataba and her houses are partly or entirely a fiction is unknown.

For the Iron Age, there is more detailed information about the rulers of the city-kingdoms of the island.⁴³ Few texts refer directly to queens and princesses, and there is only one possible representation of a queen. The plural form “wives” no longer describes the spouse(s) of the king. The earliest representation of a female ruler from Cyprus appears on a fragmentary, decorated, silver bowl from Kourion (Figure 29.2). It bears a short inscription identifying the figure and dates to the end of the eighth or first quarter of the seventh century BCE. This bowl also has the earliest representation of a Cypriot king and the earliest inscriptional evidence for the Greek word for king, *basileus*, from Cyprus.

The bowl’s decoration is arranged in registers. The best-preserved outer register depicts a procession of dancers, musicians, and bearers of food and drink. The preserved portion of the bowl shows those who process toward a woman who wears an Egyptian headdress and reclines on a couch. She faces to the right and looks across a table toward a man who also reclines on a couch and wears an Egyptian crown. He faces to the left. Most of the bowl is missing where it would have shown figures processing toward the reclining man from the right; part of only one figure remains.⁴⁴ Above each reclining figure is an inscription in Greek written in the Cypriot syllabary. Above the woman is the word, *kypromedousa*, and above the man is the word, *basileus*.⁴⁵ The word *kypromedousa* literally means a woman who protects or rules over (*medo*) Cyprus (*kypros*).



Figure 29.2 Fragmentary silver bowl said to be from Kourion with Greek Cypriot Syllabic inscriptions labeling the reclining figures of *kypromedousa* and a *basileus* c.710–c.675 BCE. Diameter 17.5 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The cesnola Collection, Purchased by subscription, 1874–76 (74.51.4557). (Photograph courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Images for Academic Publishing.)

This inscription is the only attestation of the word *kypromedousa*. It might refer to an earthly ruler, a queen,⁴⁶ or instead this could be a name for the goddess of Cyprus.⁴⁷ Arguments for both interpretations have merit. For example, the name *kypria* and the verb *medo* are each used to describe the goddess of Cyprus.⁴⁸ Yet, a similar male name, *kypromedo(n)*, appears on a fifth- or fourth-century BCE funerary inscription at Marion of a mortal man who, as far as is known, was not a king.⁴⁹ If *kypromedousa* refers only to a goddess, there is no reference to a mortal female ruler among the inscriptions of Cyprus⁵⁰ before the Hellenistic period.

Two other Greek words are pertinent here, *wanassa* and *wanax*. Aristotle's lost fourth-century BCE work, *Kyprion Politeia*,⁵¹ states that the brothers and sons of the *basileus* were called *anaktes* (singular

(w)*anax*) and the daughters and wives were called *anassai* (singular (w)*anassa*). Cypriot syllabic inscriptions attest to the *wanax* as a prince.⁵² In the inscriptions of Cyprus, *wanassa* refers only to the goddess of Cyprus who came to be known as Aphrodite at the end of the fourth century BCE.⁵³ That goddess was strongly tied to royalty on Cyprus and the *basileus* served as the priest of the *wanassa*.⁵⁴ Aristotle's work, however, confirms that by the late fourth century BCE *wanassa* was also a title for women in a ruling family.⁵⁵

Isokrates also writing in the fourth century BCE comments on these terms in his laudatory oration about king Evagoras of Salamis. He points out that all of the children of Evagoras were known as king, prince, or princess rather than only by private titles.⁵⁶ Isokrates seems to be commenting on this fact about Evagoras's family, because it was not the usual way in which things were done. Indeed, no ancient text mentions both a royal title and the specific name of a female member of a ruling family of one of the Cypriot Iron Age city-kingdoms. Yet, authors did mention the names of the wives of Cypriot kings of the Classical period. For example, Lucian tells us that Leto was the wife of king Evagoras of Salamis.⁵⁷

The best known of these Iron Age royal women is Axiothea, the wife of Nikokles, the last king of Paphos. Her dramatic death is described by Diodorus Siculus who wrote in the first century BCE:

Axiothea, the wife of Nikokles, on learning of her husband's death, slew her daughters, who were unwed, in order that no enemy might possess them; and she urged the wives of Nikokles' brothers to choose death along with her, although Ptolemy had given no instructions in regard to the women but had agreed to their safety.⁵⁸

In Diodorus's version of the story, Nikokles slays himself and Axiothea follows suit along with the other women of the palace. The tragedy came to a close when Nikokles's brothers then secured the palace, set fire to it, and killed themselves. This event of 310 BCE is also mentioned by Polyaeus who wrote in the second century CE. He tells a different version of the tale in which all the men killed themselves first and only after observing the men's actions did Axiothea and the other women secure the palace, set fire to it, and kill themselves.⁵⁹ Either way, the point was to make sure that the royal line could not be abused by the Ptolemaic regime that had ordered the death of Nikokles in the first place.

In the Hellenistic period, when Cyprus was ruled by the Ptolemies, it is important to note that most inscriptions naming known Ptolemaic queens also do not include the title, queen. A Greek word for queen,

basilissa, which is related to the word king, *basileus*, is used mainly in dedicatory inscriptions for royalty as deities. For example, Berenice II appears with the title *basilissa*, as in a dedication at Salamis to Sarapis, king Ptolemy Euergetes, and herself that dates to 246–221 BCE.⁶⁰ The well-known queen, Arsinoe Philadelphus, whose cult was well established on Cyprus and who was the sister, wife, and co-regent of Ptolemy Philadelphus is named in several inscriptions without the title of queen.⁶¹

A dramatic change in the Hellenistic period is the proliferation of royal portraiture. Portraits of Arsinoe and other Ptolemaic queens are especially prevalent on coins and seals.⁶² Arsinoe Philadelphus in particular left a visible and memorable mark on Cyprus where three cities were named after her and her cult was assimilated with Aphrodite.⁶³ Rulers were suddenly present in the visual landscape of Cyprus in ways that they never had been previously. This change was more due to artistic ideas outside Cyprus during the Hellenistic period than to choices made on the island.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, the kind of individualism highlighted by the specific naming and representation of these rulers is seen elsewhere on the island. Inscriptions erected by and about Cypriot women from this same period demonstrate that they had a greater public profile than in earlier periods.

For example, the wives and daughters of local governors on Cyprus were also among those depicted in the sculpture of Cyprus. For example, at Kition in the second century BCE there was a statue of Irene, daughter of Ptolemaios, governor and grand priest of Artemis.⁶⁵ Myrsine, the daughter of Hyperbassas and the wife of Pelops, the governor of Cyprus from 217 to 210/209 BCE was honored by having statues erected of her both at Paphos and at Salamis.⁶⁶

That some women did contribute to the day-to-day governing, especially to the lawmaking of Cyprus, is supported by a story told by Dio Chrysostom who wrote in the first or second century CE. His tale may describe a woman from the Hellenistic or even an earlier period on the island:

I will tell you also a certain Cyprian tale if you wish. The days of old produced women of distinction as well as men . . . Cyprus too had its Demonassa, a woman gifted in both statesmanship and law-giving. She gave the people of Cyprus the following three laws: a woman guilty of adultery shall have her hair cut off and be a harlot . . . whoever commits suicide shall be cast out without burial . . . third, a law forbidding the slaughter of a plough-ox.⁶⁷

Temples

Temples formed parts of Late Bronze Age settlements in the fifteenth to fourteenth centuries BCE and cult buildings were firmly established with large urban areas such as Enkomi and Kition in the thirteenth–eleventh centuries BCE.⁶⁸ Without texts to name specific individuals and their roles, it is difficult to identify women in cult contexts with precision. Important sources of information for this period are cylinder seals, small, usually stone objects that were engraved with figural and geometric designs. Seals were important tools of administrative and legal control and they also served as protective personal amulets. Cylinder seals preserve the most intricate figural art made on the island in the Late Bronze Age.

A common figure on Cypriot cylinder seals wears a long robe and, often together with a griffin, guards a palm tree.⁶⁹ Seals with this design were most characteristic of the urban center at Kourion at the site of Episkopi-Bamboula;⁷⁰ examples also come from other parts of Cyprus. The robed figure on these cylinder seals is identified as female because of one who has breasts.⁷¹ When shown together with a griffin she reaches up to touch the wing of this supernatural creature, which suggests that she is in touch with the divine or perhaps is herself semi-divine.

Her repeated appearance on cylinder seals suggests that this robed figure was consistently symbolic of the kind of administrative and personal authority conveyed by such seals. Whatever her specific authority was, her power waned toward the end of the Late Bronze Age, c.1200 BCE, when several seals with this design were recut to feature scenes of combat or hunting. At Kourion, the robed woman on one cylinder seal was replaced by a seated male.⁷² He may have been meant to represent a new kind of authority, whether religious, political, or both, which was symbolic of the kind of socio-political changes that took place on Cyprus at that time.⁷³

In the first millennium BCE, the king served as the chief priest of the goddess of Cyprus. Sculpture of the same period reveals that women also played important roles in cult. The wider populace of women and men participated in cult on Cyprus too, sometimes together. For example, Strabo writing in the first century BCE to the first century CE tells us that on the road from Paphos “men together with women, who assemble here from the other cities, hold an annual procession to Palaepaphos”⁷⁴ where stood the great temple of Aphrodite.

When it comes to defining what the roles were that women played in cult, one should note that there is some scholarly dispute about whether Cypriot sculptures of the Iron Age that portray women

wearing elaborate headdresses and jewelry are goddesses⁷⁵ or mortal women.⁷⁶ Also sculpted figures of seated women in cult contexts can be understood to be goddesses⁷⁷ or priestesses sitting in place of a goddess.⁷⁸ The line between human and deity may have been made ambiguous deliberately to emphasize the liminal space in which communication with the divine could take place.⁷⁹

Attributes and gestures are the surest way of differentiating images of elaborately clad temple officials and votaries from deities.⁸⁰ Clear examples are statues of the Hellenistic period that depict priestesses who hold temple keys.⁸¹ In the Cypro-Archaic period, statues of women shown wearing seals as part of jewelry are also likely to be temple officials.⁸² Votive figurines, statuettes, and statues of women gesturing in prayer or holding offerings stood in for the person who made the dedication before a deity. Because sanctuaries of female deities were often at the heart of urban space in Cyprus,⁸³ the many female images dedicated as votaries in those temples made women highly visible in urban contexts.

The power of these votive figures is well represented by a statuette found in the sanctuary at Polis-Peristeries that was at the heart of the city-kingdom of Marion in the Cypro-Archaic period (Figure 29.3).⁸⁴ She stands with her arms held up in a gesture of prayer. She wears a necklace, multiple earrings, and a nose ring. Holes at the back show that she was once affixed to a wall in the temple building. She was found carefully buried in a votive pit just east of the temenos wall of the sanctuary. Before burial, she was killed by having her head and body twisted and pulled apart. Such deliberate damage to a dedication prevented someone else from drawing on its power to communicate with a deity.

Texts describe some women who served in the cults of Cyprus. Prior to the Hellenistic period, there is only one text that attests to women who worked in some capacity for a temple. It is an economic list written in Phoenician that records women at a temple of Astarte at Kition in either the fifth or the fourth century BCE. One line lists a young woman or women and a group of 22 young women in connection with sacrifice.⁸⁵ The Phoenician word for a young, possibly marriageable, woman, *ʿlmt*, has also been read as widow, a woman who was still considered married even after the death of a husband.⁸⁶ If *ʿlmt* had two meanings, this could explain the two groups of women in this text.



Figure 29.3 Terracotta female statuette from Marion that was twisted and broken at the neck prior to burial in a votive pit just outside and east of a sanctuary destroyed c.500 BCE. Shown here reassembled. Width of head 9.93 cm, width of body 12.14 cm. Polis Chrysochous, Cyprus, The Local Archaeological Museum of Marion and Arsinoe, Princeton Cyprus Expedition inv. nos. R11662/TC4681 and R11666/TC4683. (Photograph by Jeffrey Evans.)

Hellenistic period texts are far more specific about women who served as officiants in cult⁸⁷ and who made cult dedications. Third- and second-century BCE inscriptions name women who served as priestesses and *kanephoroi* (basket-bearers). The greater visibility of women in official cult service at this time may have been due to

changes ushered in by the Ptolemies; mostly women served in Ptolemaic ruler cults for Arsinoe Philadelphus, Arsinoe Philopator, and Cleopatra III.⁸⁸ The exceptions are one mid-third-century BCE dedicatory inscription from Palaepaphos that names Phanion, a priestess whom scholars assume served Paphian Aphrodite,⁸⁹ and one epitaph from Soloi that names Philotis, a priestess of Demeter.⁹⁰

How a woman became an officiant of a cult on Cyprus is unclear. Some inscriptions on Cyprus describe them in relationship to their families, while others name them independently. In the Greek world, the priesthood was based on the economic and social status of one's family, including a family tradition of serving the cult.⁹¹ In Athens, typically women served as priestesses to goddesses and men served as priests to gods.⁹² Yet on Cyprus, as previously mentioned, men normally served in the priesthood of Aphrodite in both the Iron Age city-kingdoms of the island and the Hellenistic period.⁹³

From the time of Alexander the Great, whose conquests and death mark the beginning of the Hellenistic period (336–323 BCE), and throughout the Hellenistic period on Cyprus, inscriptions record women making dedications and being the subject of statues dedicated in sanctuaries. At Kition in 325 BCE, a Phoenician inscription records that a woman dedicated a statue of a woman to Astarte.⁹⁴ In the third century BCE at Salamis, a woman made a dedication in Greek to Aphrodite.⁹⁵ Statues of Philotis, daughter of Mentor and Kleonike, and Timo, daughter of Philinos, son of Mentor, were dedicated with Greek inscriptions in the sanctuary of Apollo Hylates at Kourion c.190 BCE.⁹⁶ Cypriot women were also active in making such dedications in the Greek world. For example, in the fourth century BCE, Aristoklea of Kition made a dedication in Greek to Aphrodite Ourania at Piraeus.⁹⁷

Most of these dedications are preserved only in the form of inscribed statue bases that long ago were separated from the statues that stood on them. From Palaepaphos is a smaller dedication of the late second or early first century BCE, a gold pin topped by two beads and decorated with four goat's heads, lotus flowers springing from acanthus leaves, and doves. A Greek inscription punched into the gold of the pin tells us that it was dedicated to Aphrodite at Paphos by Eubola, the wife of Aratos, and Tamisa, whose place in that or another family is unknown. Aratos held an important place as a kinsman in the Ptolemaic court.⁹⁸

Workshops

The greater presence of women as ruling figures and the initiators of dedications in the Hellenistic period raises the question of whether and where women were prominent outside the home in other periods and in other capacities. Looking back to the Late Bronze Age, texts from outside Cyprus mention women of Alashiya living outside Cyprus. One woman in the fifteenth century BCE received a food ration from the palace at Alalakh.⁹⁹ Another woman and her apprentices are listed in a text from the fourteenth or thirteenth century BCE at Ugarit. They received something in a pot.¹⁰⁰ While these texts do not describe women's roles on Cyprus, they do suggest that Alashiyan women worked for a central authority.

Ancient texts make little mention of women's crafts on Cyprus. It is therefore of interest that the second-century CE author, Pausanias, mentions a textile as a gift from Laodice to Athena. His story purports to describe a woman and a gift from an era that is much earlier than the second century CE in Cyprus. Laodice, a descendant of the legendary king, Agapenor, founder of Paphos and the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Palaepaphos:

[s]ent to Tegea [Greece] a robe as a gift for Athena Alea. The inscription on the offering told as well the race of Laodice: "This is the robe of Laodice; she offered it to her Athena, sending it to her broad fatherland from divine Cyprus."¹⁰¹

Whether Laodice made the robe is not stated in Pausanias's story; if she did, she would have been one of many women on Cyprus whose weaving skills contributed to the arts of the island. The archaeology of Cyprus preserves evidence that the development of urban settlements changed the ways in which women were involved in textile production. Prior to the Late Bronze Age, these products were only made in the home.¹⁰² While there are no texts or images that document textile production on Cyprus for the same period, many textile tools were found in household courtyards and in the largest textile workshop found so far on Cyprus. This textile workshop was located near the harbor at Kition.¹⁰³ Craft there and in a large metal workshop may have been administered in a nearby building with evidence for textile finishing and scrap metal collection.¹⁰⁴

A model developed for the different tasks in textile manufacture, such as spinning, weaving, and dyeing, and the complexity of the workspaces inside and outside the home helps to describe the different roles played by women and men in making cloth. The model draws on cross-cultural comparative evidence from ancient texts about and images of textile workers together with ethnographic examples.¹⁰⁵ Across time and across cultures, women normally spun fibers for

production both inside the home and for larger workshops. Indeed, spindles and whorls were strongly associated with being a woman in antiquity, and on Cyprus these tools are mostly found in women's burials.¹⁰⁶ Similarly, it was just as characteristic for men to conduct the messy and smelly tasks of fulling and dyeing fibers and cloths.¹⁰⁷ The evidence used to build the model pointed to women as the most frequent weavers, especially inside the home. On Cyprus, specialized toolkits for making tapestries were found in both household work areas and non-residential workshops at Kition.¹⁰⁸ Female tapestry weavers may thus have worked in the large workshop at Kition, possibly for a central authority;¹⁰⁹ the presence of vats for fulling and dyeing in that workshop suggested that men worked there too. Cyprus was famous for its tapestry weavers in the fifth century BCE.¹¹⁰ centuries earlier, it seems that women were already making these signature artistic products at Kition.

Textiles continued to be produced inside and outside the home in the Iron Age and Hellenistic periods. At Marion, textile tools such as loom weights as well as thousands of crushed murex shells from the purple dye industry were found discarded in a sixth-century BCE deposit from a workshop next to a sanctuary at Polis-Peristeries. Also tapestry weaving tools come from another Cypro-Archaic building at Marion.¹¹¹ At Nicosia (ancient Ledra), excavations have revealed over 200 loom weights from the Cypro-Archaic, Cypro-Classical, and Hellenistic city on the Hill of Ayios Georgios.¹¹² Tools found at Hellenistic period Nea Paphos also suggest that some textile manufacture took place in workshops.¹¹³

Full publication of the post-Bronze Age evidence for textile production should clarify the nature of the textiles made inside and outside the home in urban areas and how this work relates to nearby administrative buildings and temple structures. While it is not possible to determine how many women wove in workshops, the marking of clay tools such as loom weights suggests that women continued to work in them after the Bronze Age. The size of the finger-rings stamped on loom weights, especially in the Cypro-Archaic, Cypro-Classical, and Hellenistic periods, shows that seal-rings of both men and women were used, which indicates that both were weavers.¹¹⁴

Conclusions

Women contributed to the establishment and maintenance of urban life on Cyprus. In life and in death, they were integral to the life of their families and the community. Women also created some of the

signature textile products of the island. Taking the broad span of time from the beginnings of urbanism on Cyprus in the Late Bronze Age through the Hellenistic period, it is in the Hellenistic period that women's roles can be defined with greatest clarity. Inscriptions from that period identify women in the priesthood and as members of ruling families; their emergence in texts and in art as more distinct individuals parallels practices of the wider Ptolemaic world.¹¹⁵ That clarity also makes obvious roles in politics and cult for which there are hints of similar practices in texts and images from earlier periods. Indeed, it is in the Iron Age, especially in the seventh and sixth centuries of the Cypro-Archaic period that a diverse array of representations of and texts concerning women begin to emerge. This increasing specificity suggests that people then were already exploring the changing roles of women in urban society.

List of abbreviations

CceC = *Cahier du centre d'Études chypriotes*.

JHS = *Journal of Hellenic Studies*.

Kition-Bamboula V = Yon, M. (2004) *Kition dans les textes: Testimonia littéraires et épigraphiques et Corpus des inscriptions*. Kition-Bamboula V. Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilizations.

MMJ = *Metropolitan Museum Journal*.

RDAC = *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus*.

SHC II = Knapp, A. B. (ed.) (1996) *Sources for the History of Cyprus Volume II: Near Eastern and Aegean Texts from the Third to the First Millennia BC*. Altamont, NY: Greece and Cyprus Research center.

SIMA = *Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology*.

Notes

- 1 Swiny 1989: 17.
- 2 Manning *et al.* 2014.
- 3 Bolger 2003: 49.
- 4 On the various languages and scripts for Cyprus see, with further references, Knapp ed. 1996; Smith ed. 2002; Steele 2013; Steele ed. 2013.
- 5 See Pogiati 2003 on figural grave stelae.
- 6 Keswani 2004: 141, 158.
- 7 Manning 1998.
- 8 Goring 1989: 98–104.
- 9 South 2000: 349, 352–353.
- 10 Masson 1989: 39, figs. 61.1–2, nos. K-AD 734, 795; South 2003.

- 11 Goring 1989: 103–104.
- 12 Åström 1983.
- 13 Bazemore 2002.
- 14 Masson 1983: 174, no. 157; Egetmeyer 2010: 707, no. 73.
- 15 Gjerstad 1935: 428–429, Tomb 86, fig. 184.1–3.
- 16 Pogiati 2003: 161–162, 171–173, 175, nos. 70, 83, 86, pls. XLI, XLIX, XLVIII.
- 17 Wilson 1969.
- 18 Masson 1983: 179, no. 166; Egetmeyer 2010: 710, no. 86.
- 19 Poullioux *et al.* 1987: 71, no. 174.
- 20 Yon 2004: 137, no. 169.
- 21 Isokrates, *Discourses 3. Nicocles, or the Cyprians*, 40–42.
- 22 Mitford 1971: 131–132, no. 68.
- 23 Munro and Tubbs 1890: 12, 17, 18, 23, 68–70, inscription nos. 13–14; Munro 1891: 330; Masson 1983: 167–168, nos. 143–144; Egetmeyer 2010: 703, nos. 54–55.
- 24 Munro and Tubbs 1890: 69.
- 25 Sørensen 2009: 250–251.
- 26 Pogiati 2003: 119–120, no. 21, pl. XIV.
- 27 Pogiati 2003: 123–124, no. 25, pl. XVI.
- 28 Pogiati 2003: 136–137, no. 38, pl. XXIII.
- 29 Pogiati 2003: 129–130, no. 31, pl. XIX.
- 30 Bazemore 2002: 404, 411.
- 31 Donkowsky 2009.
- 32 Poullioux *et al.* 1987: 44–45, no. 89.
- 33 Mitford 1961: 11, no. 24.
- 34 Mitford 1961: 16–18, nos. 41, 44, 45; Michaelidou-Nicolaou 1976: 59, 62, nos. E20, Z2, Z3; Kyle 2015: 216.
- 35 Michaelidou-Nicolaou 1976: 110, no. Σ11; Oziol 2004: 274–275, no. 2069.
- 36 Yon 2004: 88, no. 82.
- 37 Peltenberg 2012; Peltenburg and Iacovou 2012: 345–351.
- 38 Moran 1992: 107–109, EA 35; Beckman 1996: 26–27, 32–33, nos. 25, 28, 38; Malbran-Labat 1999.
- 39 Moran 1992: 107–109, EA 35.
- 40 Baines 1999.
- 41 See, also, Steel, this volume.
- 42 Ockinga 1996: 49.
- 43 Satriani 2013.
- 44 Karageorghis 1999; Karageorghis 2006: 140–142.
- 45 Neumann 1999.
- 46 Karageorghis 2006: 142.
- 47 Hermary 2000.
- 48 Hermary 2000: 69–72.
- 49 Masson 1983: 167, no. 142; Egetmeyer 2010: 703, no. 53.

- 50 Satraki 2013: 128.
- 51 Referenced by the second-century CE lexicographer, Harpocration, in the entry for *anaktes* and *anassai*.
- 52 Pilides and Olivier 2008: 340–341.
- 53 Karageorghis 1997: 115–118.
- 54 Satraki 2013: 134.
- 55 Iacovou 2006: 328–329.
- 56 Isokrates, *Discourses* 9. *Evagoras*, 72.
- 57 Lucian, *Essays in Portraiture Defended*, 27.
- 58 Diodorus Siculus, 20.21.2–3; translated in Geer 1954.
- 59 Polyaeus, *Strategems*, 8.48.1.
- 60 Pouilloux *et al.* 1987, 29, no. 56.
- 61 Anastassiades 1998.
- 62 Plantzos 1999: 42–44, 47–52.
- 63 Anastassiades 1998; Donkow 2009: 113–114.
- 64 Anastassiades 2009.
- 65 Oziol 2004: 251–252, no. 2022.
- 66 Mitford 1961: 15, no. 39; Poullieux *et al.* 1987: 38, no. 74.
- 67 Dio Chrysostum, *Discourses* 64, *On Fortune* 2.2–4; translated in Crosby 1951.
- 68 Webb 1999: 286.
- 69 Webb 1999: 266–267.
- 70 Smith 2012.
- 71 Webb 1989.
- 72 Smith 2014: 216–217, 220–221, 226, 229.
- 73 Smith 2012.
- 74 Strabo, 14.6.3 (683); translated in Jones 1929.
- 75 Hermay 1982.
- 76 Sørensen 1994.
- 77 Connelly 1988: 21.
- 78 Markoe 1985: 56–59.
- 79 Smith 2009: 127.
- 80 Connelly 1988: 5; Sørensen 2002: 122–123.
- 81 Connelly 2007: 94–95.
- 82 Sørensen 2002: 125, 127.
- 83 Ulbrich 2010.
- 84 Serwint 2012.
- 85 Amadasi Guzzo and Karageorghis 1977: 119, 125, no. C1; Amadasi Guzzo 2004: 209–211, no. 1078; Yon 2004, 184–185, no. 1078. An earlier translation of this inscription interprets these women as sacred prostitutes (Masson and Sznycer 1972: 64–65). In Cypriot art, there are representations of couples engaging in sexual intercourse (Karageorghis 1993). Yet, sacred prostitution did not exist in the ancient Near East and it finds no support in either Near Eastern or Classical texts (see Budin 2008, and on this text, see Budin 2008: 46–47).

- 86 Hiebert 1989.
- 87 Connelly 2007: 93–94, 140.
- 88 Michaelidou-Nicolaou 1976: 32, 45, 56, 68–69, 121–122, nos. A24, A158, E2, T13, Y2.
- 89 Mitford 1961: 9–10, no. 19; Michaelidou-Nicolaou 1976: 122, no. Φ4.
- 90 Nicolaou 1966: 54, 56, no. 1; Michaelidou-Nicolaou 1976: 125, no. Φ36.
- 91 Connelly 2007: 19.
- 92 Connelly 2007: 2.
- 93 Młynarczyk 1990: 113–115.
- 94 Amadasi and Karageorghis 1977: 11–13, no. A1; Yon 2004: 174, no. 1001.
- 95 Poullieux *et al.* 1987: 24, no. 41.
- 96 Mitford 1971: 106–108, nos. 50–51.
- 97 Yon 2004: 134, no. 160.
- 98 Hogarth *et al.* 1888: 222–223; Mitford 1961: 41, no. 112; British Museum Collection Online: no. 1888, 1115.2.
- 99 Wiseman 1996: 20, no. 12.
- 100 Walls 1996: 39, no. 58.
- 101 Pausanias, 8.5.2–3; translated in Jones 1933.
- 102 See also Steel, this volume, for women in other aspects of the Cypriot economy.
- 103 Smith 2002: 299–304, 2009: 34–41.
- 104 Smith 2009: 51–57.
- 105 Smith 2002: 282–289.
- 106 Fischer 1986: 42; Steel 1995: 201. Objects that may be whorls are found in some burials of men. The clearest example is in a shaft grave of a single male at Hala Sultan Tekke. See Niklasson 1983: nos. N 1219, N 1370, N 1382.
- 107 Smith 2002: 285–289.
- 108 Smith 2013: 165–168, 177–180.
- 109 Smith 2002: 304.
- 110 Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists*, 2.48b.
- 111 Smith 2013: 181–182.
- 112 Pilides 2004: 158–159.
- 113 Conroy 2000: 222.
- 114 Smith 2015.
- 115 Anastassiades 2009.

References

- Amadasi Guzzo, M. G. (2004) Mise à jour du recueil Kition III (1977). *Kition-Bamboula V* : 205–216.
- Amadasi Guzzo, M. G. and Karageorghis, V. (1977) *Fouilles de Kition III. Inscriptions phéniciennes*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Department of Antiquities.

- Anastassiades, A. (1998) Ἀρσινόης Φιλαδέλφου: Aspects of a specific cult in Cyprus. *RDAC*, pp. 129–140.
- Anastassiades, A. (2009) Two Ptolemaic queens and Cyprus: Iconographic issues. *CceC* 39: 259–270.
- Åström, P. (1983) A hoard of gold work. In P. Åström, E. Åström, A. Hatziantoniou, K. Niklasson and U. Öbrink (eds) *Hala Sultan Tekke 8: Excavations 1971–79*. SIMA 45: 8. Göteborg, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, pp. 8–15.
- Baines, J. (1999) On Wenamun as a literary text. In J. Assmann and E. Blumenthal (eds) *Literatur und Politik im Pharaonischen und Ptolemäischen Ägypten: Vorträge der Tagung zum Gedenken an Georges Posener*, 5–10 September 1996, Leipzig. Bibliothèque d'Étude 127. Cairo, Egypt: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, pp. 209–233.
- Bazemore, G. B. (2002) Gender, sex and the Cypriot syllabic inscriptions: Females in the written record of Ancient Cyprus. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. ASOR Archaeological Reports 7. CAARI Monographs 3. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 397–418.
- Beckman, G. (1996) Akkadian documents from Ugarit, and Hittite documents from Hattusha. *SHC* II, pp. 26–28, 31–35.
- Bolger, D. (2003) *Gender in Ancient Cyprus: Narratives of Social Change on a Mediterranean Island*. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.
- British Museum Collection Online, available at http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx.
- Budin, S. L. (2008) *The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University.
- Connelly, J. B. (1988) *Votive Sculpture of Hellenistic Cyprus*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Department of Antiquities, Cyprus.
- Connelly, J. B. (2007) *Portrait of a Priestess: Women and Ritual in Ancient Greece*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Conroy, D. W. (2000) Textile artefacts and a fragment of cloth from Pafos, Cyprus. *RDAC*, pp. 221–232.
- Crosby, H. L. (1951) *Dio Chrysostom, Volume V, Discourses 61–80. Fragments. Letters*. Loeb Classical Library 385. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Donkow, I. (2009) Commemorated and honoured: Women in dedicatory and honorific inscriptions of Hellenistic Cyprus. *Medelhavsmuseet* 5: 110–118.
- Egetmeyer, M. (2010) *Le Dialecte Grec Ancien de Chypre Tome II: Répertoire des Inscriptions en Syllabaire Chypro-Grec*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Fischer, P. (1986) *Prehistoric Cypriot Skulls*. SIMA 75. Göteborg,

- Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag.
- Geer, R. M. (1954) *Diodorus Siculus, Library of History Volume X, Books 19.66–20*. Loeb Classical Library 390. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Gjerstad, E. (1935) Marion. In E. Gjerstad, J. Lindros, E. Sjöqvist and A. Westholm (eds) *The Swedish Cyprus Expedition: Finds and Results of the Excavations in Cyprus 1927–1931*, Vol. II. Stockholm, Sweden: The Swedish Cyprus Expedition, pp. 181–459.
- Goring, E. (1989) Death in everyday life: Aspects of burial practice in the Late Bronze Age. In E. J. Peltenburg (ed.) *Early Society in Cyprus*. Edinburgh, UK: University of Edinburgh, pp. 95–105.
- Hermay, A. (1982) Divinités cypriotes, I. *RDAC*, pp. 164–173.
- Hermay, A. (2000) Déesse plutôt que reine? A propos d'une couple en argent de la collection cesnola. *CceC* 30: 67–78.
- Hiebert, P. S. (1989) 'Whence shall help come to me?': The biblical widow. In P. L. Day (ed.) *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, pp. 125–141.
- Hogarth, D. G., James, M. R., Elsey Smith, R. and Gardner, E. A. (1888) Excavations in Cyprus, 1887–88. Paphos, Leontari, Amargetti. *JHS* 9: 147–271.
- Iacovou, M. (2006) From the Mycenaean *qa-si-re-u* to the Cypriote *pa-si-le-wo-se*: The Basileus in the Kingdoms of Cyprus. In S. Deger-Jalkotsky and I. S. Lemos (eds) *Ancient Greece from the Mycenaean Palaces to the Age of Homer*. Edinburgh Leventis Studies 3. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 315–335.
- Jones, H. L. (1929) *Strabo, Geography, Volume VI, Books 13–14*. Loeb Classical Library 223. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Jones, W. H. S. (1933) *Pausanias, Description of Greece, Volume III, Books 6–8.21 (Elis 2, Achaia, Arcadia)*. Loeb Classical Library 272. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Karageorghis, J. (1997) Les noms de la grande déesse dans les inscriptions syllabiques chypriotes. *CceC* 27: 109–119.
- Karageorghis, V. (1993) Erotica from Salamis. *Rivista di Studi Fenici* 21, *Supplemento*: 7–13.
- Karageorghis, V. (1999) A Cypriot silver bowl reconsidered 1: The iconography of the decoration. *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 34: 13–20.
- Karageorghis, V. (2006) *Aspects of Everyday Life in Ancient Cyprus: Iconographic Representations*. Nicosia, Cyprus: A. G. Leventis Foundation.
- Keswani, P. (2004) *Mortuary Ritual and Society in Bronze Age Cyprus*. London: Equinox Publishing Ltd.

- Knapp, A. B. (ed.) (1996) *Sources for the History of Cyprus Volume II: Near Eastern and Aegean Texts from the Third to the First Millennia BC*. Altamont, NY: Greece and Cyprus Research center.
- Kyle, D. G. (2015) *Sport and Spectacle in the Ancient World*. Second edition. Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell.
- Malbran-Labat, F. (1999) Nouvelles données épigraphiques sur Chypre et Ougarit. *RDAC*, pp. 122–124.
- Manning, S. W. (1998) Changing pasts and socio-political cognition in Late Bronze Age Cyprus. *World Archaeology* 30(1): 39–58.
- Manning, S. W., Andreou, G.-M., Fisher, K. D., Gerard-Little, P., Kearns, C., Leon, J. F., Sewell, D. A. and Urban, T. M. (2014) Becoming urban: Investigating the anatomy of the Late Bronze Age complex, Maroni, Cyprus. *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 27(1): 3–32.
- Markoe, G. (1985) *Phoenician Bronze and Silver Bowls from Cyprus and the Mediterranean*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Masson, E. (1989) Vestiges écrits trouvés sur le site de Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios. In A. South, P. Russell and P. S. Keswani (eds) *Vasilikos Valley Project 3: Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios II. ceramics, Objects, Tombs, Specialist Studies*. SIMA 71: 3. Göteborg, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, pp. 38–40.
- Masson, O. (1983) *Les Inscriptions Chypriotes Syllabiques Recueil Critique et Commenté, Réimpression Augmentée, Études Chypriotes* 1. Paris: École Françaises d'Athènes.
- Masson, O. and Sznycer, M. (1972) *Recherches sur les Phéniciens à Chypre*. centre de recherches d'histoire et de philologie 2, Hautes études orientales 3. Geneva: Librairie Droz.
- Michaelidou-Nicolaou, I (1976) *Prospography of Ptolemaic Cyprus*. SIMA 44. Göteborg, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag.
- Mitford, T. B. (1961) The Hellenistic inscriptions of old Paphos. *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 56: 1–41.
- Mitford, T. B. (1971) *The Inscriptions of Kourion*. Philadelphia, PA: American Philosophical Society.
- Młynarczyk, J. (1990) *Nea Paphos III: Nea Paphos in the Hellenistic Period*. Warsaw, Poland: Éditions Géologiques.
- Moran, W. L. (1992) *The Amarna Letters*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University.
- Munro, J. A. R. (1891) Excavations in Cyprus. Third season's work–Polis tes Chrysochou. *JHS* 12: 298–333.
- Munro, J. A. R. and H. A. Tubbs (1890) Excavations in Cyprus, 1889. Second season's work–Polis tes Chrysochou–Limniti. *JHS* 11: 1–99.
- Neumann, G. (1999) A Cypriot silver bowl reconsidered 3: The

- inscription. *MMJ* 34: 33–35.
- Nicolaou, I. (1966) *Inscriptiones Cypriae Alphabeticae V*, 1965. *RDAC*, pp. 54–74.
- Niklasson, K. (1983) A shaft-grave of the Late Cypriote III period. In P. Åström, E. Åström, A. Hatziantoniou, K. Niklasson and U. Öbrink (eds) *Hala Sultan Tekke 8: Excavations 1971–79*. SIMA 45: 8. Göteborg, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, pp. 169–213.
- Ockinga, B. G. (1996) Hieroglyphic texts from Egypt. *SHC* II, pp. 42–50.
- Oziol, T. (2004) Textes en grec alphabétique. *Kition-Bamboula V*, pp. 231–314.
- Peltenburg, E. J. (2012) Text meets material in Late Bronze Age Cyprus. In A. Georgiou (ed.) *Cyprus: An Island Culture: Society and Social Relations from the Bronze Age to the Venetian Period*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 1–23.
- Peltenburg, E. and Iacovou, M. (2012) Crete and Cyprus: Contrasting political configurations. In G. Cadogan, M. Iacovou, K. Kopaka and J. Whitley (eds) *Parallel Lives: Ancient Island Societies in Crete and Cyprus*. British School at Athens Studies 20. Athens, Greece: British School at Athens, pp. 345–363.
- Pilides, D. (2004) Potters, weavers and sanctuary dedications: Possible evidence from the Hill of Agios Georgios in the quest for territorial boundaries. *CceC* 34: 155–172.
- Pilides, D. and Olivier, J.-P. (2008) A black glazed cup from the Hill of Agios Georgios, Lefkosia, belonging to a “Wanax”. *RDAC*, pp. 337–352.
- Plantzos, D. (1999) *Hellenistic Engraved Gems*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon.
- Pogiatzi, E. (2003) *Die Grabreliefs auf Zypern von der archaischen bis zur römischen Zeit*. Peleus Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Griechenlands und Zyperns 23. Mannheim and Möhnesee, Germany: Bibliopolis.
- Poullioux, J., Roesch, P. and Marcillet-Jaubert, J. (1987) *Salamine de Chypre XIII: Testimonia Salamina 2, Corpus Épigraphique*. Paris: GS Maison de l’Orient Méditerranéen.
- Satraki, A. (2013) The iconography of basileis in Archaic and Classical Cyprus: Manifestations of royal power in the visual record. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 370: 123–144.
- Serwint, N. (2012) Female statuette. In W. A. P. Childs, J. S. Smith and J. M. Padgett (eds) *City of Gold: The Archaeology of Polis Chrysochous, Cyprus*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Art Museum, pp. 186–188.
- Smith, J. S. (2002) Changes in the workplace: Women and textile

- production on Late Bronze Age Cyprus. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. ASOR Archaeological Reports 7. CAARI Monographs 3. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 281–312.
- Smith, J. S. (ed.) (2002) *Script and Seal Use on Cyprus in the Bronze and Iron Ages*. Archaeological Institute of America Colloquia and Conference Papers Series 4. Boston, MA: Archaeological Institute of America.
- Smith, J. S. (2009) *Art and Society in Cyprus from the Bronze Age into the Iron Age*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University.
- Smith, J. S. (2012) Seals, scripts, and politics at Late Bronze Age Kourion. *American Journal of Archaeology* 116: 39–103.
- Smith, J. S. (2013) Tapestries in the Bronze and early Iron Ages of the Ancient Near East. In M.-L. Nosch and H. Koefoed (eds) *Textile Production and Consumption in the Ancient Near East: Archaeology, Epigraphy, Iconography*. Ancient Textiles Series 12. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 159–186.
- Smith, J. S. (2014) Histories of Cypriot Art through seal carving. In B. A. Brown and M. H. Feldman (eds) *Critical Approaches to Ancient Near Eastern Art*. Boston, MA: Walter de Gruyter, pp. 205–237.
- Smith, J. S. (2015) Impressing Aphrodite: Stamped loom weights from Polis Chrysochous. *CceC*, pp. 41–56.
- Sørensen, L. W. (1994) The divine image? In F. Vandenabeele and R. Laffineur (eds) *Cypriote Stone Sculpture: Proceedings of the Second International Conference of Cypriote Studies, Brussels-Liège, 17–19 May, 1993*. Brussels-Liège, Belgium: A. G. Leventis Foundation.
- Sørensen, L. W. (2002) Cypriot women of the Archaic Period: Evidence from sculpture. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. ASOR Archaeological Reports 7. CAARI Monographs 3. Boston, MA: ASOR, pp. 121–132.
- Sørensen, L. W. (2009) The image of women in public space. *Medelhavsmuseet* 5: 246–254.
- South, A. (2000) Late Bronze Age burials at Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios. In G. K. Ioannides, S. A. Hadjistilles and I. P. Theocharides (eds) *Proceedings of the Third International Congress of Cypriot Studies, Nicosia, 16–20 April 1996*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Society of Cypriot Studies, pp. 345–364.
- South, A. (2003) Tomb 11 at Kalavassos-Ayios Dimitrios. In S. Hadjisavvas (ed.) *From Ishtar to Aphrodite: 3200 Years of Cypriot Hellenism, Treasures from the Museums of Cyprus*. New York: Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation (USA), pp. 26–30.

- Steel, L. (1995) Differential burial practices in Cyprus at the beginning of the Iron Age. In S. Campbell and A. Green (eds) *The Archaeology of Death in the Ancient Near East*. Oxbow Monograph 51. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 199–204.
- Steele, P. (2013) *A Linguistic History of Ancient Cyprus: The Non-Greek Languages and Their Relations with Greek, c.1600–300 BC*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University.
- Steele, P. (ed.) (2013) *Syllabic Writing on Cyprus and its Context*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University.
- Swiny, S. (1989) From round house to duplex: A re-assessment of Prehistoric Cypriot Bronze Age society. In E. J. Peltenburg (ed.) *Early Society in Cyprus*. Edinburgh, UK: University of Edinburgh, pp. 14–31.
- Ulbrich, A. (2010) Images of Cypriot Aphrodite in her sanctuaries during the age of the city-kingdoms. In A. C. Smith and S. Pickup (eds) *Brill's Companion to Aphrodite*. Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, pp. 167–193.
- Walls, N. (1996) Ugaritic documents from Ugarit. *SHC* II, pp. 36–40.
- Webb, J. M. (1989) A cylinder seal from Kazaphani-Ayios Andronikos. In I. Nicolaou and K. Nicolaou (eds) *A Middle/Late Cypriot Tomb at Kazaphani-Ayios Andronikos: T. 2A, B*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Department of Antiquities, pp. 113–114.
- Webb, J. M. (1999) *Ritual Architecture, Iconography and Practice in the Late Cypriot Bronze Age*. SIMA and Literature Pocket-book 75. Jonsered, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag.
- Wilson, V. (1969) A grave relief from Marion. *RDAC*, pp. 56–63.
- Wiseman, D. J. (1996) Akkadian documents from Alalakh (Old and Middle Babylonian Periods). *SHC* II, p. 20.
- Yon, M. (2004) *Kition dans les Textes: Testimonia Littéraires et Epigraphiques et Corpus des Inscriptions*. Kition-Bamboula V. Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations.

PART V

The Levant and Carthage

(See map in Introduction to Part One: Mesopotamia)

THE LEVANT

Chronology

4300–3300	Chalcolithic (Proto-Bronze Age)
3300–3050	Early Bronze Age (EBA) I
3050–2300	Early Bronze II–III
2300–2000	EB IV –Middle Bronze Age (MBA) I
2000–1750	MBA IIA
1750–1550	MBA IIB–C
1550–1400	Late Bronze Age (LBA) I
1400–1200	LBA II
1200–1000	Iron Age I
1000–586	Iron Age II
586–538	Babylonian Captivity (Israel-Palestine)
538–330	Persian Period
330–63	Hellenistic Period
63 BCE– CE 640	Roman/Byzantine Period

Introduction

Early Bronze Age

The area known as the Levant, the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, can usefully be divided into three parts. To the north is Syria, which in the Bronze Age was more heavily influenced by Mesopotamia. On the central coast is the area that would become Iron Age Phoenicia and modern Lebanon. Although more influenced by Egypt than Mesopotamia, a defining characteristic of this area is its location on the sea, and its age-old potential for sea trade and long-range colonization (see Phoenicia and Punic World below). Finally, there is the southern region of Israel-Palestine (geographically called “Palestine” here for convenience sake). In the Bronze Age it and its

northern “Phoenician” neighbor composed Canaan. In the Iron Age, the southern Levant consisted of the smaller states of Israel to the north, Judah to the south, and Ammon, Moab, and Edom to the east.

Urbanization first appeared in the Levant in the first half of the third millennium BCE. Syrian cities were typically larger than their counterparts in southern Canaan, which consisted of small walled settlements dotting the rural areas and the region north of the Negev Desert. Even before this, as early as the fourth millennium, the coastal city of Byblos was already engaging in active trade with Egypt where demand for the famous cedars of Lebanon was evident.

Minimal textual evidence suggests that Syria was dominated by the city of Ebla (modern Tell Mardikh) from about 2525 to 2325 before the city was set aflame and the region came under the sway of the Akkadian Dynasty in Mesopotamia. For the next century, urbanization was greatly stunted in the northern Levant. Archaeology reveals a region of small, unfortified, temporary settlements and no evidence of high culture—craft-specialization, literacy, hierarchy. A similar situation also appeared in Palestine, although without the original hegemony of a principal state, as was the case for Ebla to the north. Minimal interaction with Egypt is already evident in some Egyptian items found in southern Palestine from this period, but this interaction was minimal at best, with no signs of political occupation or organized commerce. In contrast to this period of decline, the coastal regions, including coastal Palestine and Byblos, seem to have thrived in the later third millennium, perhaps due to their greater distance from the ravages of Akkad.

Middle Bronze Age

The first half of the second millennium was a true apex of Levantine society in all regions. Syria was divided into a series of independent states dominated by one or (occasionally) more “capital” cities. The dominant territory was the region (one might say “state”) of Yamhad with its capital the city of ancient Halab, modern Aleppo. An early eighteenth-century letter from the city of Mari refers to some 20 kings of other cities who owed fealty to King Yarim-Lim of Yamhad, whose influence stretched from Mukish on the Mediterranean coast to the city of Emar (modern Tell Meskene) on the banks of the northern Euphrates. For a brief period in the seventeenth century the Hittites seized control of Halab, but their domination was soon overthrown and Syrian life returned to the status quo. Other large, cosmopolitan cities in Syria included the above-mentioned Mari (modern Tell

Hariri) at the border between Syria and Mesopotamia on the Euphrates, the northern city of Carchemish which was to play a significant role in Hittite history, Qatna (Tell Mishrife) on the Orontes River, and Ugarit (Ras Shamra and its port at Minet el-Beida) on the northern coast. Although the majority of the populations of these cities, as in all the preindustrial world, was primarily engaged in agriculture, affluence and elitism emerged through control of trade routes between Mesopotamia, the coast, and the corridor between Egypt and Anatolia. The royal families of these city-states intermarried, forged and broke alliances, and vied with each other for control of the best access to trade.

The population of Middle Bronze Age Syria consisted of a mixture of Canaanites and Amorites (both speakers of Semitic languages), Indo-European-speaking Hittites from Anatolia, and Hurrians, the people who founded the Mitanni Empire spreading from northern Syria to Mesopotamia. In addition to the urban populations were more nomadic tribal groups, such as the Banu-Yamina, who migrated annually amongst the various states and engaged in their own small-scale trade.

To the south, Palestine was also divided into a series of relatively smaller city-states, of which the largest was the city of Hazor. Of all the southern states, only Hazor was politically significant enough to be mentioned in the correspondence of Mari. More data on these political entities appeared in the 12th-Dynasty Egyptian *Execration Texts*, where the Egyptians basically cursed what they perceived to be their enemies. Palestinian cities mentioned in these lists include Akko, Aphek, Ashkalon, Hazor, Rehov, and Shechem. Minor military conflicts with Egypt are apparent at this time in the southern Levant, although the greater emphasis seems to have been on peaceful trade.

This focus changed in the Egyptian Second Intermediate Period, when peoples from the southern Levant, called the Hyksos in the Egyptian records, seized control of Lower Egypt and ruled there for approximate 150 years from their capital at Avaris, modern Tell el-Dab'a. Although traumatic for Egypt, the period proved to be one of prosperity for Palestine.

Late Bronze Age

At the local level, no great changes marked the transition from the Middle to the Late Bronze Age in the Levant. The significant cities remained significant, and the standard trade routes remained in place.

Instead, the hallmark of the Late Bronze Age along the eastern Mediterranean is the complete control of this area by foreign powers—Mitanni and then Hatti to the North, Egypt to the south. To the south, the founders of the 18th Dynasty, Ahmose and Kamose, drove out the last remnants of the Hyksos and returned Egypt to indigenous rule. A century later, Pharaoh Thutmose III led a campaign into the Levant and conquered territory up into Syria, with the northernmost boundary of Egyptian hegemony being the city of Qadeš. For the next four centuries, southern and central Levant was dominated by Egypt. To the north, Syria was conquered first by the Mitanni Empire, and then came under the rule of the Hittites. In general, the superpowers to the north and south controlled the foreign policy and foreign trade of their vassals. In other respects, though, they left the local political apparatus in place, including the ruling families. The kings of, say, Ugarit were recognized as “sons” to their paternal overlords in Hatti, while the superpowers of the day (Hatti, Egypt, Babylon, eventually Assyria, Cyprus, and even the western state of Aḥḥiyawa/Greece) addressed each other as “brother.” So there was a hierarchy of political power, with the Kings of Hatti and Egypt in control of the Levant, while the individual city-states continued to exist under local, if not independent, rule.

This period of foreign domination was good for the Levantine economy. There was a relative peace, and tribute-desiring overlords were anxious that their underlings should thrive economically. The coastal cities of Ugarit and Byblos provided luxury goods for the great powers and oversaw an extensive trade in commodities ranging from grain (especially as sent from the Levant to Anatolia) to precious ivory carvings and purple textiles. Multi-cultural mingling was definitely the norm in the larger cities, such as Ugarit, where the prosopography reveals a population of native Canaanites, Hurrians, Hittites, Cypriots, and even Egyptians. Borders were relatively stable, with a final confrontation between Hatti and Egypt over control of Qadeš occurring in the early thirteenth century. Both sides claimed victory, although Hatti actually won, thus preserving the status quo.

As in the Middle Bronze Age, in addition to the city-dwellers were the nomadic folk who roamed the uninhabited areas. One notable such group was the Ḫapiru (Ḫabiru, ‘Apiru), who are mentioned in numerous texts from the fourteenth-century archives at Tell el-Amarna in Egypt (the short-lived capital of Egypt under the “heretic” Pharaoh Akhenaten). This body of out-laws and refugees wreaked havoc on the settled communities and kingdoms of the Levant, and many local rulers complained to Egypt, requesting, begging, and demanding that the Pharaoh’s justice deal with this group of brigands. There has been,

of course, considerable speculation as to how these Hapiru may or may not be related to the Hebrews.

Iron Age

At the dawn of the twelfth century, the Levant experienced the same cataclysm as did the rest of the ancient world. Hatti fell and left a power vacuum in Syria. To the south, Egypt survived the debacle by shrinking in its borders and thus abandoning Palestine. Ugarit was completely destroyed. According to the Egyptian texts, the eastern Mediterranean was savaged by “Peoples of the Sea,” pirates, marauders, and potential mercenaries bearing names such as the Denyen and Ekhweš (Danaans and Akhaians?), the Tjeker and Šekeleš (Teukrians and Sicels?), and, most importantly for Palestine, the Peleset, known locally as the Philistines. These Philistines bore traces of Aegean culture in their pottery and panoplies, and probably came to Palestine (derived from the name Philistine) by way of Cyprus, Libya, and Egypt. There they founded the Philistine Pentapolis—Ekron, Gath, Gaza, Ashdod, and Ashkelon, culturally merged with the local, Canaanite population, and ruled the coast as a thorn in the side of Israel during the Iron Age.

The Levant survived, but was mostly in shambles. The Iron Age I period from 1200 to 1000 was a period of extreme decline providing little archaeological data. Iron Age II begins with the reappearance of texts and a greater prospering of archaeological data. In Palestine, in addition to the rise of the Philistine cities, the tribes that inhabited the region coalesced into the states of Israel, with its capital at Tirzah, then Samaria, to the north and Judah—rather smaller—to the south. Although the Hebrew scriptures provide the names of kings of Israel dating back to the mid-tenth century (or earlier, if one includes Saul, David, and Solomon in this reckoning), Israel reached its political apogee in the ninth century under the Omrid Dynasty—Omri (886–875) and his son Ahab (875–854). At this time, Israel was deemed one of the strongest military powers in the area, enough that Syrian Damascus sought their alliance in an attempt to throw off the growing menace of Assyria. A text known as the “Kurkh Monolith” in Mesopotamia records that Ahab contributed 2,000 chariots and 10,000 men to the coalition against Assyria, more chariots than any other member of the alliance that included Damascus, Byblos, and Phoenician Arvad. By contrast, Judah with its capital at Jerusalem was a small, insignificant state. This changed considerably in the late eighth century when both Syria and Israel fell to the Assyrians. In 732, after a two-year siege, Damascus fell to King Tiglath-pileser III, who

massacred and deported what remained of its citizens. This same fate awaited Israel, which was destroyed in 721 by Sargon II. The Israelite population was deported eastward, a new population from Babylon and the Zagros mountain area was sent in their place, the oft degraded “Samaritans” of biblical infamy.

Judah survived under the shadow of Assyria, as did the conquered cities of Syria. But after the Neo-Babylonians had replaced the Assyrians, Judah chose to rely on Egypt to back its bid to throw off Mesopotamian domination. Egypt proved to be a lackluster ally, and in 586 the Babylonians conquered Judah and deported its population to Mesopotamia—the Babylonian Captivity. The Judeans were released only under the auspices of Persia in 538, when they were permitted to return home to rebuild the land of Israel-Judah. The Levant remained under Persian domination until the arrival of Alexander the Great in the fourth century.

PHOENICIAN AND PUNIC WORLD

Chronology

c.1000 BCE	Burial of King Ahiiram of Byblos, first major inscription in the (Phoenician) alphabet
969–936	Reign of king Hiram I of Tyre (ally of Solomon)
814	Legendary foundation date of Carthage
8th–7th centuries	Phoenician colonization of western and central Mediterranean (Sardinia, Sicily, Malta) including shores of North Africa
586–573	Siege, conquest of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon; Phoenician kingdoms lose foreign provinces which will be acquired by Carthage
5th–4th centuries	Carthaginian conflicts with Greek settlements in Sicily
264–241	First Punic War
241–238	Mercenaries' War
237	Sardinia annexed by Rome
237–229	Hamilcar Barca establishes Barcid protectorate in Spain
221	Hannibal Barca succeeds to command of Punic army; 218–202 Second Punic War begins with catastrophic battles in Italy, ends with defeat of Hannibal at Zama
150–146	Rome declares Third Punic War; complete destruction of city of Carthage
29	Augustus orders foundation of new city on site of Carthage

Introduction

Shortly before the end of the second millennium BCE, Phoenician kingdoms were in operation along the shores of the Levant, including Tyre, Sidon, Byblos, Beirut and Arvad. Building on their Canaanite ancestors' technological, artistic, and commercial developments, they

were in a unique position to create a network of exchange and settlement linking the Mediterranean littoral with the Levant, North Africa, Anatolia, and the Near East, and parts of Europe. (Sites such as Sarepta, Kamid-el-Loz, and Tyre have furnished evidence of the evolution of Canaanites into Phoenicians in the region of modern Lebanon, Syria, and northern Israel.) One of the major developments was the invention of the Phoenician alphabet, the basis for alphabets in Greece, Etruria, Rome, and beyond.

Phoenician voyages of trade and discovery began during the ninth century, to judge from archaeological evidence of settlements and distributed trade goods, with Huelva in Atlantic Iberia already a trading center drawing residents from Italy and Sardinia. Recent archaeological discoveries support the traditional ninth-century date for the founding of *Kart-hadasht*, Carthage (“New City”), which from its origin was a bustling commercial center, producing and transporting goods all over the Mediterranean and into North Africa. Carthage, admired by Aristotle for its treaty of commerce and mutual aid with the Etruscans, soon incurred the enmity of Rome, which, after becoming a republic (509 BCE), had to conclude a series of unfavorable treaties, leading to the Punic Wars and the ultimate destruction of the metropolis. The heritage of Phoenicia and its heir Carthage have yet to be fully appreciated, although the alphabet, glass technology, even businessmen’s white shirts (the *chiton*, or linen tunic that was a Phoenician merchant’s uniform) are samples of their legacy. The practice of infant sacrifice, still in process of analysis by modern scholars, has been misrepresented through the filter of Classical authors, casting misunderstanding on their piety and religious cults.

Further reading

The Levant—Bronze and Early Iron Ages

- Cline, E. H. (2009) *Biblical Archaeology: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Kuhrt, A. (1995) *The Ancient Near East c. 3000–330 BC*. London: Routledge Press.
- Lemche, N. P. (1995) This history of Ancient Syria and Palestine: An overview. In J. Sasson (ed.) *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, volume 2. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, pp. 1195–1218.

Phoenicia, Carthage and the Punic World

- Aubet, M. E. (2001) *The Phoenicians and the West: Politics, Colonies and Trade* (trans. M. Turton). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, second edition.
- Harrison, R. J. (1988) *Spain at the Dawn of History: Iberians, Phoenicians and Greeks*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Hoyos, D. (2010) *The Carthaginians*. London: Routledge, 2010.
- Lancel, S. (1995) *Carthage: A History* (trans. A. Nevill). Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell.
- Markoe, G. E. (2005) *Phoenicians*. London: British Museum.
- Miles, R. (2010) *Carthage Must Be Destroyed: The Rise and Fall of an Ancient Civilization*. New York: Penguin Books.

FUNCTIONS AND PERSONALITIES OF “SYRIAN” PRIESTESSES IN THE BRONZE AGE

Priestesses at Mari, Emar, and Ugarit

Patrick M. Michel

Syrian Bronze Age priestesses are mainly known through the texts from Mari, Emar, and Ugarit. Four types of written sources are available to us: law codes, letters, administrative texts, and ritual texts. The archives of Mari and those of the Great Diviner at Emar are especially rich and allow us to draw some general conclusions about the status and role of their women in society between 1800 and 1200 BCE. Many sacerdotal titles are attested in these texts: *ugbabtum*, *nadîtum*, *qammatum*, *entum* (EREŠ.DINGIR), *maš’artum*, *qadišum*.

But what do we understand by the term “priestess”? The current definition of “priest” or “priestess” does not do justice to the role of their functions in the civilizations of the ancient Near East. It is more judicious to speak of personnel, temple servitors with responsibilities religious, administrative, or domestic. Amongst the priestesses, we can thus distinguish between those who lived as votaries in the service of the temple, and those who were thought to be the wives of the deity, with different positions in the hierarchies of the temples and sanctuaries.

What especially distinguishes these women is, on the one hand, the deity or temple to which they were attached, and on the other, the rights they did or did not have to marry, bear children, or to own or manage property. The living conditions of these different priestesses varied according to the prerogative ties to their professions and functions in the temple milieu.

We must also remain cognizant that certain sacerdotal functions were attested very early in the documentation from Mesopotamia, without entirely corresponding to the scenario at the end of the Bronze Age in the cities of, for example, Emar or Ugarit. We thus offer first a general presentation and synthesis of the various priesthoods attested for women before concentrating specifically on the status and role of some priestesses attested in Mari, Emar, and Ugarit.

The priestesses

Very frequently, these women were offered to the temple by their fathers. Generally speaking, they were members of the upper classes, including the royal household. (See also Gadotti, this volume.)

Ugbabtum:¹ (Sumerian EREŠ.DINGIR). Her status prohibited her from marriage. We know primarily about her economic activities as preserved in the extant texts. Such priestesses were dedicated to the god Zababa in the city of Kiš, and to Šamaš (the sun god) in the cities of Sippar and Nippur.

Nadîtum:² (Sumerian LUKUR;³ “fallow (childless) woman”; the text *Proto-Lu* gives the problematic equivalent *qadištum*⁴). This priestess could marry, but was not permitted to bear children—she had to remain chaste. However, she could adopt, and she could own her own property. She is not seen as a priestess per se, but rather a votary consecrated to the city deity, such as Šamaš at Sippar. Some temples had dozens, even hundreds of *nadîtū*. They lived in a specified quarter of the sanctuary called the *gagûm*, where each had her own domicile.

Qammatum: More than a priestess, the *qammatum* was possibly a prophetess. The title is only attested three times in the cuneiform documentation, and it is difficult to provide an etymology. It is possible to consider her a temple functionary like the *muḫḫûtum* (from *mahû* “to become frenzied, go into a trance,” an ecstatic prophetess, attested at Mari) who gave occasional prophesies.⁵

Entum: (Sumerian EREŠ.DINGIR; the Sumerian word is also used of the *ugbabtum*, whose status was nevertheless inferior: YOS X 38 r. 11). The term *entu*, attested at least since the Ur III period, disappears from the Old Babylonian documents, but is preserved at Nippur and Ur in the Middle Babylonian period and is reintroduced at Ur by Nabonidus. One also finds the title in Hurrian Nuzi and in the Hittite texts from Boğazköy, as well as at Emar in the Late Bronze Age. She is a high-ranking priestess who has made a vow of chastity. She is most

assuredly a member of the social elite. She was set at the head of the temple administration and was considered to be the god's wife. We shall consider especially the *entu*-priestess at Emar.⁶

Maš'artum:⁷ The etymology of this title is difficult to determine (see below). She is attested at Ebla from the third millennium on in clearly religious contexts, and later at Emar in the thirteenth century.

Qadištum: (Sumerian NU.GIG). Her status in Mesopotamia is difficult to define. The word is also attested in Hebrew in the form *qedešah*, designating a consecrated woman, although one of inferior rank. She could marry and have children, contrary to the *nadītum*. She is attested in the Old Babylonian period and in the texts from Mari. There continues a debate on the status of the priestess: chaste or not, mother, nurse, or prostitute. Outside of the text *ana ittišu* iii 7–10,⁸ there is no evidence that these women were prostitutes.

Priestesses at Mari

At Mari, priestesshoods were reserved for the social elite (Batto 1974: 79–92, 118ff.). The prestige associated with these functions was such that the women's correspondence from the royal archives at Mari mentions the rivalries associated with the priestesshoods (Dossin 1978; Bonnetterre 2014: note 60). In general, it was the priestess's father, often the king, who consecrated his daughter. Such is the case with Samsî-Addu, who made one of his daughters—Kunšîm-Mâtum—priestess of Dagan at Terqa (MARI 4, 1985, 389–390, 397–398). At Mari, as noted by Bonnetterre (Bonnetterre 2014: note 7), women played a primary role “in the functioning of the phenomenon of prophecy.” It was they, belonging to the royal court of the Mari palace, who transmitted oracles to the king. The women's correspondence from the royal archives at Mari preserves several letters that attest to the role of these women. Beyond the Mari palace, Terqa was also a religious center where women prophesied. We know this from a *qammatum*-priestess who came from Terqa to Mari in order to transmit her prophecy; unfortunately, the king was away (ARM 26/1 199).

Amongst the women of the royal household who participated in the prophetic function, we might also note Queen Šiptu of Mari. Jean-Marie Durand has mentioned on this topic:

The queen-mother or queen Šiptu and the priestess Inib-Šina had a particular rapport with the sacred realm. Either the queen-mother or the royal consort was, at Mari, the person commanded by the king to perform sacrifices, at least

in his absence.

The queen could commence a letter by taking on the governor's standard formula, including the temples in his domain. If Inib-Šina, priestess and sister of Zimrî-Lîm (king of Mari in the Old Babylonian period), transmitted prophesies, this was not the case for Lady Kunšîm-Mâtum, sister of Yasmah-Addu and cultic head of the realm. This may reflect a religious distinction between Akkadian and Bedouin religiosities.⁹

The *ugbabtum* Inib-Šina, sister of King Zimrî-Lîm (Sasson 1994: 299–316) was consecrated to the storm god Addu (DAM dĪŠKUR = “wife of Adad”), while his daughter Erišti-Aya was installed as a *naditu*-priestess in the temple of Šamaš and Aya at Sippar. Still under Zimrî-Lîm, a priestess was also installed in the cult of the goddess Annunîtum (YOS X.59.3’–4’).

Priestesses at Emar

Dating to the end of the Late Bronze Age, the texts from Emar are an extraordinary source for the study of religion west of Mesopotamia. Two rituals have come down to us which shed light both on the ritual practices associated with the installation of priestesses and on the roles of these priestesses in society. The first ritual pertains to the *entu*-priestess of Baal; the second is an installation ritual for the *maš’artu*, apparently consecrated to Ištar in her military guise.

The installation ceremony of the Entu: Emar 369

This ceremony takes place after the death of an *entu*-priestess and allows for the consecration of a new priestess to the storm god, Baal. The ritual takes place after the fashion of a wedding between the deity and his priestess (a *hieros gamos*, although there are no sexual aspects to the ritual) (Emar 369: 52; see also Fleming 1992: 76, 191 and Schwemer 2001: 556–558). Baal, however, plays no active role in the ceremony—his statue is neither moved nor adorned. His temple is the center of the cultic activities, and thus the send-off and end-point of the various processions, but it provides none of the commodities used in the ritual, even if it is the location where both sacrifices and banquets take place (Emar 369: 13, 59A).

The choice of priestess is made by Baal himself by means of an oracular interrogation in his temple that reveals his will. The priestess may thus be considered the earthly spouse of the deity, who also has a divine consort: Ḫēbat (Queen goddess of the Hurrians, consort of the Hurrian storm god, Teššub, attesting to the strong Anatolian influence

in this region of Syria).

This consort is the focus of specific rites during the ritual. One notes that Ḫebat's baetyl (standing stone) is anointed with oil by the priestess. Then, the priestess herself is anointed in similar fashion. This establishes a strong link between the heavenly spouse and her earthly cognate. Each one receives the unction: the *entu*-priestess by the Great Diviner and Ḫebat's baetyl by the priestess.

The passivity of the god Baal may be surprising, but D. E. Fleming explains this passivity by arguing that “[p]erhaps it is appropriate for the great god to remain in royal state in his court while provision is made for his marriage to the human priestess” (Fleming 1992: 71).

Below I give a summary of this ritual that enumerates, day by day, the different steps of the installation. For a full transliteration, translation, and commentary, see Fleming 1992: 9–59.

Death of an EREŠ.DINGIR

Day of Selection

Revealing of the chosen priestess.

Anointing of the chosen priestess.

Offerings to Baal.

Payment to the diviner (lúḪAL).

Preparation for the consecration ceremony of the next day.

Day of Consecration (*qaddušu*)

Shaving of the head (*gallubu*).

Sacrificial procession with songs and emblems, ending at the temple of Baal.

Payment to the diviner (lúḪAL).

Offerings and feast (*kubadu*).

Before nightfall, the lúḪAL anoints the head of the EREŠ.DINGIR at the door of the Baal's temple.

Night: return to the paternal household.

Qaddušu ceremony for installation.

Installation (*malluku*)

They bed ^dNIN.KUR [a goddess prominent in Emar] in the paternal household of the EREŠ.DINGIR, dressed in a red garment.

Sacrificial procession with songs and emblems, ending at the temple of Baal.

Lamb sacrificed at the baetyl (*sikkānu*) of Ḫebat.

Anointing by the EREŠ.DINGIR of the top (SAG) of Ḫebat's baetyl.

Offerings and feast.

Before nightfall, installation: the priestess is adorned with jewels and red garments.

Payment to the diviner (^{lú}ḪAL).

Night: return to the paternal household upon the shoulders of her brothers.

For seven days: a feast (*šukultu*) at the house of the EREŠ.DINGIR with the new priestess, which takes place in the paternal household.

Final Day

Return of the red garments to the temple of ^dNIN.KUR.

They raise ^dNIN.KUR from her bed, her mourning is complete.

Before nightfall, final departure of the priestess from her father's house.

She leaves the house like a fiancée.

Final procession with songs and emblems terminated at the temple of Baal.

That Night:

Visit to the double sanctuary at the summit, with offerings.

Preparations of the nuptial chamber and bed.

Song to Hulelu.

The priestess goes to bed.

Various commentaries and arrangements, parts assigned to participants in the rite and arrangements in case of the death of the priestess.

The ritual lasted close to nine days according to Fleming (1992: 63), but D. Arnaud has suggested that it was actually only eight days (Arnaud 1974–1975: 144).

Although one might be sure that this celebration included prayers, speeches, and even songs, the content of any of these does not appear in the ritual text as preserved, neither do we even know the text's *incipit*.¹⁰ It was not a liturgical text per se, but more likely a text redacted by one of the functionaries involved in response to organizational matters. One might think of the Diviner—^{lú}HAL—for example. He lived in structure M1, discovered in the lower city of Emar and containing numerous texts including this ritual of installation. The Diviner was one of the most important functionaries in this ritual and was paid repeatedly during its performance: “They will place 10 shekels into the hand of the Diviner in the form of a roll of silver” (Emar 369: 43).

The Diviner was likewise present at numerous religious enactments at Emar, and several prescriptions indicated in the above ritual suggest that it was at least in part to assure his own interests that he redacted such a text. It was on him to anoint the priestess (twice), but also to choose her through divination. He was compensated for each of his actions.

The use of the veil

At the moment she leaves her father's house, the EREŠ.DINGIR priestess of Baal is veiled. This occurs on the last day of the ritual (Emar 369: 60–64).

To put this another way, at the moment of leaving, her face is covered with a red fabric that belongs to the temple of ^dNIN.KUR. On the first day of the ritual, ^dNIN.KUR herself was covered with a veil when she appeared in the priestess's father's home. It is likely that this was the same veil that was used by the priestess at the moment of her

final procession to the temple of Baal.

Covered by a veil, acting during the night—visibility is clearly at issue. If the notion of a wedding is in play in the ritual of the EREŠ.DINGIR, perhaps we should understand that the veil she wears is a bridal attribute, but with greater meaning considering the relationship that exists between the god and his future priestess. She veils herself before the installation ceremony is completed, so she can no longer set eyes upon her “spouse.” Furthermore, insofar as the ritual is not yet completed, the priestess-to-be cannot enter into the temple and may not yet carry the divine axe. It is only at the end of the ceremony that the *entu* may act alone and unveiled. The veil thus marks a barrier between the profane and the sacred. It is the manifestation of this separation between the not-yet-inducted priestess and the temple where she will reside as its priestess.

The installation ceremony of the Mašartu (Emar 370)

This ritual deals with the installation of the priestess responsible for the cult of Ašart (d^{IN}ANNA), and its composition emphasizes different aspects of the celebration. If the consecration (*qaddušu*) only lasts a single day, the celebration takes seven. Furthermore, each day was dedicated to a temple in the city. They visited several deities in succession, each in his or her own temple, as well as the house of the priestess (Fleming 1992: 79; Emar 370: 45–68). Amongst the deities cited are Baal, Ninurta, Dagan, and Ea.

Précis of the ritual (D’Agostino and Seminara 1997: 13–14):

Day 1: Day of consecration (*quddušu*)

Various offerings

Procession to the house of the chosen one’s father.

Dispersal of the offerings; the crier is present.

That night: they place a bed and a chair for the priestess (?).

They set a red cloth upon the bed (Emar 370: 17; Fleming 1992: 171–172).

Presence of the elders and potentates of the city.

Day 2: First day of the installation (*malluku*)

They have Warrior ^dINANNA enter into the house of the *maš'artu*

Burning of incense (?).

Dispersal of the offerings for seven days.

Offerings not eaten immediately (are covered by a cloth).

Eating and drinking.

Presence of the *Entu* of ^dIM [= Baal] and the previous *maš'artu*.

Distribution of the sacrificial meat.

Offerings to all the deities.

Day 3: Second day of the installation

They set a baetyl upon the roof of the structure.

That night: with singing they sacrifice to the baetyl a goat and cedar oil.

When the sun rises: sacrifices and offerings in the temple of Dagan [grain god].

Day 4: Third day of the installation

Sacrifices and offerings at the temple of Baal.

Day 5: Fourth day of the installation

Sacrifices and offerings in the temple of Ninurta.

Several men from the neighboring towns (Buzqa) reside and celebrate in the temples of Baal and Ninurta for two days.

Day 6: Fifth day of the installation

Sacrifices and offerings to the deities at the "Gate of Dagan."

Day 7: Sixth day of the installation

Sacrifices and offerings at the temple of Ea.

Day 8: Seventh day of the installation

They sacrifice a sheep upon the roof of the *maš'artu*'s house.

When the sun rises: offerings to ^dINANNA.

They fill cups of wine.

They set offerings before the deities.

Mock combats in the courts of the priestess's house.

Before nightfall: offerings to Baal.

Procession to the temple of Ea.

The priestess says: "I wish to pour water for the bath of my lady Aštar."

She adorns herself.

Veneration and homage given to the priestess.

She takes her place upon her throne (*kissu* festival?).

Various commentaries and arrangements.

The enactment of the installation of the *maš'artu* priestess differs from that of the *entu*. As Fleming noted, the installation rite of the EREŠ.DINGIR reflects a Mesopotamian tradition while that of the *maš'artu* was specific to Emar and reflected a local tradition. This also explains why the priestess's title is not known from Akkadian sources:

Other differences respect the separate traditions of the NIN.DINGIR (sic. EREŠ.DINGIR) and the *maš'artu* roles. The first comes from Mesopotamia, though the institution appears to be deeply rooted in Syrian culture by the Late Bronze Age. The second does not have any discernible Mesopotamian connection, and appears to function within a separate world of concern for military success.

(Fleming 1992: 228)

If we briefly compare the two rituals, we note that on the second day of the ritual for the *maš'artu*, a crier/mourner enters the future priestess's house, possibly reflecting the image of ^dNIN.KUR who entered the house of the EREŠ.DINGIR. At the moment of consecration, a

bed is set up with a chair, so as to signify the furnishing of the room, and the text mentions the bearing of a red cloth; fabric also attested in the previous ritual. But the comparison breaks down after these initial observations. Furthermore, the installation of the *maš'artu* is more simply described, and the text offers few details in comparison to that of the installation of the *entu*. The most interesting moment takes place on the night of the second day of the installation, when the baetyl is set on the rooftop (Emar 370: 41). One might legitimately think that this structure is the house of the *maš'artu*, as it is upon this roof where offerings are made to ^dINANNA on the seventh day.

Concerning the priestess's title

"*Maš'artu*" appears very rarely in the cuneiform documentation, and its etymology is disputed. The word is attested at Ebla (twenty-fourth to twenty-third centuries BCE) and at Emar (thirteenth century) exclusively, assuming that it is not also attested in an Old Assyrian document in the form *maš'ertu*.¹¹ This document is a letter written by Aššur-muttabbil, an Assyrian merchant, to his wife, Kunnaniya, who resided in Kaniš (Kültepe) while he himself traveled. Aššur-muttabbil sends tin and cloth from Aššur to his wife while she sends him local products such as oil. When her husband is absent, it is she who manages the household (Michel 1997: 246–247). Amongst various recommendations, Aššur-muttabbil often asks his wife to take care of Šat-Aššur, a young woman of unknown identity. Aššur-muttabbil's concern in this matter must have been considerable to judge from the multiple requests he made of his wife. Amongst the suggestions he made, he claimed that Kunnaniya should buy a sheep, which would allow for *maš'ertu*.¹²

The term has been translated as "reserved meat" (Michel 1997), following the interpretation of K. Hecker "Fleischvorrat" (1990: n. 139, 113), which goes back to the word *širum* (*ši'ru*) "meat." Another etymological approach may be considered, however: one might link *maš'ertu* with the Hebrew *š'r* "remain/subsist." The term *maš'ertu* would in this case be "that which remains." However, the translation "remaining food" is unlikely and would have been expressed with words such as *riḫtum* or *šittim*. A closer approximation would be "what remains." Thus we might translate that final line as "Buy a sheep so that it might remain as subsistence for the girl." This etymology would thus make the priestess of Emar she who *remains* in a hypostatic relationship with the goddess: she is the goddess's representative in the temple.

On the status of the *Mašartu*

The social status of this priestess at Emar was so important that the administrative documents make mention of the “sons of the *mašartu*” in the testimony lists of the legal texts (D’Agostino and Seminara 1997: 11ff.). From this, we know that the sons of the priestesses gave their filiation through their mother and not through their father. And this practice is attested for other males in the priestess’s family, notably her brothers:

Emar 124: IGI ^mZu-An-na ṽLÚṽ qa-ba-ru DUMU *maš-ar-ti*

Witness: Zu-Anna, the grave-digger, son of the *mašartu*.

Emar 209 (on a seal): NA₄.KIŠIB ^mHi-ma-ši-^dKUR ŠEŠ ṽ*maš-ar-ti*

Seal of Himaši-Dagan, brother of the *mašartu*.

At Emar, the *entu* and *mašartu* priestesses enjoyed a privileged status, and they maintained between them relations revealed in the ritual texts.¹³ In the two known rituals of installation above (Emar 369, ll. 16–17, 55–58; Emar 370 ll. 33’–35’), a place is reserved for the other priestess, along with offerings and culinary bounty. Thus, during the installation of the *entu* of Baal, the *mašartu* receives sacrificial meat. Likewise during the installation of the *mašartu*, who reserves a portion for her colleague the *entu* of Baal. In the *kissu* ritual for Dagan, the *mašartu* priestess from Emar immediately followed two *entu*-priestesses: the *entu* of Dagan from the town of Šumi and Dagan’s *entu* from the town of Šatapu. Let us emphasize that, in Emar, the status of the *entu* was tied to a social group bearing the title “Sons of Emar” (Emar 369: 3). Not a member of the royal family,¹⁴ she was a member of one of the great clans of the city. These women dominated the management of the important urban temples and enjoyed the privilege of receiving sacrificial portions that were reserved specifically for them. In addition, the acquisition of the priestesshood provided a considerable prestige to their respective families, which their family members rarely forgot to highlight during commercial transactions or when appearing as witnesses in court.

Between Syria and Anatolia¹⁵

In the Hittite world, the most ancient titles attested for priestesses do not appear in the Sumer-Akkadian title lists: the SANGA priestess and the AMA.DINGIR priestess. However, an EREŠ.DINGIR is attested in the Hittite corpora. While various *entus* are attested both at Emar and in

some neighboring sanctuaries, amongst the Hittite the *EREŠ.DINGIR* is unique. A single priestess is attested once, unnamed. There are two primary distinctions between these two homonymous functionaries: in Hittite Anatolia the priestess is not connected to the cult of a single god, and she is a member of the royal family.¹⁶ One sees members of the royal family next to her for the *AN.TAḫ.ŠUM* celebration or the festival of the autumn *nuntarriyašḫa*. Furthermore, she typically rides upon a chariot called *gišḫuluganni*, a chariot known for being a symbol of royalty (KBo XIX 128, Taggar-Cohen 2006: 320).

If the lexeme attested in the Hittite cuneiform texts is the same as the one attested in the Akkadian texts from Emar, the sumerogram was borrowed by the Hittites without reflecting the same reality or religious functions. certain similarities appear in the enactment of the installation of priests and priestesses at Emar and those in the Hittite religion, but these similarities are mainly structural.

Nevertheless, there was an *entu* of Kizzuwatna (name of an ancient Antolian kingdom in the second millennium BC, inhabited by the Hurrians at least since the beginning of the second millennium). She was probably closer to her cognate in Emar. We find in the Middle Hittite text KUB XL 2 an *entu*-priestess in charge of the cult of the Syrian goddess, Išḫara, side-by-side with a *SANGA* priest. Here, as at Emar, the priestess received various vestments and goods (dishware, precious objects), along with a bed. This bed recalls the installation ceremony at Emar, and the Emar priestess, like the Kizzuwantnean, was in charge of her temple, with the difference being that the *entu* at Emar functioned without a *SANGA* priest by her side.

In conclusion, the *entu*-priestesses of Emar and Kizzuwatna differed from the priestess in the Hittite texts, not reflecting the same realities or functions. The Syrian *entu* is a priestess with prerogatives deriving from Mesopotamia, while the Hittite *entu* is a priestess whose origins derive from the Hattic-Hittite tradition. The Hittites borrowed the title without necessarily borrowing the religious practices. (See also Collins, this volume.)

QDŠ/QDŠT: from Mesopotamia to Ugarit

The radicals *qdš*, which pertain to the notion of holiness, are attested at Ugarit, particularly in the administrative lists, often next to the *khnm* (Hebrew *kohenim* = male priests).¹⁷ J.-M. de Tarragon (1980: 141) defined the *qdšm* as, “members of the administrative personnel of the temple . . . Their title *qdš* comes more from the common noun

designating the sanctuary qds/mqds, than a personal creation.”

The Code of Hammurapi (§181) mentions the *qadištu* side-by-side with two other cult functionaries: the *nadîtu* and the *kulmašîtu*. In the Old Babylonian corpus, the *qadištu* is associated with childbirth (Ho Chung 2010: 159–160; Westenholz 1989: 245–265) which we see in the creation epic *Atraḥasis*, and nursing (VAS 7 19: 1–3; 37: 13–17). But she is also associated with magic. Note that a Middle Assyrian text (KAR 154) records a ritual performed by a *qadištu* accompanied by a SANGA priest. She is also associated with rites of purification (Gruber 1986: 141). If the range of her activities is large, nothing bespeaks a connection with the cult of Ištar like an accusation of cultic prostitution (Gruber 1986: 146). Quite to the contrary, the Ugaritic texts show that the male *qdš* is a singer (KTU 1.112), who may marry and have children, while the feminine *qdšt* is attested in personal names (KTU 4.69).¹⁸ M. Smith also noted in this regard:

[s]cholars have incorrectly imputed a cultic background to biblical Hebrew *qēdēšāh*, “prostitute” (Gen. 38:21–22; Deut. 23:18 [LXX 17]; Hos. 4:14), and a sexual meaning to its cognates, Ugaritic *qdšt* and Akkadian *qadištu*. In this way, BH *qēdēšāh* and its cognates have been viewed as terms for cultic prostitutes. Based on his examination of the extant evidence, Gruber (1986) concludes, on the contrary, that BH *qēdēšāh* refers to a (secular) prostitute, while its Ugaritic and Akkadian cognates refer to cultic functionaries whose roles do not include sexual activities.

(Smith 2002: 22)¹⁹

At Tell Munbaqa, certain administrative texts ending with ritual curse formulations indicate that a *qadištu*’s baetyl is set upon the roof of the house of a potential offender. The significance of such a baetyl in this context is difficult to understand, and the suggestion that it represents a funerary stele is unlikely.²⁰ Durand, no doubt inspired by M. Dietrich’s interpretation (Dietrich *et al.* 1989) read in the text *Munbaqa* 61 that the baetyl bore “the representation of death,”²¹ connecting the use of baetyls in curses with what we know about the use of “stele” *skn* at Ugarit. But a new reading of the document by L. Marti (2006: 56) negates any connection with the cult of the dead.

At Ugarit, religious praxis consisted of the maintenance of the deities through the service that was publicly rendered to them by humankind (RS 24.266). Men and women had need of addressing and invoking the deities through incantations (RS 88.2014) and prayers, but also through divination. For religious praxis, the king remained the intermediary par excellence, but there was a cultic personnel beside him. Preists are attested by the title *khn̄m*. We also know of the *kmrm*. Priestesses are rarely mentioned. Contrary to what existed in

Mari or Emar, the role of women in the religious lives of the west Semites seems restrained, even though temples for goddesses did exist (Dijkstra 2001: 181). Female cult functionaries were mainly attested by the title mentioned above—*qdšt*—and by the feminine form of *khn̄m*: *khnt*.

In the administrative documents of Ugarit, these female cult functionaries are virtually absent, and their feminine functions are likewise absent from the official lists of personnel deriving from the temples and the palace. If the king functioned as a priest, it is possible that the function of the *khnt* was taken on by the queen.

List of abbreviations

ARM = *Archives royales de Mari*.

CTMMA = *Cuneiform Texts in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*.

Emar = D. Arnaud. *Recherches au pays d'Aštata, Emar VI.e: texts sumériens et accadienes, texte*. Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1986.

KAR = E. Ebeling, *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts* I/II.

LAPO = *Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient*.

MARI = *Mari, Annales de recherches interdisciplinaires*.

RS = Ras Shamra.

VAS = *Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler*.

Notes

- 1 Renger 1967: 110ff. and 146ff. and Yczkowska 1986: 3–12.
- 2 See Barberon 2012 and Launderville 2010: 261ff.
- 3 For Sumerian cultic officiants, see Westenholz 2013: 245ff.; for LUKUR, especially 266ff.
- 4 Harris 1964: 106–135, especially 107, and Lambert 1992: 154.
- 5 Day 2010: 50ff. The limited number of sources makes study of this woman at the heart of the temple very problematic.
- 6 Fleming 1992.
- 7 D'Agostino and Seminara 1997.
- 8 *ana ittišu* iii 7–10 (trans. Westenholz 1989: 251):

Afterward he took a *qadištu* in from the street.

Because of his love for her, he married her even though she was a *qadištu*.

This *qadištu* took in a child from the street.

At the breast with human milk [she nursed him].

- 9 Durand 2011: 383.
- 10 The opening line which served as the text's title.
- 11 CTMMA 1 78a + b, LAPO 19: 496, n. 380: 31, see Michel 2014: 122–124.
- 12 The presence of the enclitic *-ma* allows us to link together the two elements of the letter. However, it is not clear if the sheep itself was the *maš'ertu* or if it permitted them to have one.
- 13 Emar 276: 6 which attests to a connection between *Entu*'s divine weapon and the *maš'art*; likewise Emar 286: 19'. These allow one to suggest that the priestesses shared certain cultic items. See also D'Agostino and Seminara 1997: 12.
- 14 Taggar-Cohen 2006: 318. The texts give no proper names to this effect.
- 15 See also Collins, this volume, on Anatolian cult functionaries.
- 16 Taggar-Cohen 2006: 319. This may be the king's daughter.
- 17 H. Rouillard-Bonraisin, "Religion du Proche-Orient sémitique ancien," *Annuaire de l'Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, section sciences religieuses*, Vol. 103, 1994–1995: 165.
- 18 Westenholz 1989: 249–250; see also Dijkstra 1999–2000: 81–89.
- 19 That the BH *qedešâ* is not a prostitute but a cult functionary, see Budin 2008: 33–47.
- 20 *Contra* Dietrich *et al.* 1989: 137.
- 21 I. 27: NA4 *sí-kan* NU *mi-tú*. DURAND 2005: 32.

References

- Arnaud, D. (1974–1975) Religion assyro-babylonienne. *Annuaire de l'Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Section des Sciences religieuses* 83: 139–146.
- Barberon, L. (2012) *Les Religieuses et le Culte de Marduk dans le Royaume de Babylone*. ARCHIBAB 1.
- Batto, B. F. (1974) *Studies on Women at Mari*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University.
- Bonneterre, D. (2014) Les deux bateaux du roi Zimrî-Lîm. In H. Neumann, R. Dittmann, S. Paulus, G. Neumann and A. Schuster-Brandis (eds) *Krieg und Frieden im Alten Vorderasien*. Münster, Germany: Ugarit Verlagn, pp. 133–147.
- Budin, S. (2008) *The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- D'Agostino, F. and Seminara, S. (1997) Sulla continuità del mondo

- culturale della Siria settentrionale: La “*Maš’artu*” ad Ebla ed Emar. *RA* 91: 1–20.
- Day, J. (ed.) (2010) *Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel*. Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar. The Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies. Oxford, UK: Bloomsbury T&T Clark.
- De Tarragon, J.-M. (1980) *Le Culte à Ugarit*. Paris: J. Gabalda.
- Dietrich, M., Loretz, O. and Mayer, W. (1989) Sikkatum “Betyle”. *UF* 21: 133–139.
- Dijkstra, M. (1999–2000) The list of *qdšm* in KTU 4.412 + .II.8ff. *Aula Orientalis* 17/18: 81–89.
- Dijkstra, M. (2001) Women and religion in the Old Testament. In B. Becking, M. Dijkstra, M. C. A. Korpel and K. J. H. Vriezen (eds) *Only One God? Monotheism in Ancient Israel and the Veneration of the Goddess Asherah*. Biblical Seminar 77. London: Sheffield Academic Press, pp. 164–188.
- Dossin, G. (1978) *Correspondance Féminine, Transcrite et Traduite*. Archives Royales de Mari Vol. X. Paris: Geuthner.
- Durand, J.-M. (2005) *Le Culte des Pierres et les Monuments Commémoratifs en Syrie Amorrite*. Paris. Mémoires de *Nabu* 9; FM VIII.
- Durand, J.-M. (2011) Les rois mésopotamiens et leurs prophètes. *Annuaire du Collège de France*, pp. 379–398.
- Fleming, D. E. (1992) *The Installation of Baal’s High Priestess at Emar: A Window on Ancient Syrian Religion*. Atlanta, GA. HSS 42.
- Gruber, M. (1986) Hebrew *qedēšāh* and her Canaanite and Akkadian cognates. *UF* 18: 133–148.
- Harris, R. (1964) The naditu woman. In R. D. Biggs and J. A. Brinkman (eds) *Studies Presented to L. Oppenheim*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, pp. 106–135.
- Hecker, K. (1990) Der aA Brief CTMMA 78. *Nabu*, 113.
- Ho Chung, Y. (2010) *The Sin of the Calf: The Rise of the Bible’s Negative Attitude toward the Golden Calf*. Oxford, UK: Bloomsbury T&T Clark.
- Lambert, W. G. (1992) Prostitution. *Xenia* 32: 127–161.
- Launderville, D. (2010) *celibacy in the Ancient World*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.
- Marti, L. (2006) Formules de malédictions à Munbâqa. *Nabu* 56.
- Michel, C. (1997) Les malheurs de Kunnaniya, femme de marchand. *Emin Bilgiç anı Kitabı* (mélanges Bilgiç). *ArAn* 3: 239–253.
- Michel, P. (2014) *Le Culte des Pierres à Emar à l’Époque Hittite*. Fribourg, Switzerland: Academic Press, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

- Renger, J. (1967) Untersuchungen zum Priestertum in der Altbabylonischen Zeit. *ZA* 58 (= *ZA NF* 24), pp. 110–188.
- Sasson, J. (1994) Letters with Divine Messages. In *Recueil d'Études à la Mémoire de M. Birot*, FM II. Paris, pp. 299–316.
- Schwemer, D. (2001) *Die Wettergottgestalten Mesopotamiens und Nordsyriens im Zeitalter der Keilschriftkulturen. Materialien und Studien nach den Schriftlichen Quellen*, Wiesbaden, Germany: Harrassowitz.
- Smith, M. S. (2002) *The Early History of God: Yahveh and Other Deities in Ancient Israel*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans.
- Taggar-Cohen, A. (2006) The NIN.DINGIR in the Hittite kingdom: A Mesopotamian priestly office in Hatt? *Altorientalische Forschungen* 33(2): 313–327.
- Von Soden, W. (1969) *Grundriß der Akkadischen Grammatik (GAG)*. *Analecta Orientalia* 33.
- Westenholz, J.-G. (1989) Tamar, Qedeša, Qadištu, and sacred prostitution in Mesopotamia. *HTR* 82: 245–265.
- Westenholz, J.-G. (2013) In the service of the gods: The ministering clergy. In H. Crawford (ed.) *The Sumerian World*. London: Routledge, pp. 245–274.
- Yczkowska, K. (1986) Les prêtresse *ugbaltum* dans la Babylonie ancienne. *Euhemer* 30(2): 3–12.

WOMEN'S DAILY LIVES IN LATE BRONZE AGE UGARIT (2ND MILLENNIUM BCE)

Marguerite Yon

The ancient name of *Ugarit* designated both a small Levantine kingdom located on the northern coast of the eastern Mediterranean and that kingdom's capital at Tell Ras Shamra, about one kilometer from the principle port of *Mahadu* (bay of Minet-el-Beida).¹ Excavation of the tell (since 1929) has revealed a nearly continuous occupation since the Neolithic, but the best-known phase is in the second half of the second millennium BCE (Late Bronze Age). The majority of the visible remains on the tell's surface date to this period, the site having been abandoned immediately thereafter. Here we recognize an agglomerative, organized urban center, with a defensive wall, royal palace, and temples, as well as streets accommodating houses of varying quality, in which lived a population whose lives and life-styles we are gradually coming to know better thanks to a corpus of archaeology and epigraphy that is exceptional in its variety and quality. Ugarit provides an important example of the societies which lived in the Mediterranean Levant in the Late Bronze Age, and its connections with neighboring civilizations or with biblical tradition make it a significant reference site.

In recent years, important anthropological studies have been done on women's status(es) and functions in the Ancient Near East,² especially as applied to the Mesopotamian textual data, or in relation to the Bible, and new studies are currently under way. Concerning Ugarit, the matter of women's daily lives is difficult to address, as documents pertaining specifically to this topic are rare. Furthermore, as is the case throughout the northern Levant in the Late Bronze Age, the topics addressed by the scribes responsible for our written evidence seldom focused on the female portion of the population.

Amongst the relatively varied texts discovered at Ugarit, those that

mention the presence or roles of women pertain either to the world of myth and divinity or to real women who belonged to the upper classes, mainly the royal family. Concerning iconography, most female images are in fact divine representations. Nevertheless, we might use these, with all necessary precautions, to derive some understanding of the women of Ugarit. Along with the textual and iconographic data, analysis of the architectural remains and the household goods will provide additional information in our attempt to understand aspects of the daily lives of women in the kingdom of Ugarit during this period.

Status

We would love to know what stations a woman could hold in public life and society, and what possibilities were open to her. C. Schaeffer and J. Nougeyrol believed that the women of Ugarit enjoyed an “enviable legal status,”³ an idea also expressed in the following: “Women had a surprising amount of autonomy and freedom. The society was patriarchal but not restrictive.”⁴ Nevertheless, this independence had its limits. Lacking data on the status of ordinary Ugaritic women, certain literary examples or references to the royal family may provide some enlightenment.

Daughters lived in their fathers’ households until marriage, just as the daughters of the storm god Baal had to remain in the paternal household.⁵ Marriage was arranged by the father.⁶ Once married, girls lived in their husband’s home. Polygamy existed (even if the documents we have do not speak of it explicitly), as was also the case in the royal family, and different wives held different ranks.⁷ When marrying, the wife arrived with a dowry that remained her personal property. Thus, an administrative text describes the considerable trousseau of Queen Ahatmilku, daughter of the king of Amurru,⁸ when she married King Niqmepa of Ugarit in c.1250.⁹ This list does not read like some faerie tale or romance, but an objective inventory keeping track of jewelry and gold dishware, clothing and fine textiles (wool, linen), furniture (beds, stools, etc.) in boxwood or ebony, inlaid with lapis lazuli or gold, or ivory plaques, containers and various objects in bronze, bottles of perfumed oil, small objects made of ivory, cosmetic containers, etc. Obviously, not all women had such vast and wealthy dowries of such precious materials, but the list is significant. Keeping a proper sense of scale, we might extend the dowry institution down to the women of the middle classes who lived in the city, as we see in the texts that pertain to the rights of the family. Thus a legal text—pertaining to an adoption that was regulated at the palace by the king—indicated that, if the father should die, the widow, “could leave the

house,” but if her son evicts her, “she will take back the 80 shekels of silver that she had brought.”¹⁰ At the lowest levels of society, the dowry no doubt consisted of some domestic necessities of a modest quality.

An aspect of a wife’s legal status appears in the marital affairs of King Ammištamru II (reigned c.1260–1230). His divorce appears in an important dossier of 14 documents from the archives of the royal palace, and it serves as a case study for the practice (Figure 31.1).¹¹ The king separated from the daughter of King Bentesina of Amurru. This wife was one of the spouses dubbed “The daughter of the Great Lady,” and she was accused of having committed a “great fault” against her husband—adultery or political intrigue perhaps; we do not know. Her name appears nowhere and she is never called by the title “Queen.” The entitled queen was probably an older wife or one of a superior ranking (?), or possibly even still the queen-mother Ahatmilku,¹² who seems to have played some role in the divorce. She also came from Amurru, and we see that these marriages formed close alliances within an exclusive royal “caste,” uniting the same royal families. But we cannot know if such endogamy might be extrapolated to the society at large.

In this instance, the repudiation implicated the royal succession, as the son, Urhi-Šaruma, was the designated heir. The verdict gave him the opportunity of going with his mother and thus renouncing the throne: “Urhi-Šaruma remains the crown-prince in Ugarit. If Urhi-Šaruma says, ‘I wish to follow my mother,’ may he relinquish his claim to the throne and may he leave.” The following text pertains to the children she bore the king, who have now become adults, “the sons and daughters . . . , the in-laws.” The first verdict orders the former wife to leave the kingdom:

Concerning Ammištamru she has done nothing but seek to hurt him. Ammištamru, King of Ugarit, has thus repudiated the daughter of Bentesina forever. Everything that the daughter of Bentesina had brought to the house of Ammištamru . . . , may she take back with her, and may she depart from the house of Ammištamru (Figure 31.1).¹³

But this indulgent verdict was only the first act. Another verdict, from the king of Carchemish in the name of the Hittite king, enumerates the mobile goods that the wife had acquired as royal wife during her years at Ugarit, and demanded that she leave them, “silver, gold, copper, bronze objects, male and female servants, clothing, linen textiles.”¹⁴ In the end one would hardly envy the fate of this woman, as her own brother offered her up to the king of Ugarit to do with as he chose, “Here then is the daughter of the Great Lady who has

committed a heinous fault against you. Take her and do with her as you will. If it pleases you, kill her. If it pleases you, toss her into the sea, etc.”¹⁵ Without going into the more complex details of the affair, let us note that it ended with the woman’s execution and with financial compensations, whereby the king of Ugarit offered considerable sums of silver to the woman’s brother.

It is necessary to recognize the royal context of this affair and its implications for international relations, as the two primary parties—the king of Ugarit and the royal family of Amurru—brought in the Great King of the Hittites and his representative, the king of Carchemish. Nevertheless, we might also see in this some aspects of the lives of women of less elevated classes. The husband may repudiate one of his wives if she is deemed “guilty,” and he may evict her from his home. The repudiated wife may only reclaim her dowry (which remained her own property), but she must renounce all goods acquired over the course of the marriage. The offspring, free to choose to leave with their mother, in so doing simultaneously lose their possessions and all claims to their paternal inheritance. Finally, the husband remains master of his wife’s fate, over whom he appears to have the right of life and death.



Goddesses

In the mythic adventures of the deities who appear throughout the literary *Baal Cycle* (CAT 1.1–1.6),¹⁶ and as well in the numerous ritual texts which often merely list the sacrifices offered to the deities during the various ceremonies,¹⁷ we see that the Ugaritic pantheon has fewer goddesses than gods, and their place is relatively restricted vis-à-vis their male cohorts. Their adventures and their statuses do not apply to normal life, and thus the best-known goddess—“the Maiden Anat,” warrior goddess, sister of Baal at whose side she plays a decisive role and whose death she defies (avenging him by destroying the god Mot), and who revels in massacres—does not replicate the life experience of a normal woman of Ugarit. But the fact that the god El has a wife, Athirat, and children does reflect to a certain extent the archetypal family life of the populace. Goddesses are welcomed at table and partake of the deities’ feasts. At the banquet celebrating the inauguration of his new palace, Baal offers a seat, drink, and plenty to eat to his sisters as well as his brothers.¹⁸ Keeping a sense of proportion and scale—warrior Anat is certainly an outlier—the goddesses of Ugarit in general behave like the women of Ugarit, whom they reflect.

Elite women

The real women who appear in the non-mythological texts generally belong to the social elite, and especially to the royal realm of queens and princesses. They appear in the royal correspondence, where their roles are in the areas of diplomatic exchange and political marriages. In the economic and legal documents, women often appear as businesswomen. A free woman might execute legal matters, sell and buy lands or houses in the fashion of a queen who is at the head of a household with servants and slaves, and possessing a personal financial patrimony which she manages and which she might augment considerably. In about 1200 BCE, the businessman Sipit-Baal¹⁹ (son-in-law of the king) finalized some land-holding transactions in the name of his mother-in-law, for whom he served as legal representative. According to another legal document, a man sold his lands to Sarelli,²⁰ wife of the king, who may have been Hamurapi (reigned c.1200–1185). Women had the right to adopt.²¹ Having become a widow, she could arrange the matters of succession of her husband, and even be the sole inheritor, obliging her sons to seek out her

consent in order to make use of any of the patrimony.²²

The queen often played a political role as queen-mother, notably as regent when a new king was especially young.²³ She acted in all capacities as the real sovereign, and Ahatmilku herself used her own personal seal in correspondence with foreign powers.²⁴

There were also types of activities that, while not reserved exclusively for females, gave women status and constituted particular categories within the female population. One such category is that of priestess, whose roles were quite important (see Michel, this volume). So much is also the case with the palace musicians,²⁵ and there were also dancers, even if the rare depictions of dance²⁶ do not always reveal if the dancers were male or female.

Images of women

In contrast to neighboring civilizations (especially Egypt), the civilization of Ugarit did not leave behind many artistic representations, and women are rarely a primary subject of art. It is thus difficult to determine what Ugaritic women looked like, how they dressed, and did their hair according to fashions which must have varied considerably over the course of the centuries considered here.

Amongst the items that have come down to us, the category richest in human portrayals, next to the glyptic, is the corpus of bronze figurines, which usually portray males, most often as warriors in the image of the god Baal.²⁷ Images of women are rare in the iconography of Ugarit, and those that do exist do not portray women engaged in ordinary activities. The corpus *in toto* depicts either symbolic representations or images of goddesses. The nude female type—arms hanging or with hands under the breasts, or holding small goats by their hooves—appears on gold jewelry (“Astarte pendants”) as well as in terracotta figurines associated with the household cult.²⁸ But neither the nudity nor the posture nor the attributes bring us back to an image of ordinary lives at Ugarit: the hair-style of long curls on the shoulders is borrowed from Egyptian Hathor,²⁹ an iconographic style which spread throughout the Levant.

The depiction of a woman that appears on a stele³⁰ from next to the Temple of Baal is sufficiently damaged that the head is no longer visible. But her long gown with fanning skirt, resembling stylized wings clinging to her thighs, reflects the style prevalent in New Kingdom Egypt. On the other hand, her sandals cover the heel and are

identical to those worn by the men on two other stelae discovered at the same spot.³¹ These are clearly Syrian and recall those worn by the mountain men of northern Syria and Asia Minor. Ugaritic women certainly wore them in order to walk in the fields and mountains surrounding the city. The clothing worn by a woman on a bead of Egyptian Blue³² shows a style borrowed from Egypt and is thus not indicative of the clothing worn by typical women in Ugarit.

certain other depictions are more representative, such as those which appear on a series of ivory panels from a bed in the royal palace,³³ or a tiny figurine of finely sculpted ivory—a luxury material—of a woman seated upon a high-backed chair.³⁴ The veil that covers her head and shoulders crosses over the chest; upon her forehead, a series of tight curls peeks out from below the veil (Figure 31.2). She is dressed in the local style, not in Egyptian fashion as with the other female depictions from Ugarit. Thus in her we see a real woman of Ugarit, certainly of one of the upper classes. But she is a unique example.

The “Lady of the Goats” brandishing two leafy branches³⁵ that decorate the cover of an ivory pyxis, with her full skirt with peplums and nude torso, cannot be seen as a typical Ugaritic female. We might say the same about the cylinder seals where we see the “unveiling” Syrian goddess. Nevertheless, the coiffure of the “Lady of the Goats”—bound with a headband surrounded front and back with ringlets, and with tresses descending down the nape of the neck, may indeed represent one of the ways Ugaritic women did their hair.

A large number of toiletry articles and cosmetic containers show the importance that women attached to the care of their bodies and their physical appearance. Many small objects in bronze (tweezers), stone or faience (containers), bone or ivory (makeup applicators, round or duck-shaped boxes), etc., were discovered in the city and at the port of Mahadu (at Minet-el-Beida). One may think of the dowry of Ahatmilku (see note 9) which included amongst other things “20 ivory cosmetic boxes.” But many of these toilette articles come from the excavations of common houses. There again, the variety of materials that were used to make such items include luxury fabrics such as ivory and faience, while the diversity of find spots reveals clearly that the care of the body and matters of beauty were prevalent at all levels of society.

The use of vivid cosmetics is visible on the faience goblets in the form of women’s heads (Figure 31.3).³⁶ The face is that of a very made-up woman, with large eyes surrounded by black eyeliner. Her

hair is parted in the middle and bound up, but with distinct curls appearing both at the center of the forehead and upon both lower cheeks. It is a sophisticated style that was exceptionally popular throughout the Near East, from Cyprus to Iran, and which was fabricated in the ateliers of Syria, offering an image of ideal feminine beauty. The aesthetics and criteria of beauty and fashion surpassed the frontiers of the Levant.

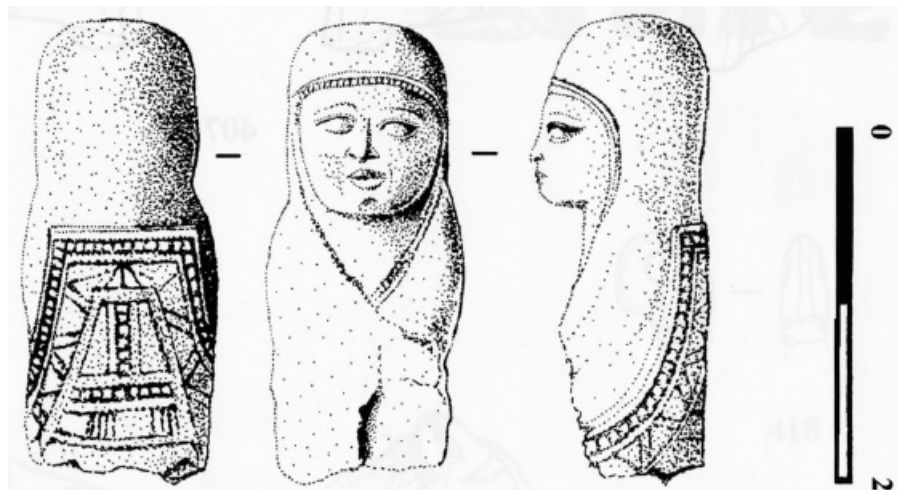


Figure 31.2 Ivory figurine (RS 9.283).



Figure 31.3 Faience goblet (RS 4.106).

All sorts of jewelry were used as accessories—earrings, rings, pendants, beads of various materials, etc., all discovered in tombs or homes. In an ordinary house of the *centre de la ville*, a jug of mediocre quality was found filled with pearls which their owner had stashed below the staircase, certainly intending to come back for them. The importance of these decorative accessories, used universally, justifies the presence in Ugarit of numerous goldsmith workshops. The excavations brought to light several steatite jewelry molds with finely crafted details;³⁷ and deposits of precious metals to be melted down for reuse in new objects of jewelry were discovered at several locations.³⁸

Living spaces

The architecture of the ordinary domestic quarters³⁹ sheds light on the daily life of the populace. The streets give access through narrow doors to residences that were closed in upon themselves, only open to the exterior by sparse windows. No matter the architectural quality or dimensions, all houses centered on an interior court, sometimes extremely small, such that one might easily doubt that domestic activities necessarily took place in the courtyard. Some walls which were preserved to a height of several meters show that the floor-level rooms often lacked windows to the street; occasionally small openings at ceiling level provided aeration and a minimal amount of light to see by. As confirmed by ethnographic studies, such rooms served as storage facilities and not rooms for daily habitation. The occupants of these houses thus mainly lived on the upper stories, and it was here where women engaged in their daily activities. These upper floors opened onto terraces convenient for family and domestic living (Figure 31.4).

Access to water was an on-going issue in urban life. We counted a single well per several houses,⁴⁰ and women's gatherings at the wells, be they at a neighbor's house or in more public places, were certainly part of daily socializing. Another comfort of domestic life was the presence of numerous dug-toilets, most often located beneath the staircases.

The implements of daily life

Domestic tools and instruments can also shed light on the daily lives of women. One must assume *a priori* that the women of Ugarit had, like all women throughout the Ancient Near East, charge over domestic duties. They took charge of food storage and production, the tending of children and the family, as well as the family's possessions and profession(s). From this perspective, the domestic apparatus contributes to the study of a significant aspect of life of an important sector of the city's population.

We need not rely exclusively on culinary goods, neither on the stone implements used to prepare grains—mortars, pestles⁴¹—found in large quantities in all areas of the household. Cooking hearths and bread ovens (*tannours*) were found or had left behind traces in certain courtyards, and the hearths were also located on higher levels, on the terraces (although no traces remain because the ceilings and roofs have collapsed).

Climatic conditions have not permitted the preservation of textiles

unto the present day. But Ugarit, with wool derived from their sheep, produced textiles, dyes, and especially purple woolens, while the texts refer to the importation of textiles, colored woolens, and linen fabrics.⁴² Numerous spindle whorls derive from the houses; they are fashioned from diverse materials—terracotta, certain stones (steatite, etc.), or even ivory. Also found were distaffs in bone, sometimes ivory (those in wood have not survived). The presence of loom weights—most often of stone or terracotta—attests to textile activities taking place in the home. The variety of materials used and the dispersal of textile accessories throughout the entire city indicate that their domestic use was universal amongst the women of Ugarit, who wove cloth made from the wool produced locally, or who worked wools and linens imported from abroad. Women of all social classes partook of these “feminine” tasks, which were necessary to clothe the family, or to occupy the free time of those upper-class women fortunate enough to have numerous servants. (See also McGeough, this volume.)

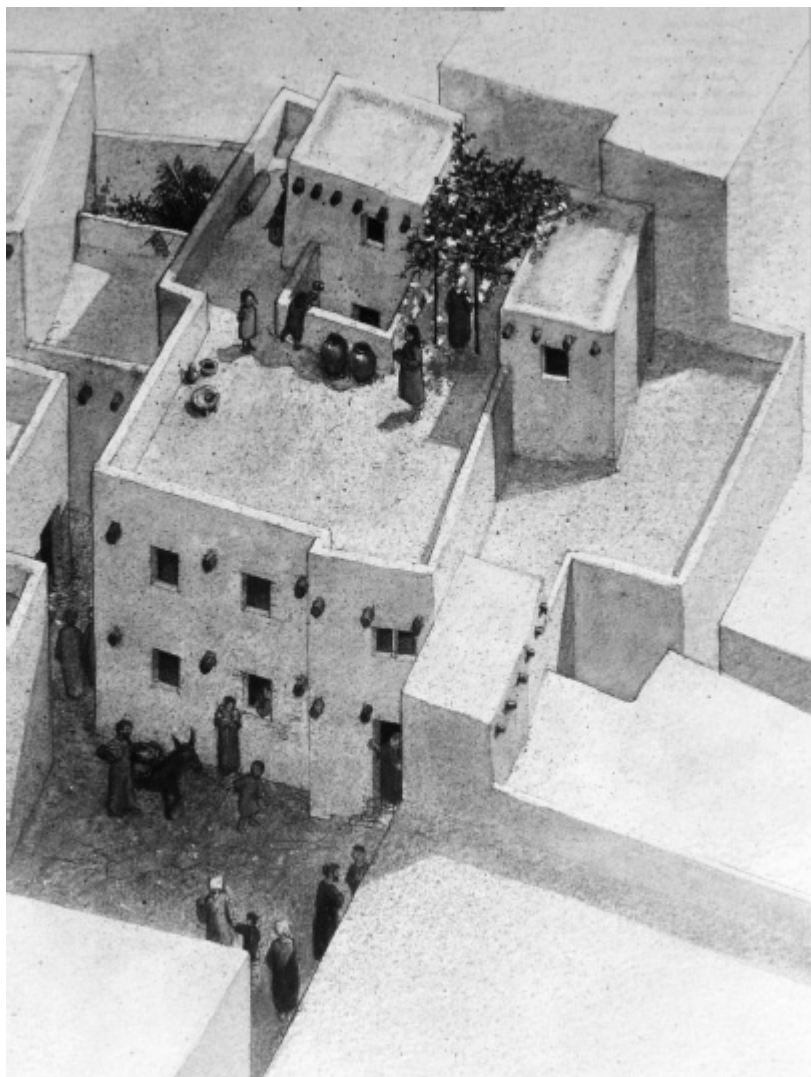


Figure 31.4 Houses of Late Bronze Age Ugarit. (According to the reconstruction proposed by Callot 1994.)

Birth and childcare

The realities pertaining to birth and the family are not well known and are seldom mentioned in the texts. Anat, the violent warrior, was also a fertility goddess, insofar as she assured the fecundity of the fields (Baal and Anat, V AB, D 65–74, etc.). But she was not a *genetrix*; the Mother Goddess was Athirat, wife and consort of the god El and mother of 70 children. She was later associated with Baal. The divine midwives were the Kotharôt, who reflected mortal practice. It was

they who intervened, for example, in the *Legend of Danel and Aqhat* (CAT 1.17–1.19);⁴³ at the moment of the birth of Aqhat, the son desperately wished for by Danel, the poem quickly invokes the mother, “In his embrace she conceived,/she gave birth . . . /the man of healing [= Danel] has a son in his house/offspring in his palace” and Danel then thanked the Kotharôt with a seven-day feast (v. 41–44). Likewise, in the poem *The Wedding of Yarih and Nikal* (CAT 1.24), the Kotharôt “descend [from the sky] with the plants,” that is to say, with the pharmacopeia that would apparently bring about birth. And they were the “releasers” in a “recipe” and a “formula” (v. 40–46).⁴⁴ These divine figures are thus the depiction of real, professional midwives who, on earth, armed with their drugs and their knowledge, and perhaps some recourse to magic, aided the women of Ugarit in bringing their children to light.

A subtle allusion to pregnancy and birth is perceptible on the ivory bed panel mentioned above.⁴⁵ Face 1 evokes masculine pursuits—war and hunting—alluded to by the lion carried by a man. The only feminine image on this face (panel 1/f) is that of a young woman, nude and standing, holding an *ankh* (symbol of life) in her right hand while her right arm hangs down the body. She lifts her left hand, in which she holds a floral scepter. Her nudity and the attributes of royalty and divinity associate her with a divine world more so than that of mortal women, but the arrangement of her hair—a large tress down the back and two small corkscrew tresses hanging in front of the ears—conforms to the Ugaritic style of this period, in the same style as the female on the other side of the panel.

The panels on face 2 (Figure 31.5), oriented more around the world of emotions, affection, and peace, evoke a more “feminine universe,” accompanied by peaceful animals (deer and ibexes), and notions of fertility and birth. The depictions of women show clothing and coiffures in the current fashions. Granted, these panels were not intended to depict ordinary people; nevertheless, the evocation of the king and queen, embracing and holding each other by the shoulder (panel 2/G), constituted a model the people could relate to. The image of the queen is quite suggestive. In good Ugaritic style, her hair is pulled back and smooth, revealing the ears which have a long tress hanging before them to the shoulders. Also visible is a long tress hanging down the back. Her gown is ankle-length, bordered on the bottom with incised braiding and cinched at the waist by a belt with a round buckle decorated with a five-part tassel. “The rounding of the young woman’s belly and the low placement of the belt appears to indicate that she is pregnant.”⁴⁶ The posture of the two individuals in the scene is an allusive and modest reference to corporal embrace,

symbolic of conception. Such discretion contrasts with the description of the hierogamy of the god El with the two females who give birth to the two divine infants in the poem *The Birth of the Gracious Gods* (CAT 1.23).⁴⁷

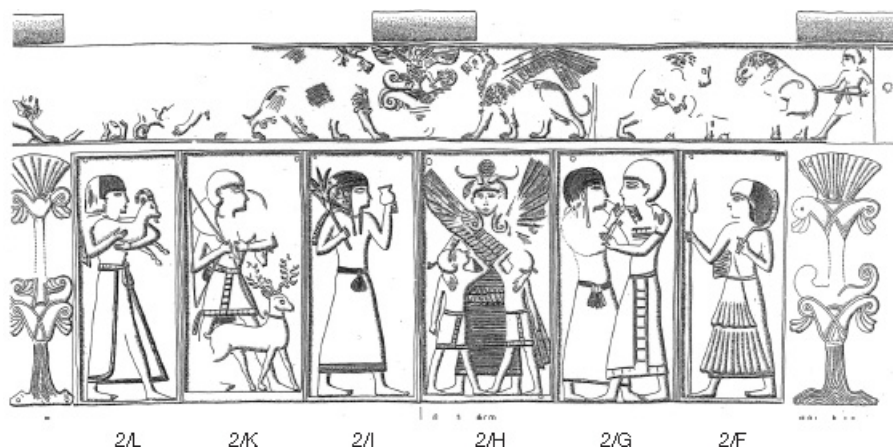


Figure 31.5 Ivory panels from a bed, face 2 (RS 16.056 + 28.031).

On the same side, panel 2/H depicts children, which is rare, but who are young princes rather than young deities. A winged goddess in a long Syrian-style gown with elaborately decorated flounces and wearing a headdress with a winged solar disk and a Hathor-style coiffure, nurses the two children. They are boys, as is indicated by their short kilts, but they are not shown with their parents and do not depict a familial scene. On panel 2/I a young female advances who is dressed and coiffed like the queen of 2/G, holding a vase in her left hand, a branch (or floral scepter?) in her right. She represents life, youth, power, and is perhaps another image of the queen before she became pregnant. In spite of some Egyptianizing elements, we might see here a properly Ugaritic interpretation by a local artisan of a popular northern Levantine theme; the symbolism conveys the idea of protection for pregnant women and young mothers, and may make allusion to the pregnancy of the queen, real or hoped for.

To be sure, the somewhat random character of the documents we have at our disposal, which are not always wholly explicit, makes it difficult to describe in detail the lives of the women of Ugarit. But the combination of the textual data with the archaeological discoveries contributes to a better understanding of women's statuses, depictions, daily lives, and activities. Many aspects come to light in the mythological tales, which often reflect local realities, public activities, and the roles of the queens and women of high status. We also have

those rarely preserved artistic depictions, as well as analysis of the objects of daily life which contributed to the social valorization of the women of Ugarit.

Notes

- 1 For a general introduction, see Yon 2006; Saadé 2011.
- 2 Cf. Asher-Greve 2002; Marsman 2003.
- 3 In Nougayrol 1955: xxvi, 179.
- 4 After E. Amico, *The Status of Women at Ugarit* (unpublished dissertation), cited in Marsman 2003: 35.
- 5 Cf. *Le Palais de Baal*, II AB 10–19: Caquot *et al.* 1974: 193.
- 6 In the *Legend of Kirta*, Kirta demands his wife from her father, King Pabil: Caquot *et al.* 1974: 524–526.
- 7 On the queens, their status and their economic prerogatives, see Lackenbacher 2002: 283–286; cf. Saadé 2011: 98.
- 8 Kingdom just to the south of Ugarit; its ancient capital was Sumur (modern Tell Kazel).
- 9 RS 16.146 + 161 (Nougayrol 1955: 182–186, pl. 11, fig. 14): Lackenbacher 2002: 289–291; cf. Yon 2006: 128–129, n° 7.
- 10 RS.15.092: Lackenbacher 2002: 266–267.
- 11 Nougayrol, *PRU IV* (1956): 125–148; cf. Lackenbacher 2002: 108–116; Saadé 2011: 76–80 (see previous bibliography cited on p. 76, note 111).
- 12 See above and note 8.
- 13 RS 17.159 (Nougayrol 1956: 126): Lackenbacher 2002: 116; cf. Saadé 2011: 77.
- 14 RS 17.396 (Nougayrol 1956: 127): Lackenbacher 2002: 117.
- 15 RS 17.360A + 372A (Nougayrol 1956 139): Lackenbacher 2002: 122–123.
- 16 Caquot *et al.* 1974.
- 17 Pardee 2000.
- 18 Caquot *et al.* 1974: 213–214.
- 19 See D. Arnaud in Bordreuil ed. 1991: 65–78; cf. Saadé 2011: 85 with previous bibliography.
- 20 RS 17.325: Nougayrol 1956: 121.
- 21 E.g. RS 16.200: Lackenbacher 2002: 268.
- 22 See Saadé 2011: 100.
- 23 See Bordreuil *et al.* 1984: 420 note 3; cf. Saadé 2011: 98.
- 24 E.g. RS 16.197: with the seal of Ahatmilku: Lackenbacher 2002: 291.
- 25 Cf. Caubet 1999.
- 26 Yon 2015: 453–454, fig. 6b–c.
- 27 Seeden 1980; Negbi 1976.
- 28 E.g. RS 3.185 (gold pendant); RS 81.848 (terracotta figurine), discovered in the court of a house in the “City centre”; T. Monloup in Yon dir. 1987: 314); Yon 2006: 167, n. 58, 155, n. 44.

- 29 Carbillet 2011.
- 30 “Stele of Anat,” RS 2.[038]; Schaeffer 1949: 86, 89–90; Yon 1991: 291–293, n. 3 (with bibliography). Interpreted as an image of Anat characterizing the symbol of the wing: “*Maiden Anat spread her wings . . . and flying explored the banks of Šamak*” (Caquot *et al.* 1974: 283).
- 31 “Baal à la plume” and “Baal au cartouche,” RS 2.[033] + et RS 4.429 +: Yon 1991: 288–291, 299–301, nos 2, 6.
- 32 RS 3.013: Caubet ed. 2007: 243–242.
- 33 RS 16.056 + 28.031: Gachet-Bizollon 2007: 275–281 (with previous bibliography), cat. n° 269, fig. 40–43, pl. 25–26, 79–87 (according to the numeration of the plaques given by the excavator).
- 34 RS 9.283: Gachet-Bizollon 2007: 303, cat. n. 405, pl. 47 111.
- 35 RS 1.[099]: Gachet-Bizollon 2007: 252–253, cat. n. 80, fig. 5, pl. 13, 71.
- 36 E.g. RS 4.106: Caubet dir. 2007: 212, n. 204.
- 37 Elliott 1991: 49–51.
- 38 Yon and Caubet 2002.
- 39 See Callot 1984; Yon ed. 1987; Callot 1994.
- 40 Cf. Y. Calvet and B. Geyer in Yon ed. 1987: 134; Callot 1994: 159–168: in the *Ville sud* 18 wells for 37 houses studied, of which only three were accessible in public spaces.
- 41 Cf. Elliott 1991.
- 42 Cf. Saadé 2011: 171.
- 43 Caquot *et al.* 1974: 419–458; on the *Kotharôt*, see 384–387.
- 44 Caquot *et al.* 1974: 384.
- 45 RS 16.056 + 28.031; see above note 33.
- 46 Gachet-Bizollon 2007: 139.
- 47 Caquot *et al.* 1974: 373–374.

References

- Asher-Greve, J. (2002) *Women and Gender in Ancient Near Eastern Cultures: Bibliography 1885 to 2001*, NIN, Vol. 3. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 33–114.
- Bordreuil, P. (ed.) (1991) *RSO VII. Une bibliothèque au sud de la ville*. Paris: Edition Recherches sur les Civilisations.
- Bordreuil, P., Lagarce, J., Lagarce, E., Bounni, A. and Saliby, N. (1994) Les découvertes architecturales et épigraphiques de Ras Ibn Hani (Syrie) en 1983: Un lot d’archives administratives. *CRAI* 1984: 398–438.
- Callot, O. (1984) *RSO I, Une Maison à Ougarit*. Paris: Edition Recherches sur les Civilisations.
- Callot, O. 1994) *RSO X, La Tranchée Ville Sud*. Paris: Edition Recherches sur les Civilisations.

- Caquot, A., Sznycer, M. and A. Herdner, A. (1974) *Textes Ougaritiques, I: Mythes et Légendes*, LAPO. Paris: Editions du cerf.
- Caquot, A., De Tarragon, J.-M. and Cunchillos, J. L. (1989) *Textes Ougaritiques, II: Textes Religieux, Rituels, Correspondance*, LAPO. Paris: Editions du cerf.
- Carbillet, A. (2011) *La Figure Hathorique à Chypre (II^e et I^{er} millénaires av. J.-C.)*. Münster, Germany: Alter Orient und Altes Testament 88.
- Caubet, A. (1999) Chantres et devins: Deux cas de pratiques de la musique à Ougarit. In M. Kropp and A. Wagner (eds) *Schnittpunkt Ugarit*. Mainz, Germany: Peter Lang, pp. 9–29.
- Caubet, A. (ed.) (2007) with A. Bouquillon, A. Kaczmarczyk and V. Matoïan, *Faïences et Matières Vitreuses de l'Orient Ancien dans les Collections du Musée du Louvre*. Paris: Musée du Louvre.
- Elliott, C. (1991) The ground stone industry. In Yon, M. (ed.) *RSO VI, Arts et Industries de la Pierre*. Paris: Edition Recherches sur les Civilisations, pp. 9–99.
- Gachet-Bizollon, J. (2007) *RSO XVI, Les ivoires d'Ougarit et l'art des ivoiriers du Levant*. Paris: Edition Recherches sur les Civilisations.
- Lackenbacher, S. (2002) *Textes Akkadiens d'Ugarit*. LAPO. Paris: Editions du cerf.
- Marsman, H. J. (2003) *Women in Ugarit and Israel: Their Social and Religious Position in the Context of the Ancient Near East*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill.
- Negbi, O. (1976) *Canaanite Gods in Metal: An Archaeological Study of Ancient Syro-palestinian Figurine*. Israel: Tel Aviv University.
- Nougayrol, J. (1955) *PRU III, Textes accadiens et hourrites des archives Est, Ouest et centrales*. Paris: Geuthner.
- Nougayrol, J. (1956) *PRU IV, Textes accadiens des archives Sud (archives internationales)*. Paris: Geuthner.
- Pardee, D. (2000) *RSO XII, Les textes rituels*. Paris: Edition Recherches sur les Civilisations.
- Saadé, G. (2011) *Ougarit et son Royaume*. M. Yon (ed.). Beirut, Lebanon and Paris: BAH.
- Schaeffer, C. F.-A. (1949) *Ugaritica II*. Paris: Geuthner.
- Seeden, H. (1980) *The Standing Armed Figurines in the Levant*. Munich, Germany: Beck.
- Yon, M. (ed.) (1987) *RSO III, Le centre de la Ville, 38^e–44^e Campagnes (1978–1984)*. Paris: Edition Recherches sur les Civilisations; Lyon, France: Maison de l'Orient.
- Yon, M. (ed.) (1991) *RSO VI, Arts et Industries de la Pierre*. Paris: Edition Recherches sur les Civilisations.

- Yon, M. (2006) *The City of Ugarit at Tell Ras Shamra*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Yon, M. (2015) La fête au Proche-Orient, 1. Le cas d'Ougarit au Bronze Récent final. *Cult and Ritual on the Levantine Coast, Proceedings of the International Symposium Beirut 2012, BAAL Hors-Série X*, pp. 443–462.
- Yon, M. and Caubet, A. (2002) Une coupe inscrite en chypro-minoen à Ras Shamra et les “trésors” d'Ougarit. In P. Fischer (ed.) *Contributions to the Archaeology and History of the Bronze and Iron Ages in the Eastern Mediterranean, Studies in Honour of Paul Åström*. Vienna, Austria: Austrian Archaeological Institute, pp. 149–157.

WOMEN'S DAILY LIFE IN BRONZE AGE CANAAN

Jennie Ebeling

This chapter describes the daily lives of women in Canaan during the Middle and Late Bronze Ages (henceforth MBA and LBA), approximately 2000–1200 BCE. Canaan is defined in this chapter as the southern Levant, equating to modern Israel and the Palestinian Territories (Horowitz and Oshima 2006: 3, note 1). During this approximately 800-year period, Canaan transformed from a series of independent and heavily-fortified city-states controlled by local rulers to a land first disrupted, then annexed by New Kingdom Egypt and controlled either directly or indirectly by the pharaoh and his officials. Material excavated from MBA–LBA contexts inform on many aspects of daily life and demonstrate the dynamic nature of Canaanite settlement during this period.

Previous research on women in the Bronze Age Levant looked to the Ugaritic texts as the primary source of information about women's lives in the region (e.g., Marsman 2003; Wilson 2013). Although a discussion of the relevance of the Ugaritic texts for understanding life in the LBA southern Levant is beyond the scope of this study, suffice it to say that this situation has resulted in a dearth of research that utilizes the abundant sources from the southern Levant to inform on the lives of those who lived there. In this chapter, I will avoid the northern Levantine material and instead look to the epigraphic materials composed and discovered in MBA–LBA Canaan and artistic representations of Canaanite women before examining the archaeological remains from contemporary sites to reconstruct aspects of women's private and public lives.

In the shadow of Egypt: the textual sources

Although they have been overlooked in favor of the Ugaritic texts, letters and inscriptions composed and excavated in MBA–LBA Canaan have potential to inform on Canaanite women’s lives. Unfortunately, however, no one has yet examined the epigraphic material with an eye toward what these texts reveal about women. An archive of cuneiform texts uncovered in fourteenth-century BCE Tell el-Amarna in Egypt—the Amarna Letters—informs on relations between the Egyptian pharaohs and other rulers in the ancient Near East. The 153 letters (227–380) that originated in Canaan offer interesting insights into the political realities of the region and illustrate Canaanite rulers’ subservience to Egypt. Among the 153 letters from Canaan are several that provide information about Canaanite women of both high and low status. Most interesting are two letters (EA 273 and EA 274) from a female ruler, perhaps a queen mother, called NIN.UR.MAḥ.MEš, or “Lady of the Lioness” (Na’aman 2011: 282, note 3). Although her seat is unspecified, it was likely in the region of Gezer, possibly Tel Beth Shemesh (Na’aman 2011: 283). In EA 273, she alerts the pharaoh that two sons of the prince of Gezer, Milkilu, had barely escaped being killed in a raid by bands of people living on the fringes of Canaanite society—‘Apiru—in two cities in the Shephelah region of southwestern Canaan. In EA 274, she requests the pharaoh’s help in protecting the land from the ‘Apiru and reports that a city has been taken. Like the male rulers of other Canaanite cities, the “Lady of the Lioness” was aware of larger regional events and sought the pharaoh’s help with the troublesome ‘Apiru.

Other Amarna Letters offer more limited information about women. In EA 270, Milkilu complains of a plan to extort him, including a threat to hand over his wife and sons. In EA 268, the same Milkilu describes sending a consignment of personnel to the pharaoh that included 46 females (Moran 1992: 316–317). In addition, the prince of Jerusalem, ‘Abdi-Heba, sent 21 girls as gifts to the pharaoh along with slaves and prisoners (EA 288). Shubandu, prince of an unspecified town, sent 20 girls (EA 301), and the prince of another unspecified town seems to have sent 10 maidservants (EA 309) (Moran 1992). In EA 369, a letter written by the pharaoh to Milkilu of Gezer, the pharaoh sends a request for 40 extremely beautiful female cupbearers, each worth 40 shekels of silver (Moran 1992: 366). Although most of these texts describe presumably lower-class women as commodities, we also learn that the “Lady of the Lioness” felt entitled to write to the pharaoh not once, but twice. She was also the only female ruler in the entire ancient Near East to write to the pharaoh according to this archive.

In addition, at least 55 cuneiform and alphabetic texts and

inscriptions have been found in MBA–LBA contexts in the southern Levant; they include administrative documents, letters, private inscriptions, academic documents, cylinder seals, and miscellaneous texts (Horowitz and Oshima 2006: 10, 16). Cuneiform texts from Hazor, Shechem, and Taanach mention women—two of them by name—and one text from Taanach mentions an arranged marriage. Taanach 1 is an LBA letter from Ehli-Tešub requesting that Talwašur, prince of this northern city, send word concerning a young woman or junior servant named Ka. We also learn in this letter that when Ka grows up, she was to be given for ransom money or to a husband (Horowitz and Oshima 2006: 131). The contents of this letter suggest that Ka, a young woman of interest to both of these elite men, was a person of some status herself.

Artistic representations of females in Middle and Late Bronze Age Canaan

Artistic representations of females in MBA–LBA Canaan include a variety of metal figures, seal imagery, and plaques and figurines made out of ceramic and silica (Green 2007: 297). Since many depict divine and elite figures, their function is probably more important than their physical appearance in the context of reconstructing the reality of women's lives. For example, images of woman and child—kourotophos figurines—in the southern Levant are interpreted as images of mortals, not goddesses (Budin 2011: 161). Although the functions of figurines depicting a female lying in a bed with a child lying beside her, a female holding a child on the left hip, and others are disputed (Budin 2011: 159), the earliest kourotophoi in the region “are simple potency figurines, transposed from Egypt northward” (Budin 2011: 161). These figurines expressed women's very real concerns related to fertility and childbirth and their archaeological find spots may correlate with female-gendered space in households.

A tomb dating to Year 6 of pharaoh Senusret II (c.1897–1878 BCE) belonging to the high official, Khnumhotep II, at Beni Hasan, Egypt, might include representations of women from the MBA southern Levant (Kamrin 2009; Cohen 2015). One segment of this large tomb painting depicts eight men, four women, and three children identified as ‘Aamu of Shu. The ‘Aamu of Shu are not Egyptian and are believed by many to have originated in the southern Levant, perhaps east of the Jordan River or Dead Sea (Kamrin 2009: 25), or in the Eastern Desert (Cohen 2015: 36). The four women depicted in this group are

wearing, like some of the men, brightly patterned dresses that leave one shoulder bare, long hair held back with a fillet, and brown or red ankle boots (Figure 32.1).

According to Kamrin (2009: 27), the first and fourth women hold their left fists to their chest in a gesture that may be a greeting or sign of reverence. The objects in the painting include metal weapons that are typologically datable to the MBA as well as many other items that are associated with the desert, including the desert animals ibex and gazelle (Cohen 2015: 32–35). Although the interpretation of this scene is much debated (Cohen 2015), the Beni Hasan painting is unique for its representation of MBA women from the region.

Archaeological sources from Middle and Late Bronze Age Canaan

Although texts and art provide clues about the lives of Canaanite women, it is the archaeological remains that allow us to reconstruct the actual activities that concerned most women and men during the Bronze Age. Recent attention given to households and their remains as opposed to elite and public structures contribute a great deal to our understanding of women's lives.

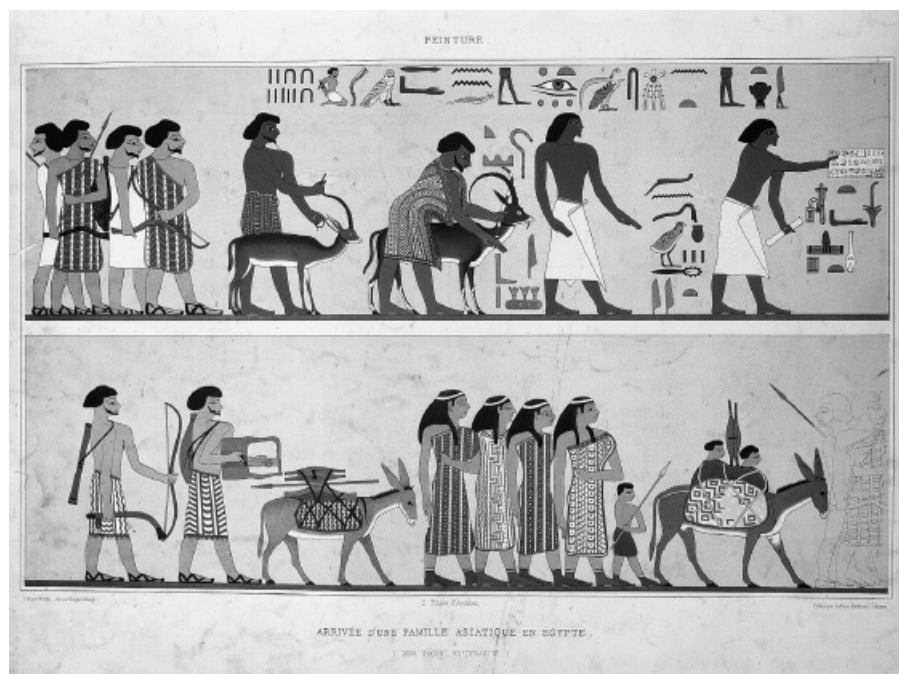


Figure 32.1 Asiatic family arriving in Egypt, 12th-Dynasty Egyptian, from Beni Hasan, Egypt, engraving from 1878 *Histoire de l'Art Egyptien* (History of Egyptian Art) by Achille. (Photo Credit: Gianni Dagli Orti/The Art Archive at Art Resource, NY.)

Ethnographic and ethnoarchaeological studies of traditional societies in the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East provide analogies that can help archaeologists identify women's daily life activities, gendered space, and more in household and related contexts. Ethnographic observations from the same region are seen as particularly useful for comparison with archaeological data because, "they operate under the same ecological constraints, are generally demographically similar, and have mostly the same resources available for exploitation as did the ancient inhabitants that precede them" (Hardin 2011: 20). In addition, burials may provide information about women's status in life and death in addition to funerary practices and beliefs. Although it may seem difficult to assess women's participation in the public cult during this period, it is possible to identify specific activities in which women might have been engaged in the numerous and varied MBA–LBA temples and sanctuaries in Canaan.

Some of the daily life activities closely associated with women that can be reconstructed using archaeological remains are textile production, food and drink preparation, and pottery production.

Textile production

Spinning and weaving activities were closely associated with women in antiquity and their remains may evidence not only women's work, but also how women utilized household space (Cassuto 2008: 65). Fabric and other woven materials are rarely preserved in the archaeological record in this region; a rare exception is MBA Jericho, where among the wooden furniture and other items made of organic material were preserved narrow woven bands around some of the skulls that may have been fillets like those worn by the women in the Beni Hasan Tomb painting (Ziffer 1990: 52*). More typically, however, textile production activities are attested in MBA–LBA households by the remains of spindle whorls used to spin fibers into thread, loomweights used on a horizontal warp-weighted loom for weaving, and other artifacts associated with these activities.

Separate weaving areas are sometimes identified in MBA–LBA

houses. In Area CC at Megiddo, weaving activity—as evidenced by spindles, whorls, needles, awls, and possibly stone rings—was so extensive that it is possible that some of the rooms were weaving workshops even though they were not distinguished from a typical house floor plan (Daviau 1993: 275). At MBA Tel Nagila, spindle whorls and loomweights found in a concentration in Room 80 may evidence the division of household space into activity areas (Uziel and Avissar Lewis 2013: 282). At MBA Jericho, loom weights found in upper story debris show that weaving on a warp-weighted loom was accomplished on the second floor (Ziffer 1990: 52*). In most houses, however, separate spinning and weaving areas were not identified, suggesting that these activities were accomplished alongside other domestic activities (Daviau 1993: 453). In an MBA house at Hazor, evidence for spinning was found in the same space as artifacts related to food production (Daviau 1993: 77–78); the same can be seen in a courtyard house dating to the Early Iron Age at Megiddo (Gadot and Yasur-Landau 2006: 590).

Food and drink preparation

Women performed many of the food preparation activities in traditional Middle Eastern societies, and ancient Near Eastern and Egyptian textual and artistic sources suggest that the situation was the same in MBA–LBA Canaan. Archaeological remains of spaces containing artifacts and installations used for food processing inform on the context of activities that likely occupied most women for hours each day. Evidence for spinning and weaving in the same context as food preparation may strengthen the gendered identification of these spaces.

cereals, especially wheat and barley, were staples in the Canaanite diet from prehistory to the modern period and their preparation was by nearly all accounts the concern of women. Specialized tools made of stone and probably other materials were used to transform harvested cereals for consumption. Grinding stones, specifically lower grinding slabs and the upper, mobile handstones, were effective in pulverizing grains to a finer texture to make porridge, stew, baked goods, and more (Ebeling and Rowan 2004). Such grinding stones are ubiquitous in MBA–LBA contexts and are sometimes found in close association with pottery and installations associated with food production. In a comprehensive analysis of the use of space in MBA–LBA households, food preparation and storage were the two most common activities identified (Daviau 1993: 449). Typical features in MBA–LBA houses were ovens and hearths, benches, shelves, bins, and

pits. Ovens are found in large rooms, in entryways, and in courtyards (Daviau 1993: 451) while evidence for grinding and mixing food was typically found in adjacent rooms. To make bread, grain was ground to a finer texture than might be necessary for porridge, mixed with water and other additives, and baked directly in ashes or in a clay oven; ovens are found in roofed and unroofed spaces, such as in Building 6205 at Hazor (below). If beer was the desired end product, grain would be kept moist for a few days until it germinated; the sprouted grains would then be placed in water with yeast or ground and baked into malted bread cakes that were crumbled and added to water to make beer (Ebeling and Homan 2008: 52–53). Since beer was an offshoot of bread production in the ancient Near Eastern, beer making in domestic contexts was probably a female activity in MBA–LBA Canaan.

Other common foods were made from the staple horticultural crops of olives and grapes as well as native fruits and vegetables and dairy products. The processing of these foods is more difficult to document because specialized apparatus is either unnecessary or could be the same as those used to process cereal grain. In addition, organic materials, including the remains of plants, were not systematically collected by excavators until relatively recently. Large jars used for storing liquids like olive oil and wine as well as cereals and other foods are sometimes found in household areas that were specifically used for long-term storage (Gadot and Yasur-Landau 2006: 588–589).

Although dated to the end of the second millennium BCE and thus to the Iron Age I period, a Megiddo courtyard house from level K-4 destroyed by fire is interesting for what it uniquely preserves: the remains of seven or eight individuals apparently trapped inside and preserved along with the remains of daily life activities (Gadot and Yasur-Landau 2006). The only skeleton of the eight whose sex could be determined was a 30- to 40-year-old woman found in the central courtyard where installations and artifacts connected with food preparation and consumption were found, and it is possible that the woman was caught in the house's collapse while actually engaged in food processing activities (Gadot and Yasur-Landau 2006: 595).

Pottery production

Since archaeological ceramics comprise our most abundant remains of daily life activities related to preparing, presenting, consuming, and storing foods, these artifacts have great potential to provide information about women's work. Southern Levantine pottery has

been valued primarily for its use as chronological indicators, and pottery typology is the most commonly used tool for determining the dating of archaeological contexts in this region. This attention to temporal changes in pottery has led to a dearth of studies of pottery technology and the identification of who made the pots (London 2008: 155). Based on ethnoarchaeological research in Cyprus and elsewhere, we should expect some of the ancient potters to have been women (London 2008: 156). The fact that very few kilns have been identified in ancient contexts in the eastern Mediterranean may be explained by the prominent role of female potters who worked at home seasonally or between other chores. Ethnoarchaeological research in Cyprus shows that everything related to pottery production in the home disappears in the off months; if this holds true for MBA–LBA Canaan, there would little chance of finding clay, tools, or pots in these contexts (161). Daviau (1993) recognized very little evidence for pottery production in MBA–LBA domestic contexts and came to the conclusion that it was not a normal domestic activity.

Recent studies have attempted to identify evidence for instructing children in pottery production in households. Ethnoarchaeological studies show that non-skilled laborers, family members, and apprentices participated in pottery making in various ways, from collecting raw materials to moving pots for drying, adding accessory pieces, and more (London 2008: 163); therefore, children might have been taught to make pottery by their mothers through their participation in these activities. At MBA Tel Nagila, miniature vessels were examined for children's fingerprints in an attempt to identify children's role in pottery manufacture and the location of children in domestic spaces. Miniature vessels found in spaces related to storage, dining, food preparation, and weaving might evidence the presence of children accompanied by their mother (Uziel and Avissar Lewis 2013: 290), who might have been engaged in spinning, weaving, and cooking while supervising child apprentices. At Megiddo, a crude handmade vessel was found in one of the rooms of the courtyard house of level K-4, evidence, perhaps, that it was an appreciated object that was, "safely kept in storage" (Gadot and Yasur-Landau 2006: 595).

Case Study: an MBA House at Hazor

A relatively well-preserved five-room house, Building 6205, in Stratum III (late MBA) Area C at Hazor provides evidence for female-gendered activities throughout ([Figure 32.2](#)). A small entrance room contained an oven in the corner that was separated from the rest of

the space by a partition wall. Pottery vessels used to prepare and consume food were also present in this space. Although damaged, a small room to the north of the entrance room contained more pottery associated with food preparation and consumption. The main room, 6205, may have been an unroofed courtyard. It contained an oven in the southwestern corner as well as a basalt mortar bowl and pottery used for food preparation, consumption, and storage. One of the two rooms to the east of the courtyard preserved vessels used in food preparation, two spindle whorls, three beads or buttons, and two fragments of bone inlay. These artifacts “reflect activities common to women and strongly suggested a woman’s workroom” (Daviau 1993: 77–78).

Tombs

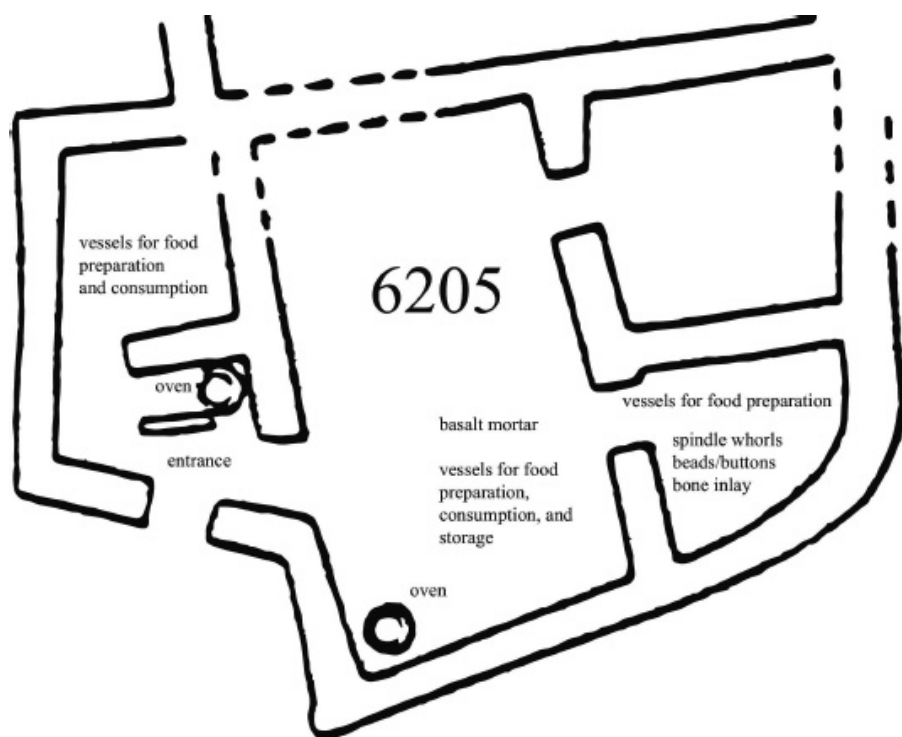


Figure 32.2 Building 6205 in Area C at Hazor. (After Yadin *et al.* 1960: Plate CCVII.)

The remains from Canaanite tombs might inform on women’s status in

life and death and offer insights into funerary customs and beliefs. Funerary practices underwent many changes during the MBA–LBA. In the early phase of the MBA, tombs are typically single, secondary interments with relatively few grave goods consisting mainly of pottery and metal weapons. In later phases of the MBA, multiple primary interments became more common and the funerary goods included more elite pottery types as well as increased numbers of scarabs, jewelry, and other items. At the same time, the number of metal weapons decreased (Cohen 2014: 455, 460). LBA burials are more diverse, and included multiple interments in burial caves, single interments in pit graves, intramural burials, and eight types of ‘special burials’ that are different from the prevailing Canaanite types: “bench burial caves, loculi burial caves, bilobate burial caves, open pits, structural chambers, and larnax, coffin, and jar burials” (Gonen 1992: 21).

Although most studies of MBA–LBA burials have not identified gendered differences in funerary goods, a task that can be hindered by a lack of sexed adult skeletons, specific items interred with the deceased might reflect women’s gender roles and status in addition to activities that might have taken place after death, like funerary meals. Spindle sticks and whorls made of bone were found in tombs at Megiddo (Gonen 1992: 45, 50, table 29) and Lachish (Gonen 1992: 68, 132, 147), and loomweights made of clay and bone were found at Megiddo (Gonen 1992: 88), indicating, perhaps, that these were women’s burials (Gonen 1992: 45). In addition, grinding stones might have been the personal property of the individuals with which they were buried or they might inform on activities carried out at the tomb. Stone vessels, mortars, grinders, and hammers found in the Megiddo tombs (Gonen 1992: 50), for example, might have represented a woman’s roles as wife, mother, and provider, while a basalt pestle found in an infant jar burial at Tell el-Wawiyat might have been a token to accompany the deceased infant into the afterlife (Ebeling 2002: 150–151). Several complete sets of grinding equipment found in tombs, such as a grinding slab and handstone found in a tomb at Megiddo and a pestle and three-legged mortar in a tomb at Jericho, might have been used in feasting activities that accompanied these burials (Ebeling 2002: 149).

Called “by far the richest burial yet found in Palestine” by its excavator (Pritchard 1964: 9), Tomb 101 at LBA/Early Iron Age Tell es-Sa’idiyeh contained the remains of a person of “considerable wealth and importance” (Pritchard 1980: 10) ([Figure 32.3](#)). The tomb was found in a large cemetery consisting primarily of simple pit graves containing a single interment and was among the fewer than 10

percent that included high-status items such as imported pottery and their imitations, bronze vessels, Egyptian-style stone vessels, ivory objects, and metal jewelry (Green 2013: 420–421). Tomb 101 was lined with unbaked bricks and contained 7 bronze objects of very high quality as well as toggle pins, plates, bottles, boxes, an ivory spoon, and 573 beads of gold, electrum, carnelian, and ivory (Gonen 1992: 89). Although the skeletal material was apparently not examined by an osteologist, the objects that accompanied the deceased were compared to those found on sexed skeletons from the cemetery and indicate that this was the burial of a woman who was “dressed for death” (Green 2013: 423). In addition to the special effort in the tomb’s construction and the rich artifact assemblage found within, the deceased was positioned in such a way that suggests she was dressed in a kind of ceremonial costume rather than wrapped in a shroud (Green 2013: 423). It is possible that the woman buried in Tomb 101 was a queen, as the excavator suggested (Pritchard 1964: 2).

Temples

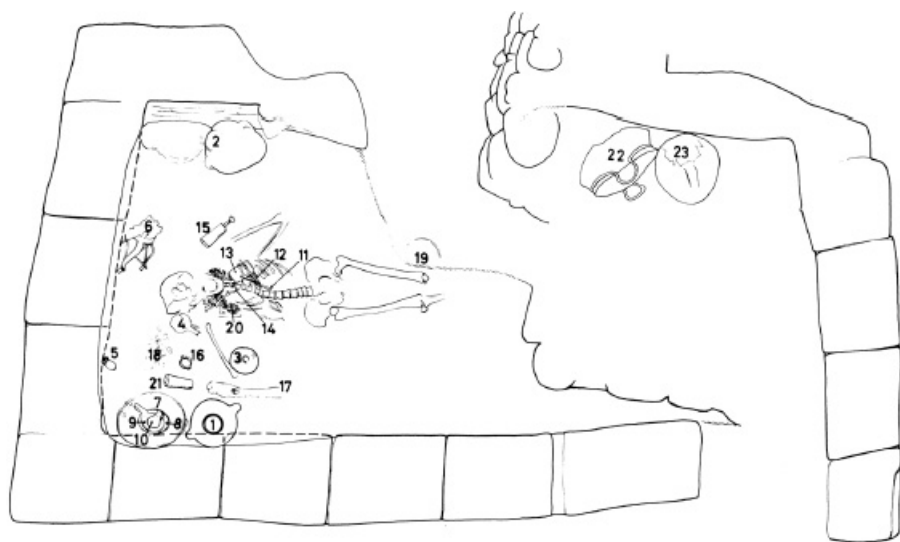


Figure 32.3 Tomb 101 at Tell es-Sa'idiyeh. (After Pritchard 1980: 10.)

There was an explosion in the number and variety of cult places in Canaan during the MBA–LBA. At the beginning of the MBA, religious structures were characterized by regional or village sanctuaries; by the end of the MBA, more regional sanctuaries had been established along with a variety of small shrines, and imposing fortress temples were constructed in fortified cities (Nakhai 2001: 92–101). The character of

Canaanite religious practice changed in the LBA as a result of international politics generally and Egyptian colonization specifically, and, by 1300 BCE, the number of sacred sites had doubled over that of previous periods (Nakhai 2001: 153). Egyptian-style temples functioned at several sites while Hazor, which was perhaps only indirectly controlled by Egypt, was home to a variety of temples and sacred installations (Nakhai 2001: 126–154). The artifacts found inside and around these diverse structures bear witness to a wide variety of activities, including offerings and sacrifices, food preparation, craft production, and more.

Careful analysis of the remains of public temples reveals that many of the same artifacts and installations from female-gendered spaces in households are also found in the houses of the deities. Food preparation, for example, is evidenced in MBA–LBA temples by stone mortars, grinding slabs, and various hand-held processors that could have been used to grind grain and process meat and other materials for consumption (Ebeling 2001: 192). Specialized food preparation areas have been identified in several temples. In an LBA temple complex at Bet Shean, for example, a number of ground stone tools, called “dishes, corn-mills, and grinders of basalt” by the excavators (Rowe 1929: 43), were found in the vicinity of an oven some two meters in diameter (Ebeling 2001: 153). Similarly, a kitchen and storeroom containing pottery vessels and various ground stone tools were identified east of the LBA temple at Deir ‘Alla (Franken 1992: 22, 26, figs 4–7). It is difficult to know if this equipment was used to prepare offerings or feasts or to feed priests and other officiants who may have lived on the premises (Ebeling 2001: 192–193).

In addition, evidence for pottery production was identified in the context of MBA temples at Hazor and Tell el-Hayyat and an LBA shrine at Hazor. At Tell el-Hayyat, there was evidence for a kiln and manufacturing debris including “naturally bedded clays, fragments of tempered potting clays, pottery waters, and ceramic slag” (Falconer and Magness-Gardiner 1989: 344) in the vicinity of the temple compound. Interestingly, the kiln contained an intact human cranium, mandible, left and right carpals, metacarpals, and phalanges of a male aged 25–30 (Falconer and Magness-Gardiner 1989: 344). The courtyard of the MBA phase of the Area H Temple at Hazor contained a potter’s kiln with 22 miniature vessels still inside. The excavator suggested that these votive vessels were produced in the context of the temple to be sold to worshippers (Yadin 1975: 115). In addition, evidence for pottery production was found in association with the shrine in Area C at Hazor that contained a row of ten miniature stelae, an offering table, a statue of a male, and a lion statue, all of basalt

(Yadin 1975: 43–48). A pair of basalt potter's wheels and a small clay mask were found in a room associated with the shrine, leading the excavator to identify this space as a potter's workshop connected with the temple (Yadin 1975: 49–51). Could pottery making, a female-gendered activity in contemporary domestic contexts, evidence female activities in these sacred structures?

Little can be said about women's official roles in the temple cult in Canaan for lack of textual sources. Information from contemporary sources in the northern Levant as well as material in the Hebrew Bible and extra-biblical texts demonstrate that women played important roles in the cults of various deities in the Bronze and Iron Ages, and we might imagine that Canaanite women participated in similar activities.

Conclusion

This chapter has only scratched the surface on women's daily lives in MBA–LBA Canaan. In the past, women in the southern Levant were overlooked because of the supposed dearth of textual information and the lack of careful analysis of everyday life activities in archaeological contexts. The recognition that women are mentioned in the epigraphic material from Canaan will hopefully spur others to research what these sources can contribute to our understanding of women's lives, while the emergence of household archaeology now allows for comparative work both intra- and inter-site that will be useful when reconstructing aspects of daily life going forward. Future researchers should consider Canaanite women a topic worthy of study in its own right and not in relation to contemporary women at Ugarit and women in the period of the Hebrew Bible.

References

- Budin, S. L. (2011) *Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity, and Gender in the Ancient World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Cassuto, D. (2008) Bringing the artifacts home: A social interpretation of loom weights in context. In B. A. Nakhai (ed.) *The World of Women in the Ancient and Classical Near East*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 63–77.
- Cohen, S. (2014) The Southern Levant (Cisjordan) during the Middle Bronze Age. In M. L. Steiner and A. E. Killebrew (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of the Levant c. 8000–332 Bce*. Oxford,

- UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 451–464.
- Cohen, S. (2015) Interpretative uses and abuses of the Beni Hasan Tomb painting. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 74(1): 19–36.
- Daviau, P. M. M. (1993) *Houses and Their Furnishings in Bronze Age Palestine*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Ebeling, J. R. (2001) *Utilitarian Objects in Sacred Spaces: Ground Stone Tools in Middle and Late Bronze Age Temples in the Southern Levant*. PhD Dissertation. University of Arizona.
- Ebeling, J. R. (2002) Why are ground stone tools found in Middle and Late Bronze Age Burials? *Near Eastern Archaeology* 65(2): 149–151.
- Ebeling, J. R. and Rowan, Y. M. (2004) The archaeology of the daily grind: Ground stone tools and food production in the Southern Levant. *Near Eastern Archaeology* 67(2): 108–117.
- Ebeling, J. R. and Homan, M. M. (2008) Baking and brewing beer in the Israelite household: A study of women's cooking technology. In B. A. Nakhai (ed.) *The World of Women in the Ancient and Classical Near East*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 45–62.
- Falconer, S. E. and Magness-Gardiner, B. (1989) Bronze Age village life in the Jordan Valley: Archaeological investigations at Tell el-Hayyat and Tell Abu en-Ni'aj. *National Geographic Research* 5(3): 335–347.
- Franken, H. J. (1992) *Excavations at Tell Deir 'Alla: The Late Bronze Age Sanctuary*. Louvain, Belgium: Peeters.
- Gadot, Y. and Yasur-Landau, A. (2006) Beyond finds: Reconstructing life in the courtyard building of level K-4. In I. Finkelstein, D. Ussishkin and B. Halpern (eds) *Megiddo IV: The 1998–2002 Seasons*. Volume 2. Tel Aviv, Israel: Emery and Claire Yass Publications in Archaeology, Tel Aviv University, pp. 583–600.
- Gonen, R. (1992) *Burial Patterns and Cultural Diversity in Late Bronze Age Canaan*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Green, J. D. M. (2007) Anklets and the social construction of gender and age in the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age Southern Levant. In S. Hamilton, R. D. Whitehouse and K. I. Wright (eds) *Archaeology and Women: Ancient and Modern Issues*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, pp. 283–311.
- Green, J. D. M. (2013) Social identity in the Jordan Valley during the Late Bronze and Early Iron Ages: Evidence from the Tall as-Sa'idiyyah cemetery. *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan* XI: 419–429.
- Hardin, J. W. (2011) Understanding houses, households, and the Levantine archaeological record. In A. Yasur-Landau, J. R. Ebeling

- and L. B. Mazow (eds) *Household Archaeology in Ancient Israel and Beyond*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 9–26.
- Horowitz, W. and Oshima, T. (2006) *Cuneiform in Canaan: Cuneiform Sources from the Land of Israel in Ancient Times*. Jerusalem, Israel: Israel Exploration Society.
- Kamrin, J. (2009) The Aamu of Shu in the Tomb of Khnumhotep II at Beni Hassan. *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 1(3): 22–36.
- London, G. (2008) Fe(male) potters as the personification of individuals, places, and things as known from ethnoarchaeological studies. In B. A. Nakhai (ed.) *The World of Women in the Ancient and Classical Near East*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 155–180.
- Marsman, H. (2003) *Women in Canaan and Ancient Israel: Their Social and Religious Position in the Context of the Ancient Near East*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Moran, W. L. (1992) *The Amarna Letters*. Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Na'aman, N. (2011). The Shephelah according to the Amarna letters. In I. Finkelstein and N. Na'aman (eds) *The Fire Signals of Lachish: Studies in the Archaeology and History of Israel in the Late Bronze Age, Iron Age, and Persian Period in Honor of David Ussishkin*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, pp. 281–299.
- Nakhai, B. A. (2001) *Archaeology and the Religions of Canaan and Israel*. Boston, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research.
- Pritchard, J. B. (1964) Two tombs and a tunnel in the Jordan Valley: Discoveries at the biblical Zarethan. *Expedition* 6(4): 2–9.
- Pritchard, J. B. (1980) *The cemetery at Tell es-Sa'idiyeh, Jordan*. Philadelphia, PA: The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania.
- Rowe, A. (1929) The Palestine expedition: Report of the 1928 season. *Museum Journal* 20: 37–87.
- Uziel, J. and Avissar Lewis, R. S. (2013) The Tel Nagila Middle Bronze Age homes—Studying household activities and identifying children in the archaeological record. *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 145(4): 268–293.
- Wilson, E. A. (2013) *Women of Canaan: The Status of Women at Ugarit*. Whitewater, WI: Heartwell Productions.
- Yadin, Y. (1975) *Hazor: The Rediscovery of a Great Citadel of the Bible*. New York: Random House.
- Yadin, Y., Aharoni, Y., Amiran, R., Dothan, T., Dunayevsky, I. and Perrot, J. (1960) *Hazor II: An Account of the Second Season of*

Excavations, 1956. Jerusalem, Israel: Magnes Press.

Ziffer, I. (1990) *At That Time Canaanites Were in the Land: Daily Life in Canaan in the Middle Bronze Age 2 2000–1550 B.C.E.* Tel Aviv, Israel: Eretz Israel Museum.

“WILL WOMANKIND NOW BE HUNTING?”

The work and economic lives of women at Late Bronze Age Ugarit

Kevin M. McGeough

In the Ugaritic story of *Aqhat*, the eponymous hero rejects the goddess Anat's attempts to trade him gold, silver and even immortality in exchange for his divinely-granted bow. Aqhat makes the bad choice to taunt her as he does so, saying (KTU 1.17, Col. VI, 39–41): “Bows are weapons of (?) warriors/Will womankind now be hunting?” (trans. Parker 1997: 62). For those familiar with the character of Anat, this is a particularly meaningful insult, for Anat is a hunter and warrior and certainly she sees the bow as a tool appropriate to her. Aqhat pays for his insolence (and his refusal to trade the bow) with his life, slain by one of Anat's minions. Aqhat's sister Paghit, with the blessing of their father Danel puts on women's clothing over her warrior's gear and sets out to avenge her brother's death. Unfortunately the ending of the story has not been preserved, but presumably Paghit vanquishes Anat's servant, the one who killed Aqhat.

While Anat is arguably the most aggressive of Ugaritic divine women, the stories recovered from the city depict a mythological environment where there are few clear-cut gender divisions in terms of labour or access to public space. It is tempting but difficult to extrapolate about the lives of everyday women based on these mythological stories. Some have argued that there is a correlation between the women of myth and the lives of everyday women (Marsman 2003: 36, 44, 733; Van Selms 1954), although the specifics of any correlations are complex. Perhaps these stories of strong, empowered women reflect a reality where women played an important role in public and political life and there was little

distinction in power between the sexes. These same stories may reflect a situation where women were becoming more powerful than they had been before and they imply a challenge to the status quo. Or they may be the product of male fears or fantasies about women who were playing (or beginning to play) a prominent role in Ugarit. Or the stories could merely have been enjoyable fantasies, because they were so far from the truth of women's lives, either laughably amusing because a woman could act as Anat did, or useful for justifying the status quo, because they showed the consequences of subverting the normative social order and letting women act as men do. It is also possible that the stories bear little or no resemblance to the everyday life of women and reflect nothing of social history.

The complexity of understanding the relationship between myth and social life means that other types of evidence, although perhaps less glamorous, can be very valuable in understanding women's lives in the Bronze Age city. Along with the mythological texts, hundreds of letters, legal texts, contracts, and administrative records were preserved in the ruins of the ancient city and recovered by excavators.¹ These tablets, taken in tandem with archaeological discoveries, make it possible to identify the particulars of women's economic lives at Ugarit.

It should not be presumed that "woman" was a static category at Ugarit, or that all women's lives were much the same. It is clear that there were significant class distinctions at Ugarit and that the lives of wealthy women were very different from the lives of the urban and rural poor. In a previous study of Ugarit, I argued that distinguishing between royal elites, non-royal elites, and non-elites was an heuristically useful means of thinking about difference, and that these kinds of distinctions are readily evident in both the textual and archaeological record (McGeough 2007: 352–364). It is also apparent from the administrative texts that *ethnicity* was an emic category of difference for people of the city, where natives, Hittites, Hurrians and probably Cypriots resided side-by-side. Additionally, non-elites can be further distinguished by occupational category to some degree. Slavery and other types of economic indebtedness were also meaningful distinctions in the economic lives of Ugaritic women. Within the category of non-royal elite, there were different degrees of wealth and influence. What is not entirely clear from the textual record is how much social mobility was available to women to move from one category to another, either upwards or downwards. Marriage was perhaps one mechanism. Likewise, the king could proclaim (or award) significant changes in status to both men and women, including freedom from slavery (see below, RS 16.267).

Women's work in the Ugaritic household

The non-elite household was the living setting for the majority of women of the ancient city. These homes were multi-storey complexes with many families living in the same building, each taking up an entire block in the urban space of Ugarit.² As I have argued elsewhere (McGeough 2007: 279–280), the non-elite homes vary quite considerably in layout and size, and the organization of space gives some sense as to what life would have been like for the women who lived there. The discrete units within the building seem to have been able to accommodate an extended family, and it is likely that multiple generations lived within the same household. David Schloen has argued, based on multiple lines of evidence, that the family structure was patrimonial, and thus power would have been nested within a hierarchical family structure, with the oldest male as the head of the household (Schloen 2001: 332–334).

Such a hypothesis is supported by texts from the palatial archive. For example, in KTU 4.295, ll. 1–6 we read:

[]dmu of Apsunayu . . . and his son and his wife and ox and 8 sheep.

Ttln of Qamanuzu and his wife and his two sons.

Thmgdl of Yakuna`mu and his wife and his son and one ox.

The text continues in a similar fashion. The placement of the wives and sons varies, even within the same tablet, although both groups are lumped together with the oxen and sheep. Sometimes the wife is the first individual listed and other times she follows a reference to the sons. Thus it is not clear if this is evidence of varying degrees of influence between different households or just that scribal practices were not standardized in this regard. It is noteworthy, however, that the only named figure in each list is the head male and the others are indicated by reference to him, listed as *his* wife, *his* son, etc. Two data do complicate the information derived from these documents, however. The first is that these census lists have come from the palace archive and it is unclear to which homes they refer. The second, and more problematic issue, is that the lists indicate that these are households of resident foreigners at Ugarit, so it is not clear whether the household structure attested in these tablets was typical of Ugaritic families generally.

Other census documents provide a different perspective on

household organization and ownership. For example, KTU 4.102, ll. 4–7 reads:

A pre-eminent wife in the house of Artthb.

A wife and her two sons in the house of Iwrpzn.

A wife and an unmarried woman in the house of Ydrm.

Two pre-eminent wives and an unmarried woman in the [house of ?]

A line at the bottom of the tablet indicates that the people listed here are all Cypriotes, although Van Soldt has argued that the names seem Semitic or Hurrian (Van Soldt 2002: 816–817). Here we see various women in the houses of named individuals. While the women themselves are not named, the various people associated with the household are listed as theirs (f.) (*her* sons, *her* daughters, etc.). Some women are listed as wives (*att*). Some are identified as pre-eminent wives (*att adrt*) indicating a ranking distinction from other wives. Unmarried women (*pḡt*) are also listed, differentiated from the wives. Furthermore, some households have more than one wife, perhaps indicating that some degree of polygyny was permitted. There is little other evidence to suggest that this practice was common and scholars have come to different conclusions on this topic.³ Based on this text, there is clear evidence for a ranking of women within a household, based on marital status although it is not clear to what extent this can be extended to Ugaritic women specifically.

A personal letter from a man named ‘Uzzīnu provides interesting insight on how women might make use of their domestic accommodations. RS 17.177 relates:

I am living in the house of TRTN. (His) wife is furnishing my bread and, moreover, she is furnishing my wine (for) three (shekels of) silver. She is working for (my) father.

(*trans. Pardee 2002: 109*)

There the tablet breaks off so it is not clear what other work TRTN’s wife was doing, but at the least it is apparent that she was providing accommodations and meals from her home for payment.

Returning to the archaeological evidence for these households, much can be said about the kinds of household labour that were engaged in by non-elites at Ugarit. By combining these data with the literary evidence, it becomes possible to engender some of the

household tasks taken on by non-elite women and girls. What is important to note is that these tasks do not necessarily follow modern gender assumptions.

Lists of professions that have been found at the palace do not seem to identify women as involved in textile production or secondary food production (i.e. baking), activities that ancient historians typically assume to have been “women’s work”. The individuals associated with these jobs at the palace were men. This suggests that it is not safe to presume gender-based roles for different kinds of household work.

The example of textile manufacturing is instructive for how different types of evidence indicate different reconstructions of Ugaritic economic life. In the mythological texts, spinning is an activity that is engaged in by goddesses but never by male deities. In the *Baal Cycle* the mother-goddess, Athirat, is described as engaging in textile manufacturing (KTU 1.4, Col II, ll. 3–4): “She takes her spindle [in her hand,] A mighty spindle in her right hand” (trans. Smith 1997: 122). Yet it appears to be the opposite situation in the palatial administrative archive where the named individuals who are associated with textiles are most often men (or at least bear names that are more easily understood to be male). One exception is PRU VI, 123–124 (RS 19.99) where female names are listed alongside quantities of textiles. There is no indication, however, that these women were involved in the production of textiles. Given the contradictory textual evidence, how should one reconstruct the situation in the non-elite Ugaritic home? This may reflect a simple dichotomy between household and “professional” production, whereby women performed household tasks, such as spinning, weaving and cooking, but that these jobs were done by men in the palace setting. As the palatial records pertain mainly to the latter, men are identified as engaging in these tasks, even though the literary evidence suggests that women did them at home.

The kinds of work that were engaged in by the non-elite household that are attested archaeologically were mostly non-specialized kinds of labour. Many different facets of food production were conducted by members of these non-elite houses. Stone tools associated with bread-making show that cereal crops were made into edible form at the individual household level. Plaster-lined pits most likely functioned as grain silos and Schloen (2001: 336) has shown that, taking into account variations in size, these could have supported families of two to six members for about a year. Sickles found in each household bear a silica sheen, which is evidence that they were used for harvesting cereal crops. So despite Ugarit’s urban setting, members

of the household would have walked up to two hours away to engage in agricultural work (Schloen 2001: 335–341; McGeough 2007: 291). Most agricultural work is referenced using grammatically masculine forms (such as the various vineworkers in KTU 1.239–11). This, however, does not prove that women did not engage in these kinds of labour, only that these are references to males engaged in this work.

Cooking was important household work, although so ubiquitous as not to warrant mention textually except for literary purposes. Here, though, the texts do indicate that it was the women of the house who did the cooking. In the *Baal Cycle*, Athirat is described as making food in the house of El (KTU 1.4, Col II, ll. 8–9): “She sets a pot on the fire, A pot on top of the coals” (trans. Smith 1997: 122). Lady Huraya in the *Kirta Epic* prepares a feast on behalf of her husband Kirta. Greenstein (1997: 27) translates Kirta’s command to his wife (KTU 1.15: IV, ll. 3–5, 24–25): “‘Listen O Lady Huraya! Prepare your fattest of livestock; Open the broad vats of wine!’ . . . She herself handles the drinking bowl, She herself slices the meat”. In the *Tale of Aqhat* we read of Queen Danatiya’s tasks when entertaining the smith deity, Kothar-wa-Ḥasis (KTU 1.17, Col. V, ll. 16–24):

Attend Danatiya the Lady:

Prepare a lamb from the flock

For the relish of Kothar and Khasis

For the hunger of clever Hayyan

Dine and wine the gods,

Uphold and honor them,

The lords of Memphis, allotted by El,

Danatiya the Lady attends.

She prepares a lamb from the flock

For the relish of Kothar and Khasis.

(trans. Parker 1997: 58–59)

Non-elites also engaged in textile and olive oil production at the neighbourhood or community level (Callot 1987: 209, 1994: 191–194; McGeough 2007: 192–193). The equipment used for this kind of work is found in shared spaces in each of the major buildings in the non-elite sections of the city, so it is likely the equipment was communal

and this kind of work was done jointly with other households, or separately while taking turns using the equipment (see also Yon and Meyers, “Daily Life,” this volume). Otherwise, the textual evidence is relatively mute on these kinds of divisions of labour. Textile and olive oil production were most likely seasonally variable work to some extent, and although it cannot be proven, it seems probable that women were highly involved in this kind of production.

All of these production tasks could have been part of a woman’s daily life, along with other essential household tasks like raising children, gathering water and emptying the latrines that were located underneath the staircases of the buildings. In mythological texts, fetching water is depicted as a primarily female responsibility, which likely reflects the lived experiences of real Ugaritic households (Van Selms 1954: 50–51; Marsman 2003: 418–421). When Kirta is told to attack Udum, he is told to (KTU 1.14, Col. III, ll. 9–10): “Sweep from the well the women drawing the water, From the spring, the women filling the jars!” (trans. Greenstein 1997: 16). Another poem, KTU 1.12, preserves in line 59 a reference to “women drawing water”, but the context of the passage is itself obscure. Paghit, Danel’s daughter, is also referred to as a “bearer of water” in the story of Aqhat (KTU 1.19 – passim). This is consistent with the archaeological evidence for water management. Cisterns within the city seemed to be used to store water drawn from wells or rivers, but not to collect rainwater (Calvet and Geyer 1987: 133). Wells were located on every block, but not in each household, meaning that there was differential access to this resource and that the collection of the water for the household was time-consuming daily work.

Comments in the mythological texts suggest that the procurement of fuel was segregated along gender lines, with men responsible for gathering wood and women responsible for gathering straw (Van Selms 1954: 50–51). This is apparent in an offhand reference in the *Kirta Epic*, where Kirta is told, when attacking a village (KTU 1.14, Col. III, ll. 7–8) to: “Sweep from the fields the men cutting wood, From the threshing-floors the women picking straw!” (trans. Greenstein 1997: 16). Interestingly, laundry duties were segregated along gender lines in the mythological texts; men washed their own clothes and women washed theirs, with male and female children responsible for their fathers and mothers respectively. In the *Baal Cycle*, the deity Athirat washes her own clothing (KTU 1.4, column II, lines 5–7): “She conveys her garment in the sea, Her two robes in the rivers, Her robes, the covering of her skin” (trans. Smith 1997: 122). In the story of *Aqhat*, it is repeated no fewer than five times that one of the duties of a son to his father is (KTU 1.17, Col. I): “To wash his

stuff when there's dirt" (trans. Parker 1997).

Women, specialized labour, and the palace administration

It is likely that some women performed specialized labour, but again it is difficult to determine, based on the equipment found in the homes, whether men or women engaged in this kind of work. The ubiquity of weights (used for commerce) and the frequent appearance of moulds (for casting tools and jewellery) suggest that there was some more specialized secondary production in the households, but the evidence is ambiguous about who would have performed this work.

Concerning the palace's economic activities, however, the situation is less ambiguous. Based on lists of labourers found in the royal palace, it is possible to identify some kinds of specialized types of work that were engaged in by women. Because these tablets were found in the palace, it is not clear if these kinds of jobs were practised by women outside of the palace's sphere of influence. But at the very least it can be shown that women associated with the palace did have some identifiable occupations. KTU 4.714, for example, is a list of men in charge of *`šrt*, an occupation more commonly spelled as *`šrm*. Here the 't' ending can be read as a feminine ending (although this is disputed), which would suggest that these men were in charge of female staff.⁴ Although the exact nature of the work of the *`šrm* is not clear, most scholars believe that these were servants for banquets or individuals who served water or other drinks in the palace (see McGeough 2007: 113–114 for more on this occupation). Similarly, some scholars (Marsman 2003: 687; Del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín 2004: 711) have argued that KTU 4.705 lists distributions to female water-carriers or water-drawers, although I argue (McGeough 2011: 463–464) that this occupation is not listed in this text.

In a few other instances, women seem to be mentioned in the palatial distribution tablets, but without a clear indication of the nature of their work. Women are occasionally listed amongst men as the recipients of goods (perhaps rations) within the palace administrative texts, suggesting some kind of labour relationship between the individuals and the palace.⁵ For example, KTU 4.175 is a list of commodity measurements distributed to people listed either by name or profession. At least two of the attested names seem to be female (in lines 11 and 12):

Two *dd* (measures of grain) to 'nqt.

A *dd* (measure of grain) to Altt and her apprentice.

The woman in line 12 is listed along with her female apprentice (*lmdt*), but of what she was an apprentice is unknown.

These are the few clear examples of non-royal women who were mentioned within the palace administrative framework. Marsman (2003: 679) and Wilson (2013: 94–96) have argued that this is evidence that women were excluded from specialist professions within the Ugaritic economy. Or possibly, this evidence suggests that women's labour was not deemed necessary to *record* administratively within the palace, and it is possible that other types of women's labour was left unrecorded. For example, there is some evidence of female professional mourners in the mythological texts, akin to the better attested practice in Egypt (Van Selms 1954: 57; Marsman 2003: 520–525). Thus in the *Tale of Aqhat* (Cat 1.11.19, col. IV, ll. 9–11, 20–22) the patriarch Danel admits and dismisses “the weepers, the mourners into his palace, those breaking their skin” (trans. Parker 1997: 76). Again though, there is no evidence for women fulfilling these roles in the administrative corpus, but then one would not expect this kind of work to have been documented by the palace.

Women in legal literature

There is more evidence for women's economic status at Ugarit preserved in the legal literature, especially through marriage and divorce contracts. As is common in antiquity, women left their father's household upon marriage, whereupon they entered their husband's or their husband's father's household (see also Marsman 2003: 100–101, 455). Marriage contracts involving elites have been preserved archaeologically, and in these contracts, the prospective wife is given a dowry (*terḥatu*) that remains hers, even if the marriage ends (Vita 1999: 475–478).⁶ These contracts, however, are contracts between men; how much influence the prospective wife or the mothers may have had in their formulation is unclear and probably varied with different circumstances. Textual evidence from Ugarit shows that women had the right to leave their husband's household through divorce, which they were able to initiate themselves (Vita 1999: 478–479; Wilson 2013: 54–59). Most of this evidence comes from preserved legal cases and contracts involving elite and royal women. PRU 3, 81–83 (RS 16.143) is a contract in which a father gives his son some land. The text reads as follows:

From today, Niqmepa, son of Niqmaddu, king of Ugarit, has taken up the

house and field of Tešubmadu, an administrator in Ullamu and given it to Abdu, and Abdu has taken it with the inheritance field and given it to Kalbu, his son. Kalbu is free of claims from Aziru, his brother. Neither man may raise a claim against the other. . . .

Also, thus says Abdu: “There is no silver, chattel, anything that [belonged to] the mother of Kalbu in my debit. She has taken everything and departed and I have given to him a house and field”.

In the last section, the father makes reference to his ex-wife who took her property with her when she left. Wilson argues from this that women had control over their own property even after marriage and that all did not necessarily belong to the *pater familias*.

Unlike other centres of cuneiform culture (see Justel, this volume), legal codes specific to Ugarit have not been identified so it is difficult to speak of abstract legal principles regarding women’s lives. Based on the preserved legal cases from the city, it is apparent that women had legal agency and could act on their own behalf and were not beholden to a male in their household in these regards (Vita 1999: 482; Wilson 2013: 53–54). Women could act as witnesses to sales contracts. KTU 4.659 records a sale of slaves that was witnessed by “Kbby with the daughter of a maidservant”. Women could represent themselves in legal situations. RS 16.245 (PRU 3, 94–95) preserves an instance where a woman won her case, argued before King Niqmepa (Marsman 2003: 675; Wilson 2013: 132).

From today, before Niqmepa, son of Niqmaddu, king of Ugarit, Yatanu (a man) and Šanantu (a woman) on the subject of the land of . . . have undertaken a lawsuit between themselves . . . The king has decided (in favour of) the case of Šanantu, on the evidence of her tablet and on the evidence of her witnesses, and the king has given a tablet of confirmation to Šanantu. No one may take the land from the possession of Šanantu and from the possession of her children forever.

It can be presumed that the legal dispute emerged in relation to issues of land ownership or use. The woman, Šanantu, won her case by providing written evidence and witnesses that attested to her rights over that land. The king settles the dispute by affirming her rights to that property in perpetuity.

Women’s legal activities are most readily apparent in real estate contracts, in which women acted in tandem with their husbands or on their own accord. In one contract (*Ug. V*, 8–9 (RS 17.22 + 17.87)), Rašapabu, an elite man whose house has been identified at Ugarit, purchased, with his wife Pidda/Piddaya, a plot of land from another couple, Urumiya and his wife Taniya.⁷ The relevant portions of this text read as follows:

From today, before witnesses, Urumiya and Taniya his wife have sold a plot five *puridu*-measures in length and three *puridu*-measures in width (and) a *kunaḥi*-house to Rašapabu for 30 shekels of silver. From this day, Rašapabu and Pidda have acquired five *puridu*-measures of land.

Although both wives are referenced in relationship to their husbands, Wilson argues that the fact that the wife is mentioned at all is indicative of joint participation in the transaction. It may also indicate specific inheritance obligations in relation to the land. Some contracts specify that it will be the wife or the sons who inherit the land upon the man's death, so the inclusion of the wife in the contract may be an attempt to specify the circumstances surrounding inheritance. Marsman (2003: 672) and Vita (1999: 482) are right to note that the fact that the wife's inheritance needs to be stipulated suggests that this was not the default situation. There is no positive evidence for daughters inheriting land, which is to be expected in a patrilocal society.

There are instances in which women were held responsible for debts, as attested in the texts preserved at Ugarit. KTU 4.632, found in the palace, records that a man named *tgyn* and his wife are together indebted in the amount of 34 units of silver. Lines 18–23 read: “34 (shekels of) silver (debited) upon Tgyn and upon his wife”. Silver is also recorded as having been collected from a man and his sister (or potentially sisters – the orthography is ambiguous) in KTU 4.658, also discovered in the palace. Line 46 reads: “From [broken name] and his sister – 40 (shekels of) silver”. KTU 3.13 (formerly KTU 4.123) mentions the debt of “the second daughter”, although scholars disagree about the items listed in association with this individual. Some scholars (such as Marsman 2003: 685) have suggested that KTU 4.135, found in the palace, records an instance of a female administrative agent, a *šknt* (equivalent to the Akkadian *šakintu*). The text reads: “20 (shekels of) silver debited upon *šknt* of Siyannu”. Pardee (2003–2004: 33) rejects taking *šknt* as a female officer given that this office title is otherwise unattested at Ugarit and argues that this should be understood as a personal name. At the very least, however, this text is further evidence of a woman having debt relationships, as she is said to owe 20 measures of silver. (See also Svärd, this volume.)

There is much evidence that women could engage in trade activities, although the nature of buying and selling at Ugarit has itself been heavily debated. From an economic perspective, the mythological account of Anat trying to trade gold, silver, and immortality for Aqhat's bow shows that while hunting may have been

seen by some as “men’s work”, trading was not limited to men (Marsman 2003: 403). KTU 4.659 records a transaction in which a man and his unnamed daughter made some kind of purchase, perhaps of slaves. Other similar examples illustrate the movement of commodities into and out of the hands of women although the nature of the economic activity is itself debated (trade, gift-giving, rationing, etc.). For example, in a letter (RS 17.063), the same ‘Uzzīnu we saw above sends a message and commodities to his sister. Pardee (2002: 108–109) translates:

Uzzīnu son of Bayaya to his sister ‘Uthtaya: I am alive and well. Say to my mother: “Your ‘master’ is well”. I herewith send to you an [X-measure of Y] as well as a piece of linen, entrusted to [a messenger]. Have (him bring) me ten lg-measures of (olive)-oil and three lg-measures of perfumed (olive)-oil. Have one TZN sent to me.

It is not clear if the sibling’s mother’s “master” is her husband or someone in a position of social dominance. Neither is it clear what the commodities are, or what commercial relationship is presupposed. Is the sister administering a household in her brother’s absence, and is he sending and receiving materials through her? Is the brother buying materials from the sister? How much agency did his sister have in this interaction? Laconic evidence like this proves that women did participate in the movement of commodities, but it is difficult to understand the nature of those transactions.

Another letter of ‘Uzzīnu has been preserved (RS 17.177). This letter seems to have been written by ‘Uzzīnu and another individual, although the text itself is broken. The portion written by ‘Uzzīnu mentions someone’s request to the recipient’s sister not to send him a commodity. Pardee (2002: 109) translates:

And he asked your sister that she should not give (me) any asafetida [a spice used in cooking and for medicinal purposes]. If she does not furnish it sufficiently according to your order, would you give it to me?

Here then, it is apparent that the sister mentioned could choose whether or not to provide this spice according to her own whims; she would decide between the two contradictory requests from different men.

Female slaves

Presumably the women with the least economic agency at Ugarit were slaves. Little about the lives of slaves is directly preserved at Ugarit, but various legal, epistolary, and administrative tablets attest to the

nature of their bondage. Debt slavery was the primary means through which someone became a slave, and as a debt slave an individual was bound to another's household. While provided with needs of sustenance and housing, the conditions of their lives varied depending on the personalities of their owners and the economic circumstances of the households to which they became attached. It is likely that the work of slaves was typically the least desirable work in the household. Marsman (2003: 447) notes the god Ilu's rhetorical question to Athirat in KTU 1.4: IV: 59–61, as translated by Smith (1997: 128): "So am I a slave, Athirat, a slavegirl? Am I a slave who handles tools, Or Athirat a servant who molds bricks?" This offhand reference presumes that the manufacturing of mudbrick was typical of the kind of work expected of slave girls. The poetic parallelism also suggests that male slaves would have been the slaves expected to work with tools.

Women may have had very little say in the conditions that led to their slavery. KTU 4.659 preserves a purchase of slaves. Line 2 records that a named slave (although the name is not well preserved) was purchased along with "his daughter". RS 34.170 (RSO VII, 23) shows that slaves could be exchanged according to the whims of their owners (Marsman 2003: 637). The text reads:

I bought a slave from merchants. Now he has gone to my father. Now let my father give this man for my release, and I promise to give you in exchange a girl or a craftsman who is of the same value. Whatever my father says, send word to Burra. He will select a nice young woman, or purchase a craftsman who is worth exactly the same amount.

In this case, the author of the letter is offering to trade a slave girl or artisan in exchange for another slave whom he has purchased but needs to return in order to supply his own release from debt. This type of situation does not seem to have been uncommon. According to the treaty between Ugarit and Ura (RS 34.179 (RSO VII: 1)), the families of debtors who defaulted could be seized by their creditors (Marsman 2003: 659–660). A woman could also be freed from slavery by the actions of elite men. For example, King Ammistamru freed a slave so that she could become the wife of an official in PRU 3, 110 (RS 16.267):

From this day, Ammistamru, son of Niqmeppa, king of Ugarit, has declared free his servant Šaya from the status of servitude. Like Šapshu [the Ugaritic sun goddess] is "free", she is "free" (of claims) from the status of servitude. She was devoted to the king; the king has divested her and has declared her free as the sun. On the other hand, if in the future Šaya dies, all her properties: her house, her lands, with everything else that she acquired, belongs to Šaittenu the royal official, her husband.

As Wilson (2013: 90) has noted, this slave, according to the text, either owned or would own land herself, as it stipulates that her husband shall inherit the lands if she dies first.

The queen and the economy

It has been well recognized by scholars of Ugarit that the queen played a particularly prominent role in the kingdom. In terms of economics, the queen and/or the queen mother seem to have been in charge of their own estates and to have had substantial economic prerogatives independently of the king. As well summarized by Hennie Marsman:

The queen herself possessed fields, orchards with vines and olives (cf. e.g. RS 17.325, *Ug. V*: 264; RS 17.86+, *Ug. V*: 262–263; RS 17.102, *Ug. V*: 263; KTU 4.143: 1–2, 4.244: 9), had her own majordomo, her own business representative (RS 17.314, *PRU IV*, 189), her own circle of privileged “friends”, just like the king himself, and her own palace with extensive staff.

(Marsman 2003: 662–663, with references)

Thus, KTU 4.244, line 7 refers to “3 *ubdiya*-vineyards of the queen in ‘nmky”. Likewise, KTU 4.143 records: “At the agricultural estate of the queen in Raḥbānu: 250 olives, and in the hands of Krd, 154 (olives)”. Other economic prerogatives include lending and borrowing money, and the manipulation of real estate. KTU 2.21 is a letter from, given the salutation, another queen, asking that the loan that she had made to the Ugaritic queen be repaid. Various texts (RS 16.277 (*PRU 3*, 50–1; RS 15.86 (*PRU 3*, 51–52)) attest to the queen’s ability to conduct real estate transactions (Roche 2000: 214).

Conclusions

Typically scholars who have shown an interest in Ugaritic women have argued that women enjoyed a fairly positive station within their society, at least in comparison to other ancient cultures (Schaeffer, *PRU 3*, xxvi; Nougayrol, *PRU 3*, 179; Wilson 2013). Marsman (2003: 36, 693) has urged caution in this evaluation, believing that these evaluations can only be demonstrated for elite women. The larger question that emerges from this brief survey is how well the situation at Ugarit reflects the lives of other women in the Late Bronze Age Levant or in the ancient Near East more broadly. certainly, it is representative of the situation in North Syria. Ugarit is often taken as an exemplar of a Canaanite city even though the texts at Ugarit show

that the people of the city believed that Canaan was a separate entity, encompassing the smaller city-states found in the southern Levant. At least from an Ugaritian perspective, Canaan was different. Ugarit was well within the Hittite sphere of influence, unlike the southern Levant which was governed by the Egyptians at this time. The numerous Hurrian names attested at Ugarit likewise suggest that this ethnic group made up an important component of Syrian society that was not the case in the south. Yet there seem to be some significant elements of shared culture, and most scholars assume that while the Ugaritic situation may not have been completely analogous, it is at least indicative of Canaanite life. Similarly, evidence from Ugarit has often been used to help understand biblical times, and Marsman (2003) has shown that close comparison of the evidence from the two cultures can yield meaningful results about women's lives in both places and periods. Regardless, there is still much to learn about the economic lives of women at Ugarit.

Notes

- 1 There are competing conventions for identifying specific Ugaritic tablets. Excavation numbers begin with the abbreviation RS followed by a number indicating the year of excavation, followed by a number after the decimal indicating its object number. Often the alphabetic texts are referred to by numbers given in Dietrich *et al.* 2013. These numbers begin with the abbreviation KTU or CAT followed by a number indicating the tablet genre (i.e. 4 = economic texts) followed by a text number after a decimal. Non-alphabetic tablets are typically referenced by their excavation number and *editio princeps* (abbreviated either PRU or Ug.).
- 2 Callot and Yon 1995: 163; McGeough 2007: 277–289.
- 3 Wilson (2013: 44–46) believes that there is little evidence for this, while Marsman (2003: 133–135, 671, 682) sees enough evidence for this amongst royals to suggest that even though it may not have been common, it was legally possible. Bordreuil (1995: 448), Van Selms (1954: 19–21) and Vita (1999: 478) argue that it was practised, especially amongst elites. KTU 4.360 may provide further evidence for potential polygyny. This is a census text and the family listed in lines 7–9 is identified as having four wives: “Son of Ba‘aliya, 6 married men and one *hubshu* and 4 wives”. It is not clear if these were all wives of the head of the household (listed by name in the entry) or if they were just the wives of various husbands within the same household.
- 4 The other possibility is, as argued by del Olmo Lete and Sanmartín (2004: 189–190), that *`šrt* is unrelated to *`šrm*, and should be understood as “a group of ten”. In this case, the gender of the word would be masculine.
- 5 Six women are each listed as having been given a jug of beer in PRU VI, 115–116 (RS 17.354: 1–6). The second half of the tablet records a list of commodities given as a gift to the queen. The relationship between the two halves of the tablet is not clear. Female names are listed alongside a number in the already-mentioned PRU VI, 123–124 (RS 19.99), presumably indicating that they were the recipients of textiles (although the textiles may have been given to the palace

by these women as well since the summary line of the tablet is unclear). In the very broken tablet KTU 4.257, a “daughter-in-law” (*klt*) may have received a distribution of textiles but this reading is far from secure. There are a few other instances where some of the names in the texts may be feminine. A woman may have been the recipient of grain in Ug. V, 191 (RS 20.20). PRU 3, 196 (RS 15.42 + 110: 14–15) is a list of names, which may include two feminine names (but this is uncertain).

6 See, for example, PRU 3, 60 (RS 16.141).

7 For more on this instance, see, Wilson 2013: 51–52.

References

- Bordreuil, P. (1995) Les archives de la Maison d’Ourtenu. Les textes alphabétiques. *Comptes Rendus de l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres* 1995: 446–449.
- Callot, O. (1987) Les huileries du Bronze Récent à Ougarit. Premier éléments pour une étude. In M. Yon (ed.) *Le centre de la Ville* (38e–44e campagnes). Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations.
- Callot, O. (1994) *La Tranchée “Ville Sud”*: Etudes d’Architecture Domestique. Ras Shamra-Ougarit X. Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations.
- Callot, O. and Yon, M. (1995) Urbanisme et Architecture. In M. Yon, M. Sznycer and P. Bordreuil (eds) *Le pays d’Ougarit autour de 1200 av. J.-C. Actes du Colloque International, Paris, 28 juin–1er juillet 1993*. Ras Shamra-Ougarit 11. Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, pp. 155–168.
- Calvet, Y. and Geyer, B. (1987) L’eau dans l’habitat. In M. Yon (ed.) *La centre du la Ville, 38–44e (1978–1984)*. Ras Shamra-Ougarit 3. Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, pp. 129–156.
- Del Olmo Lete, G. and Sanmartín, J. (2004) *A Dictionary of the Ugaritic Language in the Alphabetic Tradition*, second revised edition. Handbuch der Orientalistik 67. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Dietrich, M., Loretz, O. and Sanmartín, J. (2013) *The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras ibn Hani and Other Places*. KTU: third, enlarged edition. Alter Orient und Altes Testament 360/1. Münster, Germany: Ugarit-Verlag.
- Greenstein, E. (1997) Kirta. In S. B. Parker (ed.) *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*. SBL Writings from the Ancient World Series, Volume 9. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, pp. 9–48.
- Marsman, H. J. (2003) *Women in Ugarit and Israel: Their Social and Religious Position in the Context of the Ancient Near East*. Oudtestamentische Studiën, Volume XLIX. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.

- McGeough, K. (2007) *Exchange Relationships at Ugarit*. Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement 26. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters.
- McGeough, K (2011) *Ugaritic Economic Tablets: Text, Translation, and Notes*. Edited by M. Smith. Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement 32. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters.
- Pardee, D. (2002) Ugaritic letters. In W. H. Hall (ed.) and K. Lawson Younger (assoc. ed.) *The Context of Scripture, Volume III: Archival Documents from the Biblical World*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 89–116.
- Pardee, D. (2003–2004) Rezension von J. Tropper, Ugaritische Grammatik (AOAT 273), Ugarit-Verlag. Münster, Germany: Ugarit-Verlag. Available at http://orientalistik.univie.ac.at/fileadmin/documents/Rezension_Tropper_AOAT273.pdf.
- Parker, S. B. (1997) Aqhat. In S. B. Parker (ed.) *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*. SBL Writings from the Ancient World Series, Volume 9. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, pp. 49–80.
- Roche, C. (2000) The lady of Ugarit. *Near Eastern Archaeology* 63(4): 214–215.
- Schloen, J. D. (2001) *The House of the Father as Fact and Symbol*. Studies in the Archaeology and History of the Levant 2. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Smith, M. S. (1997) The Baal cycle. In S. B. Parker (ed.) *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*. SBL Writings from the Ancient World Series, Volume 9. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, pp. 81–180.
- Van Selms, A. (1954) *Marriage and Family Life in Ugaritic Literature*. Pretoria Oriental Series 1. London: Luzac.
- Van Soldt, W. (2002) Studies on the sākinu-official (2): The functions of the sākinu of Ugarit. *Ugarit-Forschungen* 34: 805–828.
- Vita, J. P. (1999) The society of Ugarit. In W. Watson and N. Wyatt (eds) *The Handbook of Ugaritic Studies*. Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section 1 The Near and Middle East, 39. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 455–498.
- Wilson, E. (2013) *Women of Canaan: The Status of Women at Ugarit*. Printed by Createspace Independent Publishing Platform (Amazon).

WOMEN'S DAILY LIFE (IRON AGE ISRAEL)*

Carol Meyers

Introduction

Most Israelite women, like most Israelite men, lived in agrarian settlements.¹ Their daily lives took place in the family household, which was the smallest and most numerous unit of Israelite society. All the basic functions of everyday life, especially economic ones but also religious, social, and even political ones, played out in the activities and interactions of the household members. In addition, some women had societal roles that transcended their households and served the larger community.

Women participated, to a greater or lesser extent, in all aspects of life in an Iron Age (c.1200–587 BCE) household, which consisted of the dwelling in which they lived, the people (usually kin) who lived there, and its physical contents and also its lands and animals. The living group of most households, except those in the relatively few urban settlements, was an extended family consisting of a senior couple, their sons and sons' wives and children, unmarried daughters, and occasionally other dependents or non-kin. This lineage, the configuration of which shifted over time with the death, marriage, and birth of household members, is probably reflected in several biblical expressions: the common term *bêt 'āb* ("father's household") and the less common *bêt 'ēm* ("mother's household") found in woman-centered texts (e.g., Gen. 24:28; Song 3:4; Ruth 1:8; cf. 2 Kgs 8:1; Prov. 9:1.).²

To achieve as balanced a view as possible of women's lives, a number of different sources, especially biblical texts and archaeological remains, must be consulted. Yet each source poses special problems (see Meyers 2011: 62–72). The Hebrew Bible, for example, is androcentric and provides little information about the

social reality of the daily life of ordinary women; one cannot assume unproblematically that biblical texts are reliable reflections of the lived experience of the average Israelite of either sex (see Meyers forthcoming). For example, certain biblical materials (especially legal texts and also passages in other genres of biblical literature) are often taken as evidence of female subordination; yet other evidence, presented below, suggests a certain amount of female authority and autonomy. As for archaeology, many projects focus on community buildings (palaces, temples, fortifications) associated with male elites rather than on the structures in which most people, male and female, resided; household archaeology has only recently become more common (e.g., Hardin 2010). Also, archaeological remains are not “gender noisy.” They require interpretation in order to understand who used various artifacts and to assess the significance of the tasks for which they were used. Identifying and evaluating women’s everyday activities thus also draw upon the work of social scientists, especially ethnographers and gender archaeologists.

Household roles

Israelite households were largely self-sufficient, and women’s lives thus centered on the myriad activities essential for survival. Many anthropologists call these activities “maintenance activities,” a term referring to the processes required to maintain the household (Romero 2002). It encompasses economic tasks (production of basic commodities), reproduction (childbearing and childrearing), sociopolitical interactions of the household’s members with others in their community, and religious activities deemed vital for the well-being of the household.

Economic activities: women at work³

As is the case in virtually all traditional societies, the basic tasks necessary for survival in ancient Israel were divided by sex. Some were generally performed by women, others by men. There was also crossover in specific situations, with women helping in male-dominant activities and vice versa. In addition, women and men probably shared responsibility for certain tasks. Not every task can be identified, especially those not mentioned in the Hebrew Bible or leaving traces in the archaeological record. Yet there is reasonable certainty about the basic tasks.

The most common and important task was food production. Men

performed most of the activities needed for growing field crops (mainly grains) and other basic foodstuffs (e.g., legumes, olives, and grapes). The harvesting of crops was likely a family affair requiring the labor of all, children included, albeit with a division of labor by sex. For example, men reaped grains (e.g., Gen. 26:12; 2 Kgs 4:18), women (and children) gathered them into bundles or sheaves (probably reflected in Ruth 2:22), and men winnowed them (Ruth 3:2). Most crops then required preparation in order to be edible, and women were the food processors. Many of their food-processing tasks were seasonal; spreading grapes and figs in the sun to dry so that they would be available months later in dried form, for example, would take place in the fall when they were picked. However, the most time-consuming task—the transformation of grains into edible form—was performed by women virtually every day. Grains, in the form of porridge or gruel but more commonly bread, were the most important part of the Israelite diet, providing 75 percent or more of a person's daily caloric intake. In fact, bread was such an important part of the Israelite diet that the Hebrew word for bread (*leḥem*) is sometimes used generally for food in the Hebrew Bible. Jacob, for example, invites his kin “to eat bread” (Gen. 31:54), that is, “to have a meal,” just as “break bread together” today indicates people eating together.

Producing bread meant first grinding the grain into flour (Eccl 12:3), mixing it with water (and perhaps seasonings), kneading it to produce dough, and then baking it in an oven (see Gen. 18:6 and 1 Sam. 28:24). The first step was the most laborious. Grains were converted to flour by placing them on a large concave stone tray (lower grinding stone) and then rubbing them with a smaller stone (upper grinding stone). These tools, represented by the dual *rēḥāyīm*, are mentioned several times in the Bible (e.g., Exod. 11:5; Deut. 24:6; Isa. 47:2; cf. Judg. 9:53).⁴ In addition, they are found in Iron Age dwellings, usually in the main activity area. Moreover, there are often multiple sets of grindstones in a single dwelling—probably an indication that several women were grinding at the same time (e.g., at Khirbet Qeiyafa: Garfinkel 2009: 175, table 9.1.7, 9, and at Beth-Shean: Mazar 2006: 275; Mazar and Fink 2006: 219, photos 8.23–24; Yahalom-Mack and Mazar 2006: 488, table 13.5.6, 7, 14, 15; cf. Matt. 24:41). This is hardly surprising, given that it took two to three hours a day to produce enough flour for a family of six (Broshi 2001: 123–125). Tedious and time-consuming tasks are typically made tolerable when done in the company of others.

Baking too was likely a joint activity, with women from several households using a single oven. The Iron Age round, dome-shaped clay ovens discovered in excavations (e.g., at Jezreel, Ussishkin and

Woodhead 1994: 40, fig. 55, and at Taanach: Lapp 1964: 24, 26, fig. 10) are similar to those still in use in age-old Middle Eastern contexts.⁵ A study of 235 ovens from eighteen Iron Age sites revealed that small ovens, perhaps used only in inclement or cold weather, are found in individual dwellings, but that about 40 percent are larger ones located in courtyards or open spaces accessible to several dwellings (Baadsgaard 2008). The larger ones were probably communal ovens, meant to serve several households, a practice common in traditional villages in the Levant, where as many as ten women might use a single oven (McQuitty 1993–1994: 70; cf. Parker 2011: 611). Note that in Lev. 26:26, ten women share an oven, albeit in a time of scarcity. Sharing an oven is a fuel-conservation practice and also a social one, with women interacting as they gather to bake their loaves. Additional foodstuffs prepared mainly by women, such as stews of legumes and vegetables, would also have been cooked in shared ovens.

Other food-preparation activities are more difficult to identify. Ethnographic evidence (e.g., Amiry and Tamari 1989: 34–40) and occasional biblical references provide likely scenarios. The seasonal preparation of dried foods was a woman's task; the drying process (albeit of flax, not a foodstuff) is attributed to Rahab (Josh. 2:6). Lentils and chickpeas and other beans also required drying and sometimes grinding, for legumes too were sometimes ground into flour for bread (e.g., Ezek. 4:9). These tasks were almost certainly women's responsibility. Similarly, women were the ones who collected and dried herbs (see 1 Sam. 8:13, which refers to women as "herbalists"⁶). Once dried, these substances were ground in the mortars and pestles (or hammer stones) often found near grinding stones in household space where women prepared food (e.g., at Tel Beth-Shean; see Yahalom-Mack and Mazar 2006: 484–486, figs. 13.5.10, 12, 13). The herbs were condiments to flavor food, and some had medicinal value. Most milk was used to make cheese, with women churning the milk and then boiling the resulting curds (cf. Judg. 5:25).

Assigning gender to drink production is even more difficult. Wine was probably the most common beverage, judging from the frequency that grapes and wine are mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. Women are linked with vineyards (Prov. 31:16; Song 1:6), and harvesting grapes was probably a family undertaking (Amiry and Tamari 1989: 38–39). But it is difficult to determine who carried out the subsequent steps. Treading grapes was a celebratory occasion (e.g., Isa. 16:10) in which women probably participated (Judg. 21:21), and ethnographic evidence suggests that women dried both figs and grapes (*ibid.*). Wine-processing, often carried out in community installations in small

settlements (Faust 2011), was likely a male-dominated activity (suggested by Isa. 5:1–3). However, if beer was occasionally produced, women would have been the brewers, for ancient beer-making technology, quite different from modern processes, was linked to bread making (Ebeling and Homan 2008).

The preparation of most crops for consumption in Israelite households depended on women's labor. The time-consuming and recurring nature of food-processing activities occupied a major position in the rhythm of their daily lives. Yet these tasks were not the only ones that fell mainly to women. Another important household activity was the production of textiles.

In ordinary households, fabrics were made of sheep's wool and sometimes goat hair, for linen was more costly and was typically an elite fabric. Young girls and boys tended the household's animals (e.g., Gen. 29:6; 1 Sam. 16:19), and men sheared them (e.g., Gen. 31:19; 38:13). Women carried out the sequence of activities required to transform fibers into fabric and then to garments and other items. Several of these activities are represented in the archaeological record: spindle whorls for spinning fibers to produce yarn or thread, loom weights from the vertical looms used for weaving in the Iron Age, and ivory or bone needles for sewing garments. These objects are typically found in household spaces where women carried out food-processing activities (e.g., spindle whorls and loom weights from Timnah [Browning 2001: 248–258, photo 186, tables 52, 53] and Beth-Shean [Shamir 2006: 478–483, figs. 13.4.1–4, photo 13.16, tables 13.1, 13.3; Yahalom-Mack and Mazar 2006: 474–481, figs. 13.3.1–10, 4.5–14, photos 13.11–15, 17–21]. Several biblical texts mention women in relation to these tasks (e.g., Exod. 35:25–26; Judg. 16:13–14; 2 Kgs 23:7; 1 Sam. 2:19; Prov. 31:13, 19, 22, 24).

Textile tasks were no less time-consuming than bread production. Many hours were invested in washing the wool. Then spinning enough wool to produce yarn for a single garment might take as long as 100 hours (Strand 2010: 12–13). The subsequent weaving of simple flat-weave fabric required several days' work, and sewing fabric into a garment meant similar long hours. Like the tedium of grinding grain, the monotony of spinning, weaving, and sewing was surely relieved by women working together, as the archaeological evidence indicates. Several spindle whorls are often found in a single dwelling (e.g., at Beth Shan; see Yahalom-Mack and Mazar 2006: 475–476, figs. 13.3.7–8), although the labor of children and even old men may be represented by these multiple artifacts. However, the discovery of multiple sets of loom weights in the main activity area of a single

dwelling (e.g., two concentrations in Hall 28636, Building 28636 at Beth-Shean; see Mazar and Fink 2006: 219–220, 275, fig. 8.27, photos 8.23–24; cf. Cassuto 2008), or in an outdoor space, where they would have been used in the warm summer months, suggests that weaving was a joint female activity. Ethnographic evidence supports this, especially because weaving together was not simply a matter of camaraderie; setting threads on a loom and manipulating them to produce cloth is best done by the cooperative effort of two or three women.

Another, little-recognized aspect of women's contributions to the household economy is their work as potters, tool makers, installation builders, and basket weavers (see Meyers 2013: 134–135). Ethnography provides compelling evidence that the people who used household implements and installations are typically the ones who make them. Thus men, who were likely professional craftsmen (see 1 Sam. 13:19), produced metal objects in workshops. However, many other household items were surely made by women.

certain food-preparation activities, for example, required appropriate vessels; and as the preparers of food, women were best equipped to make those vessels. Professional male potters also produced wares, mainly in urban centers (e.g., Jer. 18:3). But women typically made handmade vessels for domestic use in traditional Mediterranean societies (Amiry and Tamari 1989: 42–46; Salem 1999: 69–71; London 2000, 2008: 159–162, 179–189). Making pottery required digging the clay, levigating it, and then forming and firing the vessels. These activities are rarely carried out by a single woman. Rather, younger women help older, more experienced potters. And the forming of large vessels for domestic use invariably required the joint efforts of several women. Ethnography also suggests that women built the clay ovens used for baking bread and cooking other foodstuffs and that oven construction was typically a collaborative project (McQuitty 1993–1994: 57). In addition, women likely produced other household items, including mats and baskets (Amiry and Tamari 1989: 42–43) and even stone tools (Ebeling 2002). And women no less than men contributed to the family project of housebuilding or renovation (see 2 Kgs 4:9–10; cf. Neh. 3:12).

Women's economic maintenance activities were clearly manifold, and all were necessary for survival. Several other features are significant. One is that many had social aspects; that is, women often worked together to relieve tedium and also because some tasks required cooperative labor. Another feature is that most of their tasks were not only physically demanding and time-consuming but also

technologically sophisticated. The requisite skills for tasks like producing fabrics or building ovens were transmitted by older experienced women to younger ones—neighboring women, their own daughters, or both. The same would have been true for virtually every household task. Finally, women’s responsibilities were generally complementary to those of men, as when they transformed the raw products produced by men into foodstuffs and textiles or participated in the labor-intensive efforts to harvest various crops.

*Reproductive activities: women and children*⁷

Biological reproduction was a central feature of women’s lives. The Eden tale of Genesis 2–3 identifies the first woman as “the mother of all who live” (3:20) and proclaims that she will have many pregnancies (3:16; see Meyers 2013: 88–93). The first woman represents all women in her childbearing capacity. Having children in Iron Age Israel was not a choice; it was essential to survival because children were part of the household work force (see Prov. 10:5; Jer. 7:18); adult children became the caregivers for their aging parents (Exod. 20:12⁸); and male children were the heirs to the family property (land, animals, dwelling, tools; see Prov. 19:14) unless a man had only daughters (Num. 27:1–8). As child bearers, women maintained their households and communities in an elemental sense.

Yet childbirth was fraught with dangers for most Israelite women (e.g., Gen. 35:16–18; 1 Sam. 4:20) as everywhere in premodern or developing societies. Although determining mortality rates for premodern populations is difficult, information from tomb excavations and from ethnographic and archival records consistently show that women’s lifespans were shorter than those of men, probably because of the risk of death in childbirth (see, e.g., Giles 1958: 201).⁹ Women’s life expectancies were as low as 20 to 25 years with the chance of early death increasing with the number of pregnancies. A description of the grim situation for women giving birth in early modern Europe could easily apply to non-elite women of the ancient Near East:

A whole variety of conditions, such as haemorrhage, pelvic deformity, disproportion between the sizes of a child’s head and the pelvis, severe abnormal presentations such as transverse lies, eclampsia and uterine inertia in labour, are likely to have posed problems which were beyond the capacity of those attending the birth to alleviate.

(Schofield 1986: 235)

Other factors also adversely influenced reproduction. New mothers

were susceptible to infections that could be fatal. Inadequate nutrition—because the Israelite diet was often deficient in key nutrients and because famines occurred sporadically (MacDonald 2008: 57–60, 80–87)—made women especially vulnerable to conditions negatively affecting prenatal health, childbirth, and lactation. In addition, adulthood and motherhood were virtually coterminous. Girls were probably married by age 14, soon after puberty, and thus were young when they began bearing children (Ebeling 2013: 190).¹⁰ Very young women are at greater risk for childbirth complications than older ones.

Some biblical texts give the impression that Israelites had large families: Jacob, for example, has twelve sons (Gen. 35:22); and kings often have many more offspring (e.g., 2 Kgs 10:1). But the Genesis patriarchs and the kings were elites, and their numerous children were the result of polygyny. Note that Jacob's twelve sons are borne by four women for an average of three children each, and three happens to be the average number of children in Israelite nuclear families according to ethnographic data and analysis of Israelite house size (Stager 1985: 18). Having three children meant having as many as six pregnancies, because of high infant mortality rates: it has been estimated that only one in two children survived to the age of 5 (see 2 Sam. 12:14–18; Isa. 65:20). Newborns were particularly susceptible to infections, and young children had little immunity to the recurrent outbreaks of life-threatening infectious diseases.

Bearing children was just part of a woman's reproductive role, for reproduction means childrearing as well as childbearing; that is, it entails providing social as well as biological continuity. Children become members of their culture only through the teachings of the people who raise them, and this is especially true in ancient societies that lacked formal education (except perhaps for elites). Israelite women were responsible for reproducing social identities and teaching life skills so that children could become competent adults (see Meyers 2013: 136–139). They were the primary educators and socializers of very young girls and boys, they continued to mentor daughters until they married and left home, and they instructed daughters-in-law who joined the extended family households that were probably the norm.

To a great extent, the educative process was embedded in a woman's daily routine. The skills required for most of the household's economic activities were imparted to children as they assisted their mothers in their daily tasks. This kind of persistent instruction, in which children learned household technologies, may have been informal education, but it was no less important than what children in

developed nations learn in schools. Similarly, in early childhood when children were cared for mainly by their mothers, both boys and girls began the process of being socialized into the norms and beliefs of their households and the larger community. Women played a pivotal role in teaching their children proper behavior (Prov. 1:8, 6:20; cf. 5:1, 31:26). The Proverbs 1 and 6 texts refer to both parents as teachers, for the parental instructional roles were complementary. As children became older, they learned gender-appropriate skills and behaviors from the same-sex parent. But the role of mothers as teachers was arguably greater than that of fathers, because women dominated the educative process in a child's early years.

Children also learned family traditions and even gained rudimentary historical knowledge about their lineage and their people from their parents (see Deut. 4:10; Josh. 4:21), with grandmothers (and grandfathers) likely instrumental in this regard. If they survived into old age, women performed fewer household tasks and took on more childcare responsibilities, including instructing their grandchildren in life skills. In addition, as members of the oldest living generation, grandmothers in traditional societies often are the ones who transmit family and community lore to the youngest members of the household (Connerton 1989: 39). And they are frequently gifted story tellers. Some of the biblical narratives identified as folk tales may well have originated in the storytelling skills of elderly women.

Although probably done more intuitively than intentionally, imparting both technological and behavioral wisdom was an integral part of women's daily existence. This comprehensive instructional role may be hard for us to grasp in today's industrialized world, where we give our children over to caregivers at ever earlier ages (unless we homeschool them). Yet in biblical antiquity, the continuity of household life depended on children learning how to perform household maintenance activities and also how to interact with others. The figure of personified wisdom—Woman Wisdom—in Proverbs (e.g., 1:20–23; 8:1–36) can be understood, at least in part, as a cultural expression of women's primary role in teaching and socializing young children (see Camp 2000).

Social and political activities: women and their communities**11**

An important but little noticed feature of women's economic activities,

as noted above, is that Israelite women often worked together. In the process of sharing daily and seasonal tasks, they inevitably formed relationships. The connections among women whose dwellings were in the same area or “neighborhood” of a settlement constituted an informal alliance that contributed to the maintenance of individual households and also the larger community. Women’s informal networks are virtually invisible in the formal records of a society, which typically focus on formal (male) leadership and organizations. Yet, although they operate differently than do the more visible male groups, women’s alliances are no less necessary for the social and political functioning of their communities.

Two biblical texts allude to the existence of women’s networks. One (Ruth 4:14–17) mentions that the “women of the neighborhood” (*sěkēnôt*) gather to attend the birth of Ruth’s son (cf. 1 Sam. 4:20, where women gather at the birth of Ichabod). The women who assist Ruth may well be the cohort mentioned earlier (Ruth 1:19), when townswomen greet Naomi upon her return from Moab with her daughter-in-law Ruth. The other text (Exod. 3:22) describes Israelite women in Egypt seeking resources for their journey to the Promised Land. That each woman is to ask for help from her female Egyptian neighbor (*sěkēnâ*) suggests that relationships based on residential proximity trump the narrative interest in portraying Egyptians as the enemy. Asking neighbors for help also appears in an Elisha narrative (2 Kgs 4:1–3), when a destitute woman borrows vessels from her neighbors, gender unspecified.

The theme of neighbors-helping-neighbors in these biblical passages resonates with what ethnographers have observed about the existence and functions of women’s informal alliances. Women who work together not only provide companionship and emotional support in the face of drudgery, they also form bonds that obligate them to help each other when they or their households have difficulties, knowing that assistance will be reciprocal. Women’s networks thus serve as mutual aid societies. Households in premodern societies without community social services depend on these informal associations in order to meet some of the challenges that inevitably arise. Women’s networks are channels of social communication that alert each other to problems and also provide solutions (see March and Taqqu 1986: 54–59). Illnesses, injuries, and food shortages were common and could be resolved only with the help of neighbors. Mutual aid was critical for survival (Gottwald 1979: 257–284, 315–318, and *passim*). For example, if someone’s husband was injured and could not sow seed at planting time, neighbors might deploy an older son to help. Or if a girl was ill and unable to tend her family’s goats, they could send one of

their daughters to shepherd the animals. Or if a household was short of food supplies, they might all share provisions with the struggling household. The words of Prov. 27:10 (“Better is a neighbor who is nearby than kindred who are faraway”) reflect the importance of relationships with neighbors and apply especially to women, whose work arguably brought them together more often than did the work of men.

Women’s alliances contributed to their communities in other ways. In their daily interactions, women typically shared technological knowledge with each other, thus improving aspects of food-processing or textile-producing tasks (Parker 2011: 621–623). This kind of knowledge-sharing may have transcended individual communities because, according to ethnographic reports, women maintained connections with kin in their natal households (see Zonabend 1996: 25–39), perhaps reflected in the story of Jacob going to his mother’s birth family to secure a wife (Gen. 28:2). These kinship connections, which were maintained at regional festivals, added another dimension to women’s networks. They provided inter-community contacts that might extend cooperative acts beyond a woman’s immediate neighborhood (see Ortner 1996: 136).

Informal women’s networks, both within and across settlements, also had political implications (see Yanagisako 1979: 191). In small Israelite communities and certainly in larger ones, the issues or conflicts that inevitably arose were typically handled by male community leaders or elders whose deliberations and decisions were part of a settlement’s political dynamics. Most political decisions required information, and the communication channels formed by women working together were an important source of relevant information. Because of their regular interactions, women were privy to certain kinds of information that were invaluable for dealing with community issues. One example is access to communal agricultural installations, like threshing floors or olive presses. Women would know which households had completed the olive harvest and were ready to process the olives; and they would be aware of the size of the yields. This information would reach community leaders, and the organization of work at communal installations could proceed efficiently. In short, women’s shared tasks meant the formation of cohorts that participated in social and, albeit indirectly, in sociopolitical matters. In addition, because of their connection with kin in other communities, women could influence the kind of alliances made among settlements.

Women's household religious activities

Religiosity was an integral part of women's lives (see Meyers, "Women's Religious Life," this volume). Here it needs to be emphasized that many of their religious activities were part of the fabric of daily life. These activities were directed to divine powers in the hope of securing help for life's difficulties: recurring droughts and crop shortages, persistent hunger and malnutrition, chronic deficiency diseases and outbreaks of infectious diseases, work-related injuries, and, for women, infertility and death in childbirth. Food-preparation tasks, for example, had a religious dimension in the steps women took to prevent evil spirits from contaminating food supplies. Also, women's food-preparation role afforded them familiarity with the healing as well as flavoring properties of various herbs. They collected and dried herbs both to flavor foods and to concoct medicinal substances to be used along with incantations in attempts to dispel or placate divine forces thought to be causing maladies. Meals themselves likely involved token sacrifices of the daily fare, prepared by women and offered in gratitude for food, in the hope of securing a better food supply, or both. Women who were pregnant or hoping to become pregnant performed religious behaviors meant to help them conceive, to protect them while pregnant, and safeguard their vulnerable newborns.

Outside the household: women's community roles

In addition to household responsibilities, and perhaps sometimes instead of them, a small number of women served their communities in specialized roles we might call "professions."¹² These varied and numerous professions—some carried out by women working alone, some by women in groups—are known mainly because they appear in the Hebrew Bible. Nearly twenty in number, these positions were often exclusively women's jobs, although several were held by both women and men. Some would be considered menial labor, and others involved creative work or authoritative function.

Women's maintenance activities sometimes translated into trades or crafts serving the larger community. Their textile skills are used for making sumptuous cultic fabrics (Exod. 35:25–26; 2 Kgs 23:7), and the woman of Proverbs 31 has a cottage industry producing garments (Prov. 31: 13, 18–19, 24). The discovery of seals (or their impressions, called bullae) and scarabs with women's names likely attests to the existence of Israelite businesswomen, for these objects were used in

business or legal transactions (see Rollston 2010: 74–77). Similarly, although not mentioned in the Bible, the expertise of some women in producing household objects (e.g., baskets or pottery) probably meant that some women marketed home-produced items. Proficiency in food-producing led to positions as herbalists (NRSV “perfumers”; see note 6), cooks, and bakers (1 Sam. 8:13) in the royal household or state industries. Familiarity with childbirth led some women, likely in their senior years, to serve as midwives (Gen. 35:17, 38:28; Exod. 1:15–21). They usually attended elite women rather than ordinary peasants. “Nurses” too (Gen. 24:59, 35:8; 2 Kgs 11:2), probably wet-nurses, were typically employees of the wealthy.

Women had community religious roles (see Meyers, “Women’s Religious Life,” this volume). certain religious activities also were part of the general cultural realm, for women sang or performed with musical instruments in secular (e.g., 2 Sam. 19:35 [Heb. 19:36]; Eccl. 2:8) and religious contexts (e.g., Ps. 68:25). Funerary performance and the composition of dirges, which were cultural as well as religious acts, were the domain of female specialists (Jer. 9:17–20 [Heb. 9:16–19]) as in many cultures. In ancient Egypt, for example, mourners were exclusively women (Tyldesley 1994: 132), and a royal Phoenician sarcophagus shows female mourners beating their breasts and tearing their hair (Gray 1964: pls. 56–57; cf. Jer. 7:29, 16:6).

Several leadership roles are mentioned. Deborah is prominent as a military figure who also adjudicated and was a prophet. Two women—the wise woman of Tekoa (2 Sam. 14:1–20) and the wise woman of Abel Beth-maakah (2 Sam. 20:14–22)—were able to resolve national crises because of their sagacity. A number of royal women (e.g., Athalia and Jezebel) exercised political power by virtue of their class; and several others, called *gēbîra* (“great lady”; NRSV “queen mother”), were court functionaries of some sort (e.g., Maakah in 1 Kgs 15:13).

Several other roles bear mention. One is perhaps the least visible: women as couriers (2 Sam. 17:17; Prov. 9:3) or heralds, implied by the female gender of the word for “herald of good tidings” (e.g., Isa. 40:9). The profession mentioned most often is prostitution, which is discouraged (e.g., Lev. 19:29; Prov. 29:3) but never absolutely forbidden; in fact, a woman who disguises herself as a prostitute (Tamar; Gen. 38:13–15) and another who is a prostitute and also the head of her household (Rahab; Josh. 6:25) are depicted positively.

Conclusions

In evaluating the lives of Israelite women, it is important to avoid presentism. Reading current ideas and perspectives about women's activities into the past would risk misunderstanding how women experienced their lives. The meaning and value of women's contributions to their households and communities in biblical antiquity diverged in fundamental ways from the way those activities are viewed today. Perhaps the best example is the perception of women's economic activities. Because most were carried out in or near their dwellings, they are often labeled "housework" or "domestic work," terms which today designate routine, unpaid labor. Moreover, because unpaid housework now is often considered supportive and secondary to work outside the home, it tends to be trivialized. Such views are largely the result of the industrial revolution and the concomitant separation of the workplace, the main arena of economic activity, from the home, with little or no economic value assigned to housekeeping chores. The reality in premodern agrarian societies, ethnography indicates (e.g., Assmuth 1997: 17, 92), was quite different.

Women's maintenance tasks in biblical antiquity functioned in ways that challenge notions of women's work as inherently unimportant or less valuable than men's. In transforming agricultural products to edible and wearable form in Israelite households, women's work was an economic activity just as critical for family survival as was the growing of crops and animals; and it was arguably more gratifying than male household labor (Meyers 1997: 26–27). Also, women's work afforded them, especially senior women in extended family contexts, considerable household power. The female heads of households acted as chief operating officers—organizing daily tasks, allocating resources, and determining how household space was used. In doing so, women exercised authority over young and even adult children, daughters-in-law, and sometimes spouses.

Several biblical passages attest to these power dynamics. The narrative about Abigail (1 Samuel 25) shows her to be a woman with access to resources that she uses cleverly to rescue her household from the wrath of the future king, David. She acts on her own initiative without consulting her husband, gives orders to servants, and speaks with the diplomatic and wise rhetoric of a woman accustomed to being in charge. The Shunammite narrative (2 Kgs 4:8–37, 8:1–6) depicts a woman acting autonomously in a series of acts; she invites the prophet Elisha to her household, reconfigures household space, moves her family away to escape a drought, interacts easily with the king as well as the prophet, and negotiates the restoration of property seized by squatters when the family is away. Finally, in Proverbs

(31:10–31), the “strong woman” (‘ēšet-ḥayil, NRSV “capable wife”) is portrayed as an efficient and successful household manager, exhibiting resourcefulness and acumen in economic processes. These are affluent women, to be sure; but the lives of wealthy and peasant women were probably much the same, except that servants or slaves relieved the wealthy of some household labor.

These managerial powers call into question the idea of male dominance in all components of household and community life (Meyers 2013: 182–193; 2014). Their economic tasks complemented those of men, who controlled crop and herd management. Women and men were thus economically interdependent (see Hendon 1996: 46), and general female subordination would not have been a functional reality.

Evaluation of the sociopolitical implications of the informal networks formed by women working together must likewise resist presentist ideas. In premodern contexts, the indirect and less visible activities of women’s groups are different but no less important than men’s direct and visible ones. The community services resulting from women’s connections are indicative of the interconnected and overlapping private and public realms of ancient life—very different from the separation of private and public into distinct spheres in the industrialized world (Stockett and Geller 2006: 7).

Women’s reproductive role must be considered apart from the presentist idea, often found in feminist critiques of biblical texts (e.g., Fuchs 2000: 44–90), that bearing children served only male interests in producing heirs. Women no less than men were the beneficiaries of having offspring to assist them in household tasks and to care for them in their dotage. Just as important, the identity of premodern peoples tends to be more collective, with people seeing themselves embedded in families and communities, than individual (Di Vito 1999: 221, 223). When a woman moved to her husband’s household, she would quickly identify with *his* household (although probably remaining connected to her birth family). Bearing children to inherit household property and continue the lineage thus served her interests too.

Women’s community roles often involved expertise. Just as for household technologies, the skill or knowledge sets involved in many of the professions (e.g., musical performance, lamenting, prophesying, offering wisdom, and also professions based on household technologies) were passed from experienced women to novices or apprentices. Thus there were hierarchies within these professions, especially those in which women worked in groups. The senior women

had the experience of exerting leadership, and all the women in these cohorts experienced the satisfaction of providing religiously or culturally important services to their community. (Similar hierarchies existed in women's informal networks, with some women taking the lead in organizing their assistance to households in need or in transmitting technical knowledge.) In short, women's hierarchies existed independently of the male-dominated ones operating in other arenas of Israelite life—the ones most visible in biblical texts—thus again contesting the idea that men controlled *all* aspects of life.

In aggregate, women's lives were more difficult and more complex than we might have imagined. Yet most adult women had ample opportunity to experience the satisfaction of contributing in vital ways to the welfare of their households and communities. Ancient Israel was certainly not an egalitarian society with respect to gender, but women nonetheless had agency in significant areas of everyday life.

Notes

- * “This chapter is adapted, with the kind permission of the publishers (Wiley-Blackwell), from the author’s 2016 chapter on “Women’s lives” in S. Niditch (ed.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel*, pp. 415–432.
- 1 “Israelite” and “Israel” are used here in a general cultural sense, not as political or geographic designations.
- 2 The use of “mother’s household” may indicate the prominence of women in household tasks and management; see discussion below and also Meyers 1991.
- 3 For more details and references, in addition to the ones cited in this chapter, see Meyers 2013: 125–139.
- 4 English translations of these verses vary and do not always convey the ancient reality of a pair of objects.
- 5 Two kinds of round clay ovens are used (Baadsgaard 2008: 21–22; cf. McQuitty 1993–1994: 55–56): the *tabun* (an Arabic word), which has fuel (dung) heaped against the outside, with bread baked in the interior; the *tannur* (a Hebrew word, see, e.g., Exod. 8:3 and Lev. 2:4), which has fuel (wood) in the inside, with bread dough slapped against the interior walls. Iron Age ovens were probably *tannurs*, although excavators often use the terms inconsistently (Baadsgaard 2008: 26).
- 6 Most translations have “perfumers,” which does not adequately convey the meaning of the Hebrew root (*rqh*).
- 7 For more information and references in addition to those provided here, see Meyers 2013: 97–102, 136–139.
- 8 The word translated as “honor” in the fifth commandment (see also Deut. 5:16; cf. Prov. 23:22) refers to an adult child’s obligation to care for elderly parents.
- 9 Giles discusses Bronze Age skeletal remains from Lachish; the report on Lachish’s Iron Age osteological data does not provide age estimates. Very little information is available about Iron Age human bones, because antiquities law in Israel forbids excavating most human remains.

- 10 Ebeling 2013 also provides information about marriage as a life-cycle event.
- 11 See Meyers 2013: 139–146 for more details and references, in addition to those cited in this chapter.
- 12 For additional information and references about these professions, see Meyers 2013: 171–179.

References

- Amiry, S. and Tamari, V. (1989) *The Palestinian Village Home*. London: British Museum.
- Assmuth, L. (1997) *Women's Work, Women's Worth: Changing Lifecourses in Highland Sardinia*. Transactions of the Finish Anthropological Society 239. Saarijärvi, Finland: Gummerus Kirjapaino Oy.
- Baadsgaard, A. (2008) A taste of women's sociality: Cooking as cooperative labor in Iron-Age Syria-Palestine. In B. A. Nakhai (ed.) *The World of Women in the Ancient and Classical Near East*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 13–44.
- Broshi, M. (2001) The diet of Palestine in the Roman period: Introductory notes. In M. Broshi, *Bread, Wine, Walls and Scrolls*. Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series 36. London: Sheffield Academic Press, pp. 121–143.
- Browning, D. C. Jr. (2001) Loomweights. In A. Mazar and N. Panitz-Cohen (eds) *Timnah (Tel Batash) II: The Finds from the First Millennium Bce*. Qedem 42. Jerusalem, Israel: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, pp. 248–258.
- Camp, C. (2000) Woman wisdom in the Hebrew Bible (Job 28:1–28: Prov. 1:20–33; 3:13–18; 7:1–5; 8:1–36; 9:1–6; 14:1). In C. Meyers, T. Craven and R. S. Kraemer (eds) *Women in Scripture: A Dictionary of the Named and Unnamed Women in the Hebrew Bible, the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, and the New Testament*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, pp. 548–550.
- Cassuto, D. (2008) Bringing home the artifacts: A social interpretation of loom weights in context. In B. A. Nakhai (ed.) *The World of Women in the Ancient and Classical Near East*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 63–77.
- Connerton, P. (1989) *How Societies Remember*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Di Vito, R. A. (1999) Old Testament anthropology and the construction of personal identity. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 61: 217–238.
- Ebeling, J. R. (2002) *Bread Making as Women's Technology in Ancient*

- Israel. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Americans Schools of Oriental Research, Toronto, Canada.
- Ebeling, J. R. (2013) Marriage, sex, reproduction, and divorce. In D. M. Master (ed.) *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Archaeology*, two volumes. New York: Oxford University Press, volume 2, pp. 190–201.
- Ebeling, J. R. and Homan, M. M. (2008) Baking and brewing beer in the Israelite household: A study of women's cooking technology. In B. A. Nakhai (ed.) *The World of Women in the Ancient and Classical Near East*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 45–62.
- Faust, A. (2011) Household economies in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. In A. Yasur-Landau, J. Ebeling and L. Mazow (eds) *Household Archaeology in Ancient Israel and Beyond*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 255–273.
- Fuchs, E. (2000) *Sexual Politics in the Biblical Narrative: Reading the Hebrew Bible as a Woman*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 310. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Garfinkel, Y. (2009) Stone and metal artifacts. In Y. Garfinkel and S. Ganor, *Khirbet Qeiyafa Vol. 1: Excavation Report 2007–2008*. Jerusalem, Israel: The Israel Exploration Society and The Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, pp. 175–194.
- Giles, M. (1958) The human and animal remains. In O. Tufnell (ed.) *Lachish IV: The Bronze Age*. London: Oxford University Press, pp. 312–322.
- Gottwald, N. K. (1979) *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250–1050 BCE*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.
- Gray, J. (1964) *The Canaanites*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Hardin, J. W. (2010) *Lahav II. Households and the Use of Domestic Space at Iron II Tell Halif: An Archaeology of Destruction*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Hendon, J. (1996) Archaeological approaches to the organization of domestic labor: Household practice and domestic relations. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 22: 45–61.
- Lapp, P. W. (1964) The 1963 excavation at Ta'anek. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 173: 4–44.
- London, G. (2000) *Women Potters of Cyprus*. Nicosia, Cyprus: Tetrakyla Film Productions Ltd. Videocassette, 26 minutes.
- London, G. (2008) (Fe)male potters as the personification of individuals, places, and things as known from ethnoarchaeological studies. In B. A. Nakhai (ed.) *The World of Women in the Ancient and*

- Classical Near East. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp. 155–180.
- MacDonald, N. (2008) *What Did the Ancient Israelites Eat? Diet in Biblical Times*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
- March, K. S. and Taqqu, R. I. (1986) *Women's Informal Associations in Developing Countries*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Mazar, A. (2006) The stratigraphy and architecture of strata P-10-P-1: Analysis of stratum P-7 building 28636. In A. Mazar, *Excavations at Tel Beth-Shean 1989–1996: Volume I, From the Late Bronze Age IIB to the Medieval Period*. Jerusalem, Israel: The Israel Exploration Society and the Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, pp. 269–286.
- Mazar, A. and Fink, A. S. (2006) The stratigraphy and architecture of strata P-10-P-1: The stratigraphy and architecture. In A. Mazar, *Excavations at Tel Beth-Shean 1989–1996: Volume I, From the Late Bronze Age IIB to the Medieval Period*. Jerusalem, Israel: The Israel Exploration Society and the Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, pp. 202–268.
- McQuitty, A. (1993–1994) Ovens in town and country. *Berytus Archaeological Studies* 41: 53–76.
- Meyers, C. (1991) “To her mother’s house”—Considering a counterpart to the Israelite *bêt ’āb*. In D. Jobling, P. Day and G. T. Sheppard (eds) *The Bible and the Politics of Exegesis: Essays in Honor of Norman K. Gottwald on his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim, pp. 39–52, 304–307.
- Meyers, C. (1997) The family in early Israel. In L. G. Perdue, J. Blenkinsopp, J. J. Collins and C. Meyers, *Families in Ancient Israel*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, pp. 1–47.
- Meyers, C. (2011) Archaeology: A window to the lives of Israelite women. In I. Fischer and M. N. Puerto, with A. Taschl-Erbele (eds) *Hebrew Bible – Old Testament: Torah*. Vol. 1.1 of J. Økland, I. Fischer, M. N. Puerto and A. Valerio (eds) *The Bible and Women: An Encyclopaedia of Exegesis and Cultural History*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, pp. 61–108.
- Meyers, C. (2013) *Rediscovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Meyers, C. (2014) Was ancient Israel a patriarchal society? *Journal of Biblical Literature* 133: 8–27.
- Meyers, C. (forthcoming) Double vision: Textual and archaeological images of women. *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* 4.
- Ortner, S. (1996) *Making Gender: The Politics and Erotics of Culture*. Boston, MA: Beacon.

- Parker, B. J. (2011) Bread ovens, social networks and gendered space: An ethnoarchaeological study of *tandir* ovens in southeastern Anatolia. *American Antiquity* 76: 603–627.
- Rollston, C. A. (2010) *Writing and Literacy in the World of Ancient Israel: Epigraphic Evidence from the Iron Age*. Archaeology and Biblical Studies 11. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Romero, M. S. (2002) Women, maintenance activities, and space. In G. Muskett, A. Koltsida and M. Georgiadis (eds) *Proceedings of the Symposium on Mediterranean Archaeology SOMA 2001: Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Meeting of Postgraduate Researchers, University of Liverpool, 23–25 February 2001*. Oxford, UK: Archaeopress, pp. 178–182.
- Salem, H. J. (1999) Implications of cultural tradition: The case of Palestinian traditional pottery. In T. Kapitan (ed.) *Archaeology, History, and Culture in Palestine and the Near East: Essays in Memory of Albert E. Glock*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, pp. 66–82.
- Schofield, R. (1986) Did the women really die? Three centuries of maternal mortality in “The world we have lost”. In L. Bonfield, R. M. Smith and K. Wrightson (eds) *The Worlds We Have Gained: Histories of Population and Social Structure: Essays Presented to Peter Laslett on His Seventieth Birthday*. Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell, pp. 231–260.
- Shamir, O. (2006) The assemblage of clay loomweights from stratum P-7 building 28636. In A. Mazar, *Excavations at Tel Beth-Shean 1989–1996: Volume I, From the Late Bronze Age IIB to the Medieval Period*. Jerusalem, Israel: The Israel Exploration Society and the Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, pp. 478–483.
- Stager, L. E. (1985) The archaeology of the family in ancient Israel. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 260: 1–35.
- Stockett, M. K. and Geller, P. L. (2006) Feminist perspectives on our past, present, and future. In P. L. Geller and M. K. Stockton (eds) *Feminist Anthropology: Past, Present, and Future*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Strand, E. A. (2010) The basics of textile tools and textile terminology: From fiber to fabric. In C. Michel and M.-L. Nosch (eds) *Textile Terminologies of the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean from the Third to First Millennia BC*. Ancient Textile Series 8. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 10–22.
- Tyldesley, J. (1994) *Daughters of Isis*. London: Viking/Penguin.
- Ussishkin, D. and Woodhead, J. (1994) Excavations at Tel Jezreel 1991–1992: Second preliminary report. *Tel Aviv* 26: 1–48.

- Yahalom-Mack, Y. and Mazar, A. (2006) Various finds from the Iron Age II strata in areas P and S. In A. Mazar, *Excavations at Tel Beth-Shean 1989–1996: Volume I, From the Late Bronze Age IIB to the Medieval Period*. Jerusalem, Israel: The Israel Exploration Society and the Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, pp. 468–504.
- Yanagisako, S. J. (1979) Family and household: The analysis of domestic groups. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 8: 161–203.
- Zonabend, F. (1996) An anthropological perspective on kinship and the family. In A. Burghière, C. Klapisch-Zuber and F. Zonabend (eds), S. H. Tenison, R. Morris and A. Wilson (trans.) *Distant Worlds, Ancient Worlds. A History of the Family* 1. Cambridge, MA: Belknap, pp. 9–68.

WOMEN IN PHILISTIA

The archaeological record of the Iron Age

Assaf Yasur-Landau

Could not once blinding me, cruel, suffice?

When first I look'd on thee, I lost mine eyes.

(Richard Crashaw 1612–1649 Divine Epigrams: Samson to his Delilah)

Our image of Philistine women is heavily influenced by the biblical narrative of Samson and Delilah (Judg. 13), and even more so by baroque imagery of their ill-fated relationship. The moment of Delilah's betrayal was portrayed on canvas in Anthony van Dyck's, Rembrandt's, and Peter Paul Rubens' identically titled works, *Samson and Delilah*. Depictions in pieces of performance art include Milton's (1671) tragedy *Samson Agonistes*—on which Handel's (1743) oratorio *Samson* (HWV 57) is based—and also Cecil B. DeMille's 1949 feature, *Samson and Delilah*.

Philistia, the setting of the adventures of Samson, may be roughly delineated by the Yarkon River on the north, Wadi Gaza on the south, the Mediterranean Sea on the west, and the Judean foothills or Shephelah on the east (Mazar 1985; Finkelstein 1996). This territory was divided into a *pentapolis*—five Philistine cities, four of which, Ekron, Ashdod, Ashkelon, and Gath, have been systematically excavated. While the Iron Age archaeological record is considerably less picturesque than the baroque imagery, it nonetheless reveals intriguing, if sometimes painfully fragmentary, evidence regarding women's role in the formation of group identity during this period. This chapter will not deal only with Philistine women, i.e., women belonging to the ancient ethnic group of the Philistines, but rather with women who inhabited the geographical zone of Philistia, be they Philistine, Canaanite, or other.

The area that would become Philistia was inhabited in the Late Bronze Age by people of southern Levantine culture, commonly referred to as Canaanites. Their material culture continued centuries-old traditions, beginning in the Middle Bronze Age, with some influence of Egyptian art and architecture, especially for the elite, caused by the New Kingdom control over Canaan (Bunimovitz 1995; Killebrew 2005: 93–138). A period of severe crisis beginning in the late thirteenth century BCE and continuing into the early twelfth century BCE left all Canaanite city states in the southern Levant in ruins. This was, of course, a part of a watershed event of the collapse of the Bronze Age civilization in the Aegean, Anatolia and Syria with the demise of the Mycenaean palaces, the collapse of the Hittite empire, and the destruction of the Syrian coast, including the kingdoms of Ugarit and Amurru (e.g., Kaniewski *et al.* 2011 with references). Letters from Ugarit tell of imminent danger from the sea, just before the destruction of Ugarit c.1190. These events were connected to the depictions and account of sea and land battles between Ramses III and a coalition of “Sea Peoples” (one of them the Philistines), occurring c.1175 (Kahn 2011). Archaeologically, the destructions were followed in Cilicia, the Syrian coast, the Amuq, and the southern Canaanite coast by the sudden appearance of locally made Aegean-inspired material culture traits, side by side with continuity of local traditions. The same phenomenon was also observed in Cyprus, an island which did not suffer from destructions in the early twelfth century BCE (Yasur-Landau 2010a: 122–193). These traits included not only local imitation of Aegean-style fineware pottery, i.e. drinking bowls and kraters, but also cooking pots and loom weights of Aegean style, reflecting domestic practices that were not influenced by previous, pre-destruction, commercial contact with the Aegean, therefore indicative of some form of migration between the Aegean area and the eastern Mediterranean and Cyprus (Karageorghis and Kouka 2011). In the southern coastal plain of Canaan, the collapse of the urban culture, although not necessarily connected with invasion, was followed by the common appearance of such material culture traits, which were connected with the migration of the Philistines. Indeed, an Egyptian inscription from the early first millennium BCE mentions an “Envoy to the Canaan of Philistines” and the area of the southern coastal plain was named the Land of the Philistines (*Erez Pleshet*) in biblical tradition, probably stemming from the Late Iron Age, if not earlier (Singer 1994). Astonishingly, tenth-century BCE literary evidence from the Aleppo temple and the Amuq strongly suggest the existence of a second Philistia, “land of Palistin” in the area of the Amuq, a kingdom also founded by migrants after the collapse of the Late Bronze Age system (Yasur-Landau 2010a: 162–

Images of female Sea Peoples

Past archaeological research on the Philistines was heavily influenced by the combat depictions in the Medinet Habu reliefs and by the image of the Philistines as mighty warriors. Thus, the two classical synthetic studies of the Philistines and the Sea Peoples: Nancy Sandar's *The Sea Peoples: Warriors of the Ancient Mediterranean* (1978) and Trude Dothan's *The Philistines and Their Material Culture* (1982) hardly mention women. Similarly, aspects of gender are conspicuously absent from the proceedings of the major conferences on the Philistines that have taken place in since the 1990s (e.g., Gitin *et al.* 1998; Oren 2000; Killebrew and Lehmann 2013). However, the interest in Israelite and Philistine ethnicities and their identification by material culture has attracted scholars into the realms of household archaeology, compelling some of them to scrutinize the role of kinship groups and women in the formation of Philistine society (Yasur-Landau 2010b; Yasur-Landau *et al.* 2011).

The only depiction that is possibly of women among the Sea Peoples in Egyptian art comes from the Mortuary Temple of Ramses III at Medinet Habu. There, in the famous land battle relief, five ox carts carrying women, children, and noncombatant men are shown among Sea Peoples' charioteers and warriors fighting the Egyptians (Nelson 1930: pls. 32, 34; Yasur-Landau 2010a: 175–177). The text does not state the location of the battle, and this depiction may be regarded as a compression of several events of migration of small groups and their hostile interactions with the Egyptians rather than a record of a single encounter occurring in ca. 1175 BCE (Cifola 1994: 54–55).

The presence of women and children, as well as ox carts is, to my mind, indicative of a migration of entire families rather than of a regular battle scene (Yasur-Landau 2010a: 175). Important hints to the nature of this migration are given by the often-ignored iconography of the women depicted in Medinet Habu: the fact that there are no two women with identical hairstyles among the six appearing there may indicate that they were not of the same origin (Figure 35.1).

As Egyptian artists were aware of different costumes and hairstyles and used them to depict ethnic differentiation, it is possible to compare the hairstyles at Medinet Habu to representations in Late Kingdom Egypt, Syro-Canaan, and the Late Bronze Age Aegean

(Sweeney and Yasur-Landau 1999). It seems that some of the women are Syro-Canaanite, whereas at least one appears to have a hairstyle with Aegean parallels. One woman's hairstyle has no close parallel in either Egyptian or Aegean art, perhaps indicating an origin outside Mycenaean and Egyptian cultural spheres. In addition, unarmed Canaanite or Hittite men drive the oxcart, adding to the image of ethnic diversity.

It may be that the different origins of the women represented on the same cart indicate the phenomenon of intercultural marriages, typical of both modern and ancient migrations (Sweeney and Yasur-Landau 1999; Yasur-Landau 2010a: 26–28); at least some of the Sea Peoples must have encountered women along their land journey through Syria. As for the children shown in the reliefs, they are divided into two groups. Those in the first group are very young and depicted naked, but they seem to be able to walk on their own, because they are lowered from the cart to escape the Egyptians. Those in the other group are youths wearing feathered hats—perhaps a sign that they had already been initiated into an age group. They are not fully grown men, as they are depicted smaller than the Sea Peoples warriors, and they are unarmed. It may be hypothesized, therefore, that the custom of wearing a feathered hat is not connected to the cultural heritage of the mother, but rather to that of the father or, alternatively, to that of the group.

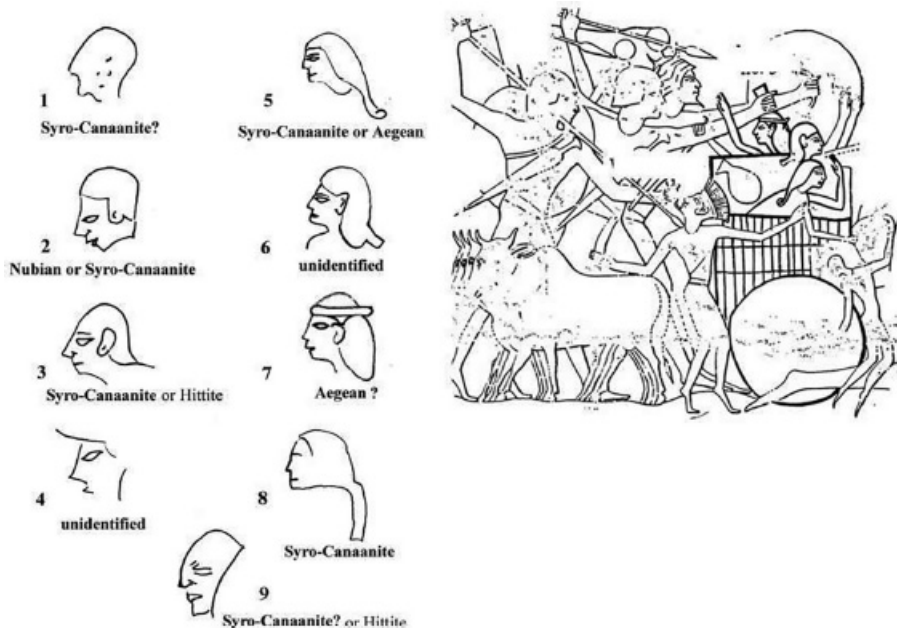


Figure 35.1 Medinet Habu: One of the oxcarts and details of the hairstyle of the women and noncombatant men. (After Sweeney and Yasur-Landau 1999: fig. 1 and Yasur-Landau 2010a: fig. 5.66.)

Intercultural households?

Additional support for intercultural marriages, between Canaanites and Aegean (and other) migrants during the formative years of the early twelfth century BCE is provided by finds from domestic assemblages in the excavated sites of Philistia, mainly Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath. The sudden appearance of Aegean-inspired behavioral patterns from Philistia in the twelfth century BCE is best witnessed in the domestic sphere, marking a deep change from previous, thirteenth-century BCE Canaanite traditions. The house itself changed in form with the introduction of rectangular, round, and keyhole hearths—all common in the Aegean. Food was cooked on the hearths using Aegean-style cooking jugs or amphorae that display the same burn marks on their sides as do those from the Aegean area (**Figure 35.2**) (Ben-Shlomo *et al.* 2008; Yasur-Landau 2010a: 130–131, 228–234).

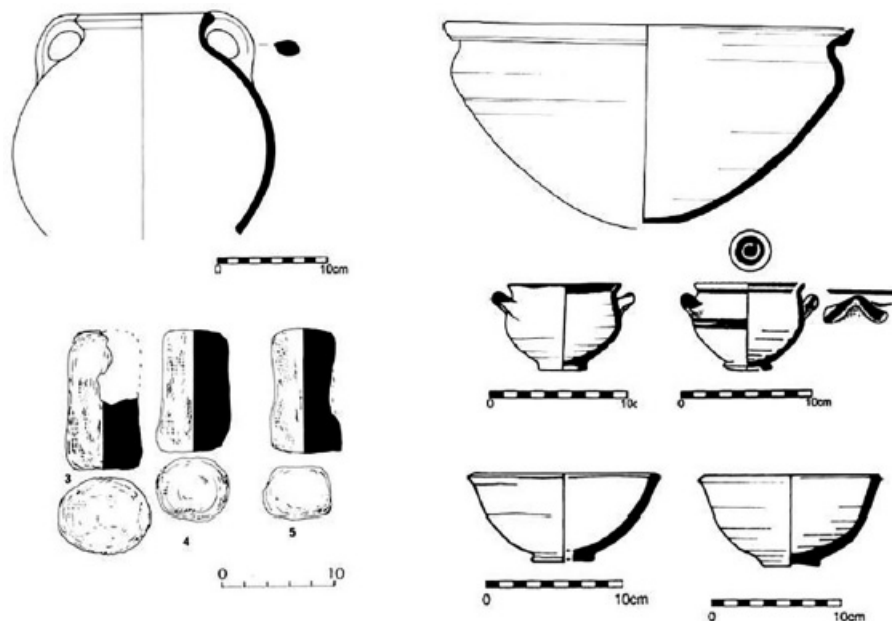


Figure 35.2 Ashdod, area G, stratum XIII, early twelfth century BCE. Aegean-style cooking amphora (top left), Aegean-style loomweights (bottom left), Canaanite-style cooking pot

(top right), Aegean style skyphoi with two handles, and Canaanite-style bowls (bottom right). (After Yasur-Landau 2010a: figs. 7.14, 7.15, 7.46, 7.55, 7.78, 7.80 and 7.118.)

The world of domestic cult was enriched by the introduction of “Ashdoda”- and “mourner”-type figurines (Ben-Shlomo and Press 2009), and by the use of incised bovid scapulae (Zukerman *et al.* 2007; Yasur-Landau 2010a: 303). A complete assemblage of locally made Late Helladic IIIC (LHIIIC)-style pottery that included skyphoi, shallow angular bowls, and kraters, as well as various closed forms, was used to serve food and beverages (Dothan and Zukerman 2004; Yasur-Landau 2010a: 243–255, table 7.2). Pottery production was transformed with the introduction of new clay recipes and kiln types (Yasur-Landau 2010a: 264–266). Domestic textile production changed with the adoption of imperforated spool-shaped loom weights (Yasur-Landau 2010a: 267–270). As domestic textile production often was connected mainly with women’s activity (Bunimovitz and Yasur-Landau 2002; Yasur-Landau 2010a: 30), the deep change in this household activity was likely introduced by women that migrated from outside the realms of Canaanite culture. The finds from Philistia cannot be attributed to the impact of trade, as argued by Sherratt (1998; cf. Knapp 2008: 258), because cooking pots, spool-shaped loom weights, and most figurine types were never imported to Canaan and they were not traded items in the Late Bronze Age. Furthermore, LHIIIC-style vessels were never imported to southern Canaan and, thus, could not have sparked the local production of these vessels in the Pentapolis sites.

This being said, the image of this migration is far from being entirely Aegean-inspired, and Aegean material culture did not replace the local, Canaanite traditions. In every house and assemblage in Ashkelon, Ashdod, and Ekron, local, Canaanite pottery forms are found in large quantities, sometimes surpassing the amount of locally made Aegean-style types (Yasur-Landau 2011, 2012). The most common household activities of food and beverage preparation, serving, and storage in small and medium-sized containers could have been practiced in either Aegean-style or Canaanite vessels. The persistence of Canaanite cooking habits is evident not only in the round-based cooking pots, which were used in every Philistine house, but also in the *tabuns* (round bread ovens) found in all Philistine settlements from their early stages, such as Ashkelon Phase 20 (Stager *et al.* 2008: fig. 15.10) and Tel Miqne/Ekron Field X, Stratum VIIIB (Bierling 1998: Stratum VIIIB plan). This is not merely a qualitative observation; it is backed by the existing statistical data for pottery

from Philistia (Yasur-Landau 2011, 2012).

It is unlikely that the image of material culture emerging from Philistia reflects a case of “hybridization” as defined by Knapp (2008: 258) and argued by him for twelfth-century BCE Cyprus, i.e., a style that combines stylistic influences from Levantine, Aegean, and Cypriot sources, rather than pointing to migration. This is simply because hybrid ceramic forms in Philistia, combining Aegean and Canaanite traits, are very rare in the twelfth and early eleventh centuries BCE (Mountjoy 2010). The typological picture from Philistia shows no hybridization of vessel types nor a mixture of domestic behavioral patterns, but rather a coexistence of two distinct types of behavior in the domestic sphere—Aegean and local. The archaeological record of twelfth-century BCE Philistia can be explained only by a scenario of a migration of families and individuals who conduct a mostly peaceful relationship with the local, Canaanite population. The creation of a *habitus* containing both Canaanite and Aegean-inspired domestic behavioral practices would have been possible only if processes of reciprocal cultural transmissions were taking place within the same domestic unit.

Women and religion in Philistia

The end of the Iron Age I and the beginning of the Iron Age II (c.1000–950 BCE) were accompanied by a fast disappearance of Aegean material culture traits in Philistia and by the formation of a coastal material culture tradition with much in common with Phoenicia.

It is in this period that we find cultic vessels bearing iconography that may hint to a significant role for women in cultic activities in both secondary towns and Pentapolis cities. New evidence comes from the finds in the Yavneh *favissa*, a rich collection of ceramic stands, chalices, altars, and other cult-related objects, dated to the ninth century BCE. The imagery decorating almost 120 cultic stands includes female figures, lions and bulls, horned animals, and palm trees. Kletter argues that the figures on the Yavneh stands are not mortal women, i.e., worshippers, but rather “a goddess (or goddesses) whose name(s) we cannot identify at present” (Kletter 2010: 187). It may be, however, that stand CAT 44 shows the role of women in the cults of a female goddess in Philistia ([Figure 35.3](#)) (IAA no. 2006–1036; Ziffer and Kletter 2007: 73–74; Kletter and Ziffer 2010: 227–228).



Figure 35.3 A stand from Yavneh. (After Ziffer and Kletter 2007: 75.)

In the front of the stand there is a narrow rectangular opening, divided in two by a pillar. Originally, five figurines were attached in these openings, four of which are preserved. They are all women, as indicated by their breasts: one is playing a double flute and another holds a frame, perhaps of a lyre. A window in the left, shorter side of the stand shows a nude figure holding her breasts, standing by another figure, who is not preserved. Ziffer and Kletter (Ziffer and Kletter 2007: 74; Ziffer 2010: 81) identified the figures on this stand as an orchestra of women playing for the nude goddess. I find this explanation logical and in accordance with another depiction of a cultic orchestra from Philistia. The comparison to the Ashdod “Musicians Stand”—a slightly earlier circular stand with attached figurines of musicians—was suggested by both Ziffer and Ben-Shlomo (Ben-Shlomo 2010: 59–62, 67). However, the gender of the Ashdod musicians was not discussed thoroughly, and it is difficult to accept Ben-Shlomo’s explanation that they were all bearded men, as no figurine displays a clearly defined beard. Rather, I would suggest that figure 2 on the Ashdod stand is not of a person playing small cymbals, which are depicted in frontal view as two disks, but rather of a woman holding her breasts. This interpretation follows iconography from the Yavneh *favissa* where there are numerous examples of female figurines holding their breasts together, including one on CAT 44 (e.g., Kletter and Ziffer 2010: CAT 28 pl. 69: 1, 2; CAT 29 pl. 70: 3;

CAT 37 pl. 78: 1, 2; CAT 56 pl. 97: 2, 3; CAT 97 pl. 132: 3). I would therefore suggest that the scene on the Ashdod “Musicians Stand” should be reconstructed similarly to that on Yavneh CAT 44, as an orchestra playing for a nude goddess. While the musicians’ gender is not clearly indicated on the Ashdod stand, it is very possible that they, too, were women.

Women in alphabetic inscriptions of the Iron Age

The early use of the alphabet in Philistia, beginning in the tenth century BCE, contributes several centuries of male names, beginning with *alwt* (son of) *wlt* on the tenth-century BCE Gath ostrakon (Maeir *et al.* 2008) to *akyš* son of *pdy* on the seventh-century BCE royal dedicatory inscription from Ekron (Gitin *et al.* 1997). The only female names appearing in these inscriptions are those of the unknown (Aegean?) goddess *ptgyh* on the Ekron inscription and the local goddess *ašrh* (Asherah) on ostracons found in a nearby context. A late seventh-century BCE ostrakon from Ashkelon is a letter discussing the mother of its writer and the fate of a beautiful cloak (Cross 2008: 340):

1. my mother. [PN] hea[rd . . .]
2. and sent from[. . .]
3. And as for mother, she has not spo[iled . . .]
4. concerning your beaut[iful] cloak [. . .]
5. [. . .]she will be strip[ped (naked) . . .]

The only possible evidence for women’s names appears on seventh-century BCE ostracons from Tell Jemmeh: one recounts a list of men and the other mentions two names—*qsryh* and *brzyh*—possibly of women, who were perhaps deportees brought to Israel and Judah by Sargon II (Na’aman and Zadok 1988).

Conclusion: long-lasting image of the other?

The close residence of Israelite and Philistine communities in the area of the Shephelah (hilly area east of the southern coastal plain, during the Iron Age had doubtless contributed to intergroup tensions and to phenomena of cultural differentiation along old or new group

boundaries (Bunimovitz and Lederman 2011). These tensions, along with the allure of the Philistine women, are well illustrated in the biblical traditions of Samson, which may fit a reality of almost any period in the course of the Iron Age—not only the Iron I (Bloch-Smith 2003: 414; Rainey and Notley 2006: 141; Levin 2008). Samson of the tribe of Dan seems to get involved in every sort of dangerous liaison that is frowned upon, yet desired, by the Israelites, thus providing an unlikely catalogue of forbiddances: first he marries a Philistine woman from the town of Timnah, aggravating both Israelites and Philistines (Judg. 14–15). He then visits a prostitute in Gaza, only to narrowly avoid a Philistine ambush (Judg. 16:1–3). Finally, he chooses a woman residing outside the scope of any community, Israelite and Philistine—Delilah. She does not live in a town or a village; her “address” is given as a geographic location (Judg. 16:4), in Naḥal Soreq—a *wadi* issuing in the Judean Mountains, crossing the Shephelah, and ending in the Mediterranean Sea, northwest of Yavneh. Humiliation in this inappropriate relationship grows in scale, resulting, ultimately, in Samson’s capture and death. The indignities suffered by the hero from the hands of Delilah only begin when he escapes the Philistines with a loom, a symbol of women’s labor, attached to his hair (Judg. 16:13–16) (Margalith 1987). The same sentiment against marrying women from Philistia is reflected in the activities of Nehemiah, who was appointed as governor of the land of Judah by Artaxerxes I and served in this role between 444 and 432 BCE (Rainey and Notley 2006: 291). Nehemiah (Neh. 13:23–24) was dismayed by the Judahite men who married Ashdodite women (as well as Ammonite and Moabite ones), resulting in intercultural households, and protested the fact that half of their children spoke the Ashdodite language but could not speak Judahite. Here, rather than death as in the case of Samson, an oath that was taken by the men not to intermarry with foreign women strengthens the boundaries between the women of Philistia and the men of Israel.

References

- Ben-Shlomo, D. (2010) *Philistine Iconography: A Wealth of Style and Symbolism*. Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 241. Göttingen, Germany: Academic Press Fribourg, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Ben-Shlomo, D. and Press, M. D. (2009) A reexamination of Aegean-style figurines in light of new evidence from Ashdod, Ashkelon, and Ekron. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 353: 39–74.
- Ben-Shlomo, D., Shai, I., Zukerman, A. and Maeir, A. (2008) Cooking

- identities: Aegean-style and Philistine cooking jugs and cultural interaction in the Southern Levant during the Iron Age. *American Journal of Archaeology* 112(2): 225–246.
- Bierling, N. (1998) *Report on the 1995–1996 Excavations in Field XNW: Areas 77, 78, 79, 89, 101, 102. Iron Age I. Text and Data Base (Plates, Sections, Plans)*. Ekron Limited Edition Series 7. Jerusalem, Israel: Albright Institute and the Hebrew University.
- Bloch-Smith, E. (2003) Israelite ethnicity in Iron I: Archaeology preserves what is remembered and what is forgotten in Israel's history. *Journal of Biblical Literature* 122(3): 401–425.
- Bunimovitz, S. (1995) On the edge of empire: Late Bronze Age (1500–1200 BCE). In T. E. Levy (ed.) *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*. London: Leicester University Press, pp. 320–331.
- Bunimovitz, S. and Yasur-Landau, A. (2002) Women and Aegean immigration to Cyprus in the 12th century BCE. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monograph 3. Boston, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, pp. 211–222.
- Bunimovitz, S. and Lederman, Z. (2011) Canaanite resistance: The Philistines and Beth-Shemesh—a case study from Iron Age I. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 364: 37–51.
- Cifola, B. (1994) The role of the sea peoples at the end of the Late Bronze Age: A reassessment of textual and archaeological evidence. *Oriens Antiqui Miscellanea* 1: 1–57.
- Cross, F. M. (2008) Inscriptions in Phoenician and other scripts. In L. E. Stager, J. D. Schloen and D. M. Master (eds) *Ashkelon 1: Introduction and Overview (1985–2006)*. Winona Lake, IN: Harvard Semitic Museum and Eisenbrauns, pp. 333–372.
- Dothan, T. (1982) *The Philistines and Their Material Culture*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Dothan, T. and Zukerman, A. (2004) A preliminary study of the Mycenaean IIC:1 pottery assemblages from Tel Miqne-Ekron and Ashdod. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 333: 1–54.
- Finkelstein, I. (1996) The Philistine countryside. *Israel Exploration Journal* 46: 225–242.
- Gitin, S., Dothan, T. and Naveh, J. (1997) A royal dedicatory inscription from Ekron. *Israel Exploration Journal* 47: 1–16.
- Gitin, S., Mazar, A. and Stern, E. (eds) (1998) *Mediterranean Peoples in Transition: Thirteenth to Early Tenth centuries BCE*. Jerusalem, Israel: Israel Exploration Society.
- Kahn, D. (2011) The campaign of Ramses III against Philistia. *Journal*

- of *Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 3(4): 1–11.
- Killebrew, A. and Lehmann, G. (eds) (2013) *The Philistines and Other “Sea Peoples” in Text and Archaeology*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature.
- Kletter, R. (2010) The function of cult stands. In R. Kletter, I. Ziffer and W. Zwickel (eds) *Yavneh I: The Excavation of the “Temple Hill” Repository Pit and the Cult Stands*. *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis* 30. Göttingen, Germany: Academic Press Fribourg, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, pp. 174–191.
- Kletter, R. and Ziffer, I. (2010) Catalogue 1: The cult stands. In R. Kletter, I. Ziffer and W. Zwickel (eds) *Yavneh I: The Excavation of the “Temple Hill” Repository Pit and the Cult Stands*. *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis* 30. Göttingen, Germany: Academic Press Fribourg, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, pp. 211–259.
- Kaniewski, D., Van Campo, E., Van Lerberghe, K., Boiy, T., Vansteenhuyse, K., Jans, G., Nys, K., Weiss, H., Morhange, C., Otto, T. and Bretschneider, J. (2011). The sea peoples, from cuneiform tablets to carbon dating. *PloS ONE* 6(6): 1–7.
- Karageorghis V. and O. Kouka, O. (eds) (2011) *On Cooking Pots, Drinking Cups, Loom Weights and Ethnicity in Bronze Age Cyprus and Neighbouring Regions. An International Archaeological Symposium Held in Nicosia, November 6th–7th 2010*. Nicosia, Cyprus: A. G. Leventis Foundation. Kailas Printers and Lithographs Ltd.
- Killebrew, A. E. (2005) *Biblical People and Ethnicity: An Archaeological study of Egyptians, Canaanites and Early Israel, 1300–1100 B.C.E.* Atlanta, GA: SBL.
- Knapp, A. B. (2008) *Prehistoric and Protohistoric Cyprus: Identity, Insularity, and Connectivity*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Levin, Y. (2008) Ideology and reality in the Book of Judges. In G. Galil, A. Gilboa, A. Maeir and D. Kahn (eds) *The Ancient Near East in the 12th–10th centuries BCE: Culture and History: Proceedings of the International Conference Held at the University of Haifa, 2–5 May, 2010*. *Alter Orient und Altes Testament* 392. Münster, Germany: Ugarit-Verlag, pp. 309–326.
- Maeir, A. M., Wimmer, S. J., Zukerman, A. and Demsky, A. (2008) A Late Iron Age I/Early Iron Age IIA Old Canaanite inscription from Tell es-Safi/Gath, Israel: Palaeography, dating and historical-cultural significance. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 351: 39–71.
- Margalith, O. (1987) The legends of Samson/Heracles. *Vetus Testamentum* 37(1): 63–70.
- Mazar, A. (1985) The emergence of the Philistine material culture.

- Mountjoy, P. A. (2010) A note on the mixed origins of some Philistine pottery. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 359: 1–12.
- Na'aman, N. and Zadok, R. (1988) Sargon II's deportation to Israel and Philistia. *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 40: 36–42.
- Nelson, H. H. (1930) *Medinet Habu I: Earlier Historical Records of Ramses III*. Chicago, IL: The Oriental Institute Publications.
- Oren, E. D. (ed.) (2000) *The Sea Peoples and Their World: A Reassessment*. University Museum Monograph 108. Philadelphia, PA: University Museum Publications.
- Rainey, A. F. and Notley, R. S. (2006) *The Sacred Bridge: Carta's Atlas of the Biblical World*. Jerusalem, Israel: Carta.
- Sanders, N. (1978) *The Sea Peoples Warriors of the Ancient Mediterranean: 1250–1150 BC*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Sherratt, S. (1998) "Sea peoples" and the economic structure of the late second millennium in the Eastern Mediterranean. In S. Gitin, A. Mazar and E. Stern (eds) *Mediterranean Peoples in Transition: Thirteenth to Early Tenth centuries BCE*. Jerusalem, Israel: Israel Exploration Society, pp. 292–313.
- Singer, I. (1994) Egyptians, Canaanites and Philistines in the period of the emergence of Israel. In I. Finkelstein and N. Na'aman (eds) *From Nomadism to Monarchy: Archaeological and Historical Aspect of Ancient Israel*. Jerusalem, Israel: Israel Exploration Society, pp. 282–338.
- Stager, L. E., Schloen, J. D., Master, D. M. and Press, M. D. (2008) Stratigraphic overview. In L. E. Stager, J. D. Schloen and D. M. Master (eds) *Ashkelon 1: Introduction and Overview (1985–2006)*. Winona Lake, IN: Harvard Semitic Museum and Eisenbrauns, pp. 213–323.
- Sweeney, D. and Yasur-Landau, A. (1999) Following the path of the sea persons: The women in the Medinet Habu reliefs. *Tel Aviv* 26: 116–145.
- Yasur-Landau, A. (2010a) *The Philistines and Aegean Migration at the End of the Late Bronze Age*. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Yasur-Landau, A. (2010b) Under the shadow of the four-room house: Biblical archaeology meets household archaeology in Israel. In T. E. Levy (ed.) *Historical Biblical Archaeology and the Future: The New Pragmatism*. London and Oakville, ON: Equinox, pp. 142–155.
- Yasur-Landau, A. (2011) Deep change in domestic behavioural patterns and theoretical aspects of interregional interactions in the

- 12th-century Levant. In V. Karageorghis and O. Kouka (eds) *On Cooking Pots, Drinking Cups, Loom Weights and Ethnicity in Bronze Age Cyprus and Neighbouring Regions. An International Archaeological Symposium Held in Nicosia, November 6th–7th, 2010*. Nicosia, Cyprus: A. G. Leventis Foundation, Kailas Printers and Lithographs Ltd, pp. 239–249.
- Yasur-Landau, A. (2012) The role of the Canaanite population in the Aegean migration to the Southern Levant in the late 2nd millennium BC. In J. Maran and P. Stockhammer (eds) *Materiality and Social Practice: Transformative Capacities of Intercultural Encounters*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow Books, pp. 190–197.
- Yasur-Landau, A., Ebeling, J. R. and Mazow, R. L. (2011) Introduction: The past and present of household archaeology in Israel. In A. Yasur-Landau, J. R. Ebeling and L. B. Mazow (eds) *Household Archaeology in Ancient Israel and Beyond*. Culture and History of the Ancient Near East 50. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill, pp. 1–8.
- Ziffer, I. (2010) The iconography of the cult stands. In R. Kletter, I. Ziffer and W. Zwickel (eds) *Yavneh I: The Excavation of the “Temple Hill” Repository Pit and the Cult Stands*. Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 30. Göttingen, Germany: Academic Press Fribourg, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, pp. 61–104.
- Ziffer, I. and Kletter, R. (2007) *In the Field of the Philistines: Cult Furnishings from the Favissa of a Yavneh Temple*. Tel Aviv, Israel: Eretz Israel Museum.
- Zukerman, A. H., Lev-Tov, L. K. J. and Maeir, A. (2007) A bone of contention? Iron Age IIA notched scapulae from Tell es-Safi/Gath, Israel. *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 347: 57–81.

WOMEN'S RELIGIOUS LIFE (IRON AGE ISRAEL)¹

Carol Meyers

Introduction

The foundational role of the Bible in Jewish and Christian tradition means that people today often turn to the Bible for information about religious beliefs and practices. Women especially, as they strive to redress the imbalances in religious roles available to them, are interested in the religious lives of their biblical foremothers. Were Israelite women restricted in the ways the Bible seems to imply? Was religiosity a feature of their daily lives? People seek answers to these and similar questions. Despite the disparities between the life conditions and religious modes of biblical antiquity and contemporary ones, investigating the religious activities of Israelite women can be meaningful. Whether or not the religious dynamics of ancient Israelite women can model women's religious life today, the very process of bringing this aspect of their lives to light is an important part of the larger feminist task of recovering women's roles in past societies.

The study of Israelite religion tends to focus on matters of faith.² When did Israelites begin to worship Yahweh? When did monotheism, the exclusive worship of Yahweh, become dominant? How widespread was the worship of Canaanite deities, especially the high gods the Bible condemns, notably Baal and Asherah (e.g., Judg. 3:7)? These questions are about beliefs; they reflect contemporary ideas about religion, with religion equated to *belief* in God and prayer rather than performance of ritual. But this idea of religion is a relatively recent development. As late as 1971, the *Oxford English Dictionary* had "actions" and "rites" as the first definition of "religion," with "system of faith" as the second. The current conception, which gives priority to belief, would have been foreign to people in biblical times. Their religious activities were shaped by their beliefs, but religion was what

people *did* rather than what they believed and was inextricably integrated to all aspects of life.

Israelite religion in the Iron Age (c.1200–587 BCE) had two interrelated components: belief in a supernatural power or powers; and behaviors directed to those powers, often in order to secure divine help in negotiating the not inconsiderable difficulties they confronted in their daily lives. Religion was part of Israelite collective identity rather than a matter of individual belief. Connections with God or gods were established not by faith but through behaviors that would have been intensely meaningful and important, based as they were on an understanding that the transcendent powers to which they were directed could affect the fertility—of humans, land, and livestock—that was essential for survival. Even Yahwists believed that other supernatural powers existed: lesser divine beings or messengers (NRSV “angel”) and malevolent spirits. Because of the essential behavioral quality of religion, and because most Israelites were probably not followers of Yahweh alone until late in the period of the Hebrew Bible, this chapter focuses on the religious *activities* of women rather than on which deities they worshipped. These activities would likely have been the same, no matter which divine power(s) they recognized, given the similarity of cultic assemblages in Israelite and non-Israelite sites in the East Mediterranean.

Resources for the study of women’s religious activities

Reconstructing women’s religious activities is not possible without using several different sources. The Bible is important but not sufficient, although for women’s communal religious roles, it is the only source. Otherwise, archaeological data and anthropological studies are also essential.

Most of the religious activities depicted in the Hebrew Bible are carried out at the national shrine: wilderness tabernacle or Jerusalem temple. The Pentateuch contains elaborate and lengthy directives for the sacrificial cult controlled by male priests. But it is inconceivable that religious experiences would be limited to participation in rituals at a central locale. Those rituals were hardly the totality of Israelite religious life. Rather, the religious activities of most people, even those living near the central shrine, consisted of household practices and observances at local or regional shrines.

Clues about those practices appear in biblical texts, but the information is incomplete or even distorted. No specific guidelines

appear, let alone information about women's roles. Yet, because the festivals and celebrations mandated in the Pentateuch were large-scale versions of household observances, they indirectly indicate the nature of many household practices. Although Pentateuchal texts likely date to late in the Iron Age, the festivals they describe appear in earlier texts (e.g., Hos. 2:11; Amos 8:5), and similar celebrations are ubiquitous across cultures. Thus biblical references to them are relevant for Israelite households throughout the Iron Age.

Because of the essential materiality of Israelite religious activities, traces of them can be found in the archaeological record. However, using archaeological data poses certain problems. With respect to understanding household religious life, a major problem is that archaeological work has often focused on monumental structures (e.g., fortifications, palaces, temples) rather than domiciles, thus limiting the available data. Another problem is the matter of identifying artifacts used in ritual activities. Some objects, similar to ones found in shrines, clearly served ritual purposes: incense stands and chalices would be examples. Yet artifacts used for food preparation can also be considered ritual objects if the food was intended for household offerings or festal meals. Many ceramic vessels had overlapping mundane and sacral functions. A small juglet, for example, might be used for ordinary cooking purposes or to pour out libations. The absence of specifically cultic objects in a household context does not mean that no rituals took place there.

Anthropology is also important for reconstructing women's religious lives. Ethnographic studies indicate the range of household religious activities in premodern agrarian cultures. Information from societies in ecological zones like that of ancient Israel suggests the kind of festivals typically geared to the agricultural calendar and the roles women played in those celebrations. Equally important, anthropological analyses help understand what women's activities mean—to women and to their households—in traditional societies.

The integration of biblical, archaeological, and anthropological resources involves the use of myriad publications. The reader is referred to Meyers (2013: 17–37) for further methodological comments about these diverse resources and to Meyers (2013: 147–179) for bibliographical references relevant to this chapter.

Women's household religious activities

An Israelite household was not simply a domicile or a family. It was

both those things and more, for it also included property—lands and animals, tools and other objects—and the activities of its members. This perspective allows us to acknowledge that religious celebrations of household members, whether they took place in the domicile or elsewhere, were part of a household's religious life.

Religious activities can be identified in relation to: 1) procreation; 2) food-preparation practices; 3) regular calendrical events; 4) recurrent life-cycle events; and 5) sporadic problems requiring ritual action. Most people experienced these religious activities as part of household life, whether they took place in their homes or in local, regional, or national settings.

Procreation: pregnancy, childbirth, and neonatal care

Problems relating to procreation are not uncommon. Some women have trouble conceiving or carrying the fetus to term; some experience difficulty during labor, delivery, or the postpartum period; and lactation may be inadequate. Also, newborns are vulnerable to complications during and after emerging from the womb. Unlike in the developed world, the reproductive difficulties of Israelite women were exacerbated by inadequate nutrition, unsanitary birthing practices, and similar issues. Maternal and infant mortality in biblical antiquity was greater than even in most developing countries today. A woman's life expectancy was up to ten years less than a man's because of child-bearing risks (see, e.g., Giles 1958: 201);³ and fewer than half of all infants lived to the age of 5, an estimate that does not take into account the possibility that an outbreak of disease might claim more.

Reproductive problems today are generally addressed by medical interventions, although prayers requesting divine assistance may also be offered. For women in traditional societies, ancient Israel included, religious practices were the chief resource. To achieve pregnancy, women (and their spouses) prayed and offered sacrifices in hopes of overcoming barrenness. In her effort to conceive, Samson's mother observes aspects of a Nazirite vow and, with her husband, offers a sacrifice (Judg. 13:2–24). Hoping to become pregnant, Hannah prays, makes a vow, and offers a sacrifice at a regional shrine (1 Sam. 1). Folk traditions of peoples in biblical lands include acts, some likely dating to biblical times, performed by women seeking to become pregnant. For example, deceased ancestors, who were believed to exist in a shadowy, semi-divine state, could be called upon to assist the living; female ancestors in particular might help with fertility problems. Petitions to the matriarch, Rachel, who dies in childbirth

and whose concern for children endures beyond the grave (Gen. 35:16–19; Jer. 31:15; cf. Matt. 2:18), are still made at the traditional site of her tomb (Meyers 2005: 54–55).

Because reproductive problems were typically attributed to evil spirits such as Lilith (see Isa. 34:14) and other demons considered dangerous to pregnant women or their offspring, measures were taken to keep those malevolent forces away from pregnant, parturient, or nursing women and from their infants. Protective folk customs abound in Mediterranean cultures and some can be identified in archaeological remains or biblical references.

For example, small figurines depicting the Egyptian dwarf god, Bes, renowned as the guardian of new mothers and their children, have been found in many Israelite households. Iron Age figurines have been excavated at Lachish, Tell es-Safi, Tell el-Far'ah (south), and Gezer, while Bes scarabs have come to light at Achzib, Beer-Sheeba, and Tel Eitun (Keel and Uehlinger 1998: 220, with full references). In fact, molds to make these objects have been discovered at Israelite sites, indicating that they were in great demand and therefore were made locally rather than being imported from Egypt. Their use does not mean Bes was worshipped; rather a powerful symbol was appropriated from a nearby culture for its apotropaic value, that is, its ability to protect by averting harmful forces. Similarly, the eye of Horus (*wedjat*) was used as an amulet to keep away the problematic evil eye, and was often found in context with Bes amulets (ibid.: 259). Eye amulets have been recovered archaeologically and to this day are used in traditional Mediterranean cultures, certainly by people who do not believe in Horus.

Shiny objects of any kind were also considered deterrents to evil spirits, which preferred the dark. Thus jewelry that reflected light and even lamplight were considered protective. This notion is reflected in the ethnographic data recorded by Lucy M. J. Garnett in her late nineteenth-century travels throughout the Ottoman Empire, where she noted that Jewish, Christian, and Muslim women fastened little bands of gold and silver to children's caps to protect them from the evil eye, while in later Jerusalem Susan Sered noted that during pregnancy Kurdish women wore silver-threaded amulets made by female ritual specialists (Meyers 2005: 51, with full references). The metal items of personal adornment discovered in excavations had protective as well as aesthetic value, and clay oil lamps provided both light and protection from malevolent forces (see Job 29:2–3).

The procedures performed on a newborn (according to Ezek. 16:4)

consist of cutting the umbilical cord, washing the infant in water, rubbing with salt, and wrapping it in swaddling clothes. These procedures had protective attributes as well as hygienic ones (see Meyers 2005: 39–41 for analysis), and continued to appear in both rabbinic texts and actual praxis as late as the twentieth century in the Near East and eastern Mediterranean (ibid.: 53). Many more apotropaic practices known from folklore surely date back to biblical days.

Foodways and ritual

Women were responsible for household food-processing activities (see Meyers, “Daily Life,” this volume). Without the time, energy, and skill they devoted to the transformation of crops to edible form, survival would have been impossible. There was no other way to procure sustenance in the largely self-sufficient households of most Israelites. The dietary restrictions in the Pentateuch, which mainly limit the animals that could be eaten (Lev. 11; Deut. 14:3–20) and also stipulate practices related to animal slaughter and cooking (Exod. 23:19; Deut. 12:16, 14:21), likely had little relevance to women’s daily food-preparation activities. Most of those regulations date to late in Israelite history, although some may have been customary practices much earlier. Moreover, because animals were rarely consumed by ordinary Israelites, those regulations were largely irrelevant. Still, those texts indicate that foodways can have a sacral dimension and that food-preparation activities would have been imbued with religious significance.

One example is found in the instructions about offering a piece of bread dough to Yahweh (Num. 15:19–21) in order to secure God’s blessing for the household (cf. Ezek. 44:30b). This practice represents a superstition associated with bread-baking like ones recorded among Muslim and Christian women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the Levant (Blackman 1924: 229). Fears of tainted flour (and thus spoiled dough) caused by evil spirits led women to practice protective rituals associated with preparing bread dough.

Food consumption, too, probably had a sacral aspect. When the artifacts of a household are found in their original use space, ritual objects appear in spaces identified as eating areas, suggesting that ordinary meals were accompanied by ritual acts. Perhaps small portions of food were provided to ancestors or deities, as among other Semitic peoples. Several passages in Jeremiah (Jer. 7:18, 44:15–19,

25; cf. Jer. 19:13) depict household women presenting libations and offerings to the “Queen of Heaven.” And in other ways no longer visible to us, the quotidian acts of preparing and consuming a meal might be marked as religious. In fact, the sacrificial regime at community shrines was likely a household meal writ large. That is, household meals prepared by women were the template for the sacrificial cult.

Regular celebrations: annual, monthly, and weekly events

The arduous daily life of most Israelites was relieved periodically by festal occasions, which were food events; feasting was an important and often overlooked aspect of their celebrations. Feasts in general are marked by special foods (especially meat, usually not eaten at everyday meals), a respite from labor, a carnivalesque atmosphere, and the opportunity to spend time with kin and neighbors. The culinary dimension of Israelite festivals entailed the participation of women as providers of festal repasts (except for the meat of sacrificed animals) as well as celebrants experiencing a festival’s social and religious intensity.

Feasts in agrarian societies are typically linked to the agricultural calendar; they mark economic milestones, like the beginning or end of a harvest season. The Israelites celebrated these important moments, although their three annual festivals (Passover, Weeks, and Booths) also take on historical meaning. Deuteronomic texts give the impression that these festivals took place only at the central shrine, with women participating as household members (Deut. 16:11, 14). But only men are enjoined to participate, except for Booths in the seventh year (Deut. 31:10–12); and wives are omitted from the lists of household participants. Do these stipulations mean women were marginal participants? Probably not. The biblical stipulations are addressed to the male head of household; the senior female is likely subsumed in her partner and thus was a full participant. More important, celebrations at the central shrine did not preclude celebrations in a household’s local community or domicile (see Neh. 8:16). Festival celebrations were held in local communities and individual households too, especially ones far from the central shrine. Indeed, they likely originated in local communities.

The Bible mentions one other event that was apparently regular and was observed *only* by women: the annual four-day commemoration by young women of the death of the unnamed daughter of the judge Jephthah in fulfillment of her father’s vow (Judg. 11:30–40). Because

the daughter bewails her unmarried status, or “maidenhood” (often erroneously translated “virginity”), this celebration is sometimes considered a coming-of-age ritual rather than a remembrance of the young woman’s death. Either way, this custom is unlike the other religious events mentioned here, for it has no explicit religious component neither does it survive in postbiblical Judaism. Perhaps the narrator in Judges has constructed the tragic folkloric account as part of the generally negative portrayal of Jephthah.

Like the annual agricultural feasts, monthly and weekly festivals were also celebrated in local communities and individual households. The popular new-moon celebrations held each month (Hos. 2:11; Amos 8:5) apparently began as household and clan feasts (e.g., 1 Sam. 20:5–29) to honor deceased ancestors as well as celebrate the seemingly miraculous re-emergence of the moon after weeks of gradual disappearance. In fact, priestly regulations (Num. 28:11–15) do not call this festival a “sanctuary convocation,” a term for festal events at the central shrine.

The Sabbath, unlike the annual and monthly celebrations, was probably a uniquely Israelite institution, perhaps originating in compassion for those engaged in arduous daily toil. Priestly texts refer to Sabbath offerings at the central shrine (Num. 28:9–10), but other texts assume household observance (e.g., Exod. 20:8–10). The manna narrative (Exod. 16) focuses on the availability of food on the Sabbath, suggesting that these weekly events, like annual and monthly ones, entailed the consumption of special foods. Like the annual and monthly festivals, the weekly celebration involved feasting—albeit perhaps less elaborate than annual and new-moon feasting—with special foods prepared by the women of a household.

Recurrent life-cycle events

Like peoples everywhere, Israelites marked life-cycle transitions. Birth and death rituals appear in the Hebrew Bible, both with special roles for women. Puberty rituals are found in many cultures but are unmentioned in the Hebrew Bible; perhaps circumcision, an Israelite birth rite often associated with puberty in other cultures, preempts the puberty event. Marriages were a social occasion and, for property-owning or elite households, a legal matter. They did not involve religious ritual until the postexilic period although they likely entailed festal meals (Judg. 14:10, 17) and prayers for the newlyweds’ successful procreation (Ruth 4:11–12).

In addition to the apotropaic measures already noted, childbirth was marked by rituals. Priestly texts (Lev. 12:6–7) suggest that new mothers offered special sacrifices to remove the impurity of parturient discharges and probably also express gratitude for a successful pregnancy:⁴

Upon the completion of the period of her purification, for either a son or daughter, she is to bring to the priest at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting a yearling lamb for a burnt offering and a young pigeon or a turtledove for a purification offering. He shall offer them before the LORD to make expiation for her, and then she will be ceremonially clean from her flow of blood. This is the regulation for the woman who bears a child, male or female.

These texts, however, are dubious evidence for general Iron Age practices. Circumcision was surely an Israelite birth rite (Gen. 17:12; Lev. 12:3) although of uncertain origins; but the strange episode of Zipporah (Exod. 4:24–26), who circumcises her son and uses his foreskin to ward off mortal danger, may reflect an ancient apotropaic practice carried out by mothers of infant sons, a practice later associated with membership in the covenant community (Gen. 17:9–14; cf. Josh. 5:1–8). Another birth rite was the naming of the newborn. Done more often by women than men in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Gen. 30:6, 8, 24, 35:18; cf. Luke 1:31, 57–60), it was likely a woman's practice. The theophoric component of most biblical names attests to the religious dimension of this ritual involving women and their offspring.

Household religious practices marking the end of life were probably similar for women and men. Ancient Semitic custom mandated immediate burial in the family tomb or burial area, with women preparing the bodies of women and children. Both men and women wore torn garments or sackcloth (e.g., 2 Sam. 1:11–12, 3:31), probably during a weeklong period of intense mourning (Gen. 50:10). Shaving the head, cutting the body, and rolling in ashes are also mentioned, sometimes to forbid them (Lev. 21:5; Deut. 14:1; Isa. 15:2; Mic. 1:16). Vessels for serving food and drink are typical tomb goods, suggesting funerary meals or food and drink offerings (in addition to those offered at household meals) for deceased ancestors. Either way, women prepared the funerary foodstuffs. Also, dirges accompanied mourning and interment. As in many societies, Israelite women chanted laments if professional keeners (who were women—see below) were not hired.

Sporadic rituals

Illnesses and accidents were inevitable, as in most cultures, and the household was the primary arena of healthcare, with women the main caregivers for the sick and injured. God's *maternal* care for Israel (Hos. 11:3–4) includes healing. When the Shunammite woman's son falls ill, his father has him carried to his mother (2 Kgs 4:19). In Samuel's warning that a monarchy will mean having family members work for the crown, women are mentioned as "herbalists" (1 Sam. 8:13; NRSV "perfumers"). Because many plant substances used to flavor foods were also used to concoct healing salves or potions, women's food-preparation tasks gave them familiarity with *materia medica* (substances inhaled, ingested, or applied to wounds). Treating the ill or injured, like dealing with reproductive problems, had a religious dimension, for health problems were attributed to supernatural causes. They might be considered divine punishment for misdeeds or simply the result of a deity's unknowable reasons (as for Job). Or demons might be the culprits; "pestilence" in Ps. 91:6 is better translated "demon." Thus women used *materia medica* and also offered prayers or incantations in caring for family members in distress. Their familiarity with plants likewise made them aware of the possible aphrodisiac qualities of certain substances, like the mandrakes that figure in the narrative about Rachel's efforts to achieve reproductive success (Gen. 30:14–17).

Another occasional ritual can be termed crisis intervention. Agrarian problems like insufficient rainfall, assumed in biblical texts to be caused by human disobedience to the divine will, necessitated special offerings to request divine assistance. Note that in Deut. 26:12–15 the fertility of the land depends on both offerings and obedience to God. Both women and men made these offerings to their household's god(s)—and probably ancestors too, given that Deut. 26:14 forbids doing so—in the hope that conditions essential for crop production would be provided in return.

Community religious roles

The religious lives of most women (and men) meant contributing to and participating in household religious activities. However, some Israelite women served as religious functionaries serving the larger community.

Several positions held by women at the national shrine are mentioned in the Bible. Although only men from the tribe of Levi (and not men in general) could be priests, several texts indicate that women too were temple servitors. Two verses (Exod. 38:8; 1 Sam.

2:22) refer to women serving at the entrance to the national shrine (Tent of Meeting). Their role is not specified, but because the word for “serve” in these verses is related to a term describing Levitical priests performing menial labor, they too likely performed menial tasks. A more skilled religious position is apparently designated by an enigmatic biblical word, *qēdēšâ*, which comes from a root meaning holiness. This term (and its masculine equivalent), traditionally translated as “temple prostitute” (e.g., Deut. 23:17), actually refers to a class of cultic personnel rather than people performing sacral sex acts. One other text mentions women performing a cultic role, namely, “weeping for Tammuz” (Ezek. 8:14) in the temple precincts. Usually thought to denote women worshiping a Mesopotamian fertility god, this phrase can be used in an extended sense to denote a mourning ritual, one carried out by women together with male priests as part of a complex set of temple rites. Women’s general expertise in funerary rites would have made them well-suited to this role.

Women were also professional mourners who could be hired by affluent households to lead funerary processions. In the ancient Near East and Aegean, professional mourners were almost always women; and in Egypt they were exclusively women. Across cultures, funerary lamentations are typically recited by women, and ancient iconography depicts women in mourning gestures. Biblical texts confirm the presence of this role for Israelite women. The “mourning women” of Jeremiah (9:17–20 [Heb. 9:16–19]; cf. Ezek. 32:16) are called “skilled” in acknowledgment of their professional proficiency; and they are urged to teach laments to their “daughters,” probably a designation for a group of professional mourners (see also 2 Sam. 1:24), just as “sons” in “sons of prophets” (e.g., 2 Kgs 2: 3, 7, 15; NRSV “company of prophets”) designates a prophetic group.

Another kind of religious expertise was exhibited by women who were skilled in transmitting the divine will to others. Most prominent in this group are “prophets,” a title given to four named biblical women (Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, and Noadiah) and several unnamed ones (Isa. 8:3; Joel 2:28 [Heb. 3:1]; cf. Ezek. 13:17–23). In addition, the masculine plural word for “prophets” (*nēbî’îm*), which frequently denotes groups of prophets, may be a gender-inclusive term in some instances. Like their male counterparts in ancient Israel and the female and male prophets elsewhere in the ancient Near East, these female prophets were probably skilled prognosticators. That is, they would have been experts in divinatory techniques (see Num. 22:7 and Ezek. 21:21–23) enabling them to respond to clients’ requests for information about the future. One biblical narrative portrays an expert in a particular kind of divination, necromancy; the medium of Endor

is a woman who summons the deceased prophet Samuel (1 Sam. 28) at Saul's behest.

Women as singers, dancers, or instrumentalists are mentioned in a number of biblical texts; and, because they were typically the percussionists, women were almost certainly part of many ensembles, both secular and religious, even when the gender of the musicians is unspecified. Notable examples of religious musical performance are celebrations of military victory, attributed to the intervention of Yahweh. Thus in Exodus 15:20–21:

Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a drum in her hand; and all the women went forth behind her with drums and with dances. And Miriam sang to them:

“Sing of the LORD, for he triumphed gloriously;
horse and rider he hurled into the sea”.

Female percussionists are also recorded as participating in a temple procession in Psalm 68:24–25 (Heb. 68:25–26):

Your solemn processions are seen, O God, the processions of my God, my King, into the sanctuary— the singers in front, the musicians last, between them young women playing drums.

Finally, midwives were not only health professionals but also religious specialists. As in other ancient Near Eastern cultures and postbiblical tradition, Israelite midwives would have recited appropriate prayers for the wellbeing of the parturient and child and incantations against the evil forces threatening her and the newborn. Note that the women attending Ruth when she gives birth to her son offer a prayer (Ruth 4:14–15), while the midwife who attends the birth of Tamar's twins in Genesis 38:28–30 places a red thread onto the newborn's hand, a practice that has cognates with birth rituals in both Mesopotamia and Anatolia (Meyers 2005: 38–39, with references). Their specialized knowledge included religious as well as “medical” procedures.

Evaluating women's religious lives

Israelite women were important actors in the array of religious practices considered essential for maintaining the vitality and continuity of households and the larger community in which they were embedded. Religiosity, in the form of an array of ritual activities and apotropaic acts, was an integral element of their daily lives. The following comments about women's religious lives—about what

women likely experienced in performing religious activities that served their households and communities—are based on ethnographic data and anthropological perspectives.

Traditional characterizations of household religion and of women's practices must first be set aside. Household practices have sometimes been characterized as “folk” or “popular” religion and thus considered heterodox or deviant, in contrast with the “official” practices at community or national shrines. This oppositional dichotomy is problematic (see Stavrakopoulou 2016: 348–349), and household and temple religious practices are more appropriately viewed as two ends of a continuum of religious behavior. Thus the strong association of women with household religion, rather than casting women in a negative light, instead signals their importance for Israelite religious life, especially because the household was central to the religious lives of most people. Similarly, because some of women's household practices were in the realm of magic, they have often been perceived as anti-religious. This negative assessment is also flawed; magical behaviors are better viewed as instances of ritual power, that is, practices intended to influence supernatural powers.

Women were the chief practitioners of rituals surrounding the reproductive process. Offspring were essential for the survival of households; they were part of its labor force, heirs to its patrimony, and the sole resource for eldercare. In performing reproductive rituals with life-death significance, women likely earned the kind of respect garnered by medical personnel today.

The rituals associated with food were mainly the responsibility of women. Food-preparation rituals were considered vital for safeguarding the health of family members and for maintaining customs associated with group identity. The food offerings at household meals or at burial sites hoped to achieve agrarian fertility by securing the help of deities or ancestors; the women portrayed making food offerings in Jeremiah clearly understand that these acts were necessary for household prosperity. Sharing food with deceased family members also maintained household identity across generations. And the special foods that were the *sine qua non* of the regular and occasional feasts contributed to the many important functions—religious, political, social, and psychological—of these events in Israelite society.

Food preparation would not usually be deemed a meaningful religious activity today. But we must put present-day attitudes aside and recognize that in traditional societies food-related contributions to

household religious life have positive value for women and their households. Special foods had to be prepared in certain ways, and food offerings had to be made in prescribed modes. With grain-based foods supplying the bulk of the caloric intake in most households, rituals associated with preparing dough, for example, took on a life-death quality no less than did reproductive rituals. Proper offerings to deities or ancestors were linked to beliefs about how to obtain the fertility of a household's lands and animals, both necessary for household survival. In other words, the preparation and offering of food were ritual acts. The women who carried out these acts—and also those surrounding the reproductive or healthcare processes—were ritual experts, no less than were the male officiants at community shrines. Because women's religious expertise functioned on a daily basis, it was arguably a more dynamic presence in household life than was priestly expertise at shrines. Marginalized or non-existent in the Bible, women's religious activities were of central importance in lived reality.

The community religious roles of Israelite women also entailed expertise but at a level not easily acquired without special training. Divinatory techniques, laments, midwifery incantations, temple music, and the rest involved the acquisition of skill sets or knowledge that served religious purposes. Senior practitioners passed their expertise on to younger women, earning the respect due to mentors. And all the practitioners of these skills, perceived as necessary for certain aspects of community life, likewise garnered a measure of prestige. Community specialists experienced the gratification of supplying important services, just as ordinary women performing religious activities felt the satisfaction of carrying out rituals believed vital to their households' welfare.

Notes

- 1 This chapter is adapted, with the kind permission of the publisher (Westminster John Knox), from the author's essay on "Women's religious life in ancient Israel" in C. Newsom, S. Ringe, and J. Lapsley (eds) *Women's Bible Commentary* (third edition, 2012).
- 2 "Israelite" and "Israel" are used here in a general cultural sense, not as political or geographic designations.
- 3 Giles discusses Bronze Age skeletal remains from Lachish; the report on Lachish's Iron Age osteological data does not provide age estimates. Very little information is available about Iron Age human bones, because antiquities law in Israel forbids the excavation of most human remains.
- 4 All translations of biblical texts are by the author.

References

- Blackman, W. S. (1924) *The Fellahin of Upper Egypt*. London: Harrap.
- Giles, M. (1958) The human and animal remains. Pp. 318–322 in O. Tufnell (ed.) *Lachish IV: The Bronze Age*. London: Oxford University Press, pp. 175–195.
- Keel, O. and Uehlinger, C. (1998) *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Meyers, C. (2005) *Households and Holiness: The Religious Culture of Israelite Women*. Facet Series. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Meyers, C. (2013) *Rediscovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Olyan, S. (2008) Family religion in Israel and the wider Levant of the first millennium BCE. In J. Bodel and S. M. Olyan (eds) *Household and Family Religion in Antiquity*. The Ancient World: Comparative Histories. Malden, MA: Blackwell, pp. 113–126.
- Stavrakopoulou, F. (2016) Religion at home: The materiality of practice. In S. Niditch (ed.) *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, pp. 347–366.

“UNTIL I COME AND TAKE YOU AWAY TO A LAND LIKE YOUR OWN”

A gendered look at siege warfare and mass deportation

Peggy L. Day

The biblical quote¹ I have incorporated into the title of this chapter is taken from a story complex, found in 2 Kings 18–19 (cf. Isa. 36–37), which centers on a military campaign of the Neo-Assyrian king Sennacherib (705–681 BCE)² into the territory of ancient Judah. The Judahite king, Hezekiah (727–698 BCE), an erstwhile Assyrian vassal, had rebelled against him and so the Assyrian army was attacking Judah’s walled cities (2 Kgs 18:7, 13). While the dominant streams of tradition hold that Yahweh, the god of Judah, rescued Jerusalem by causing Sennacherib to abandon his siege of it (2 Kgs 19:5–7, 32–37), another tradition maintains that Hezekiah admitted his wrongdoing and paid a hefty price to either avert (Mayer 2003: 179–181) or bring a swift close to Sennacherib’s siege of Jerusalem (2 Kgs 18:14–16). Straddling these discordant traditions, a further plot line asserts that Sennacherib sent a large army and three top officials from the Judahite fortress city of Lachish, where the Assyrian forces were encamped, to Jerusalem, to persuade the recalcitrant Hezekiah and the city’s defenders to surrender (2 Kgs 18:17–27). In the Judahites’ own language and in a loud voice, so that those manning the city walls could both hear and understand, the Assyrian official called the Rabshakeh continued:

Do not listen to Hezekiah; for thus says the king of Assyria: “Make your peace with me and come out to me; then every one of you will eat from your own vine and your own fig tree, and drink water from your own cistern, until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive oil and honey, that you may live and not die”.

In other words, the Rabshakeh is portrayed as assuring those within earshot that surrender would result in a mass deportation of the city's residents, but at least they would escape the agonizing death of a protracted siege or the indiscriminate slaughter and destruction that the Assyrians could be expected to inflict if they were made to take the city by force. Additionally, the Rabshakeh's speech seemingly seeks to assuage fears about the prospect of deportation by painting a rosy picture of it; the deportees will be well treated and will end up in a land of plenty, like their own.

The biblical accounts in 2 Kings 18–19 (cf. Isa. 36–37) are not the only ones that narrate a military campaign led by Sennacherib into Judahite territory during which Sennacherib's forces held the rebel king Hezekiah under siege in Jerusalem. It was standard practice for Neo-Assyrian kings to engage scribes to write laudatory, annalistic accounts of their military exploits and other noteworthy achievements. Famously, Sennacherib's Rassam Cylinder inscription narrates the Assyrian version³ of events, a version that culminates in Hezekiah's surrender and payment of a costly and extensive list of gifts and tribute that indicate he had reassumed his vassal status (Cogan 2008: 111–125). The inscription boasts about the number of people, male and female, young and old, that Sennacherib deported from the 46 Judahite walled cities he claims to have successfully besieged (Cogan 2008: 114–115, 120). And, though the fortress city Lachish is not mentioned in any of his extant annals, Sennacherib nevertheless showcased his siege and conquest of it, and his deportation of many of its residents. He devoted an entire room of his Palace Without Rival in Nineveh to reliefs depicting these events (ANEP 371–374; Ussishkin 1982: 59–118; Russell 1991: 160–164, fig. 108 and 202–209; Uehlinger 2003: 221–305; Feldman 2011: 136–140).

The purpose of this chapter is to expand upon the two scenarios the Rabshakeh presented in his speech, i.e., protracted siege and its likely consequences versus surrender and mass deportation, as they are represented in both biblical and Assyrian sources with respect to women. In contrast to military engagements that took place on an open battlefield, women and girls were fully present in a city besieged by enemy forces. They too knew that an inimical army was just outside the city gate, readying assault ladders and siege engines, armed with battering rams to breach the walls, and perhaps tunneling under them as well (Ephal 2009: 68–113). They too would come face to face with enemy combatants. And they too would have to endure

forced relocation. I am focusing on the Neo-Assyrian period of ascendancy in particular, because we have a much fuller picture of militio-political circumstances, events, and policies during that era (mid-ninth to late seventh centuries BCE; Kelle 2007), and we have evidence from primary sources that, from the reign of Shalmaneser III (858–824 BCE) through that of Ashurbanipal (669–627 BCE), first the kingdom of Israel and then the kingdom of Judah were often vassals of Assyrian rulers or participants in coalitions rebelling against them (e.g., Hallo and Younger 2003: vol. 2, 261–306; Cogan 2008: 1–174; see also Moore 2008: 57–60). And especially from the reign of Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 BCE) onward, mass resettlements of conquered populations were a signature consequence of vassal rebellion (Oded 1979: 19–22).

Siege warfare

The conditions endured by those pent up in a walled, fortified city under a protracted siege (e.g., 2 Kgs 17:5, 25:1–3), including women and girls, would have been horrific. With access to food sources external to the city cut off by enemy forces, starvation would eventually ensue if the siege persisted (e.g., 2 Kgs 6:24–25, 7:12, 25:1–3; Lam. 1:11;⁴ Ephal 2009: 57–64). In many instances, those fleeing from the surrounding countryside would take refuge in a walled city, as well as troops retreating from an open battlefield (Ephal 2009: 57, 162–167). This influx not only increased the number of mouths to feed but also heightened the likelihood of the spread of contagious diseases (Ephal 2009: 57–58, 66–68; cf. Lev. 26:25; Ezek. 5:12). It is with considerable pathos that Lamentations 2:12 claims to present an eyewitness account of Judahite children’s plight during a siege of Jerusalem: “they cry to their mothers, ‘Where is bread and wine?’ as they faint like the wounded in the streets of the city, as their life is poured out on their mother’s bosom.” Lamentations 4:3–4⁵ also speaks in the voice of an eyewitness about mothers unable to nurse their infants because their milk has dried up (Hillers 1964: 61–62). And set in the story complex with which I began this chapter, king Hezekiah describes the siege of Jerusalem as so dire that “children have come to the birth, and there is no strength to bring them forth” (2 Kgs 19:3). Also in this same story complex, the Rabshakeh tells the inhabitants of besieged Jerusalem that they are doomed to eat their own excrement and drink their own urine if Hezekiah does not surrender (2 Kgs 18:27). More gruesome still are the siege conditions threatened in Deuteronomy 28 as recompense for transgressing Yahweh’s covenant:

It [i.e., a foreign enemy] shall besiege you in all your towns until your high and fortified walls, in which you trusted, come down throughout your land; it shall besiege you in all your towns throughout the land that the Lord your God has given you. In the desperate straits to which the enemy siege reduces you, you will eat the fruit of your womb, the flesh of your own sons and daughters whom the Lord your God has given you . . . She who is the most refined and gentle among you, so gentle and refined that she does not venture to set the sole of her foot on the ground, will begrudge food to the husband whom she embraces, to her own son, and to her own daughter, begrudging even the afterbirth that comes out between her thighs, and the children that she bears, because she is eating them in secret for lack of anything else, in the desperate straits to which the enemy siege will reduce you in your towns.

(Deut. 28:52–53, 56–57; cf. Lev. 26:27–29; Jer. 19:3–9; Ezek. 5:5–10)

Covenant, treaty and loyalty oath curses

Deuteronomy 28:15 presents the siege conditions envisaged in the quote directly above as fulfillment of a curse for transgressing Yahweh's covenant:

But if you will not obey the Lord your God by diligently observing all his commandments and decrees, which I am commanding you today, then all these curses shall come upon you.

(Deut. 28:15)

Closely related to the notion of covenant curses are those maledictions invoked in Assyrian vassal treaties and loyalty oaths to pertain if the signatory to the treaty or loyalty oath violates their conditions (Hillers 1964: 12–42; Chapman 2004: 40–46). The curse of eating one's children under famine conditions as a consequence of transgressing a loyalty oath is found in the Succession Treaty of the Assyrian king Esarhaddon (681–669 BCE), who counted Manasseh of Judah (698–642 BCE) among his western vassals (Cogan 2008: 131–137; cf. 2 Chr. 33:11): “In your hunger [may you] eat the flesh of your sons” (Parpola and Watanabe 1988: 46, l. 449; Cogan 2008: 164). Further on in this document we read the following malediction: “Just as [thi]s ewe has been cut open and the flesh of [her] young has been placed in her mouth, may they make you eat in your hunger the flesh of your brothers, your sons and your daughters” (Parpola and Watanabe 1988: 52, ll. 547–550). A similar curse is expressed in the treaty between Ashur-nerari V (755–745 BCE) and Matiel, King of Arpad, a city routed by the Assyrians for rebellion: “May [Matiel's people] eat the flesh of their sons and daughters, and may it taste as good to them as the flesh of spring lambs” (Parpola and Watanabe 1988: 11, Rev. col. iv ll. 10–11; see further Hillers 1964: 62–63; cf. Lambert and Millard 1969:

Are the above biblical and Assyrian curses merely classic examples of scaremongering or was eating one's own children something that actually happened as a consequence of prolonged starvation during sieges? Was it purely a literary trope indicative of the extreme horrors of war (Cogan 2008: 164; Crouch 2009: 106–107; Ephal 2009: 9–11, 61–62)? Those of us fortunate enough to have never experienced real starvation may have doubts, but it is certainly plausible and some Hebrew Bible and Assyrian texts do portray eating one's own children as something that actually happened. That women would be willing to do so under prolonged siege conditions is the premise of a vignette (2 Kgs 6:24–31) set in Samaria, Israel's capital city, during the reign of Jehoram (851–842 BCE). An unnamed woman discloses that she had entered into a bargain with another woman that the two of them would eat her son one day and the son of the other woman the next. The two had cooked and eaten the first woman's son, but when the following day came, the second woman had hidden her son instead. In another example, spoken in the voice of someone who had lived through the experience, Lamentations 4:9–10 (cf. 2:20) bewails the fact that women, during Nebuchadrezzar's lengthy siege of Jerusalem (2 Kgs 25:1–3), were driven to boiling and eating their own children. Finally, an inscription of Ashurbanipal claims first hand knowledge of Arabs eating their own children's flesh in the famine resulting from their breaking their loyalty oaths (Chapman 2004: 44–46; Cogan 2008: 161–165).

The besieged city conquered

Several Hebrew Bible texts are not squeamish about describing both past and anticipated atrocities perpetuated against women when a city under siege was taken by force. Then as now, rape⁶ was a very real danger (e.g., Isa. 13:16; Lam. 5:11; cf. Zech. 14:2); more graphically horrifying was the manner in which pregnant women were sometimes killed. Set once again in the reign of Jehoram of Israel, 2 Kings 8:7–15 tells the story of the prophet Elisha's journey to Damascus at a time when its king, Ben-Hadad, was ill.⁷ Sent by Yahweh to inform the non-royal Hazael that Ben-Hadad would not recover and that Hazael would usurp his throne, Elisha weeps and Hazael asks why. The prophet responds (v. 12):

[b]ecause I know the evil that you will do to the people of Israel; you will set their fortresses on fire, you will kill their young men with the sword, dash in pieces their little ones, and rip up their pregnant women.

Hazael's reaction to this forecast (v. 13) is chillingly instructive. He replies, "what is your servant, who is a mere dog, *that he should do this great thing* [emphasis mine]?" Clearly, Hazael is animated here as responding not to the nature of the acts themselves but rather to the measure of power implied by his ability to carry out such destruction and slaughter. 2 Kings 15:16 attributes the ripping open of all of the pregnant women of a particular city⁸ to king Menahem of Israel (747–737 BCE) expressly because it did not surrender (literally, "did not open [the city gate]") to him. Hosea 13:16 [Heb. 14:1] is formulated as a foretelling of Samaria's destruction because of its purported rebellion against Yahweh; those within it "shall fall by the sword, their little ones shall be dashed in pieces, and their pregnant women ripped open."⁹

Turning to the Neo-Assyrian inscriptions, there is one curse, found in Esarhaddon's (681–669 BCE) Succession Treaty, that invokes rape upon the wives of seditious signatories: "May Venus, the brightest of the stars, before your eyes make your wives lie in the lap of your enemy" (Parpola and Watanabe 1988: 47 ll. 428–429).¹⁰ But while the extant annals of the period do not hesitate to describe beheadings, flayings, impalings, and other brutal acts inflicted upon men, they do not provide a single example of overt, graphic violence against a woman, or against women only as a group.¹¹ Regarding Assyrian reliefs, there is one (BM 124927 = Barnett 1976: Plate XXXIII), from the reign of Ashurbanipal, that has been interpreted as depicting Assyrian soldiers raping an Arab woman (e.g., Parpola and Watanabe 1988: 47, caption under fig. 13; Marcus 1995: 202 and n. 66),¹² but other scholars have described the scene as one of attack and possibly murder rather than rape (e.g., Reade 1979: 334 and fig. 10; Reed 2007: 106 and n. 7; Crouch 2009: 122 and n. 19). To my knowledge, no other extant Neo-Assyrian relief depicts violence against women in wartime circumstances, likely for ideological reasons (see [Figure 37.1](#)).

Mass deportations

As we learn from his annals, Shalmaneser III was not only the first Neo-Assyrian king to bring Israel (under kings Ahab and Jehu) into a vassal relationship with Assyria (Cogan 2008: 12–31), he was also the first to employ deportation of conquered enemies on a large scale (Luckenbill 1926: 200–252; Oded 1979: 20). And while the annals do not dwell on describing female war captives, they are consistently depicted in his Balawat Gates reliefs as being led away from defeated cities clothed (as opposed to male captives, who are routinely depicted

as naked) and unencumbered by ropes, shackles, yokes, or other forms of restraint (again in contrast to male captives). Band IX.3, lower register (King 1915: Plate L; King and Stager 2001: 238, ill. 120) (Figure 37.2) is a particularly apt example as it purports to depict male and female captives after the battle of Qarqar (853 BCE), and the Kurkh Monolith names Ahab of Israel (873–852 BCE) as one among an alliance of kings who Shalmaneser III claims to have defeated at Qarqar in the sixth year of his reign (Grayson 1996: 23 col. ii ll. 91–92; Cogan 2008: 13–22). Similarly, bands III.3–4, VIII.3–4, XII.2 and XIII.5 (King 1915: Plates XV, XVI, XLV, XLVI, XLVII, LXXVI) juxtapose naked and restrained male prisoners with clothed and unfettered females, and several additional bands depict either the former or latter.

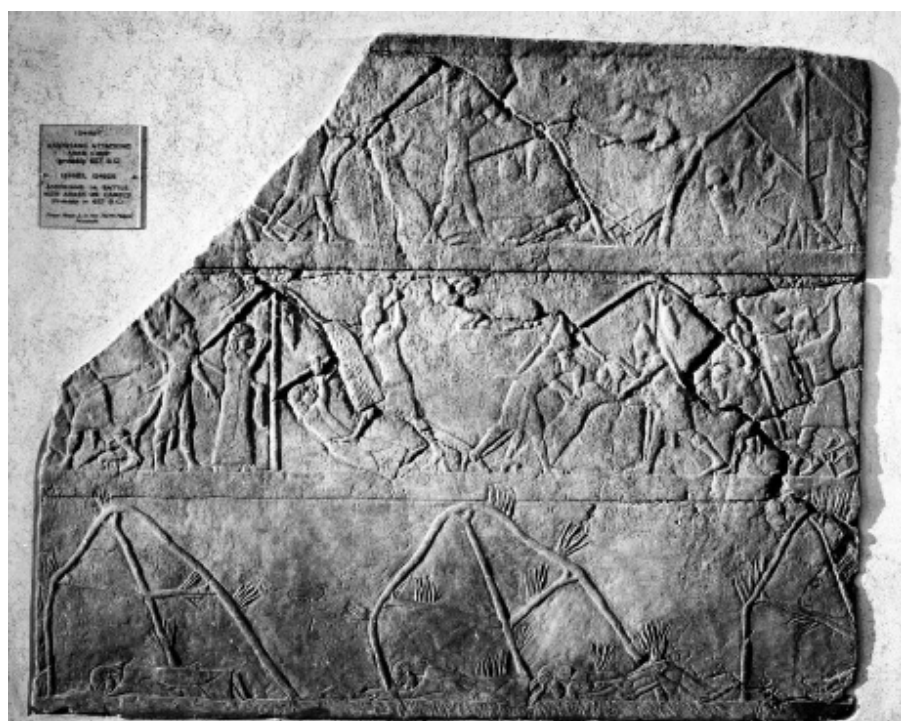


Figure 37.1 BM 124927; middle register, right side is the alleged rape of an Arab woman. Ashurbanipal's North Palace. (©The Trustees of the British Museum.)

To the modern, Western eye, the clothed female prisoners in the Balawat Gates reliefs appear to be adequately dressed, but would ancient Assyrian viewers of these reliefs have perceived these women as being decently clothed? Megan Cifarelli has argued that the raised skirts and uncovered heads of women captives (e.g., Cifarelli 1998:

220, fig. 17; see also Marcus 1995: Pl. VIb and King 1915: Plates XXIII and L) would have signalled their immodesty and sexual availability, which in turn would have indicated their humiliation and debasement (Cifarelli 1998: 221–222; cf. Marcus 1995: 202). She points to Isaiah 47:1–3’s image of dethroned daughter Babylon removing her veil, hiking up her skirts, and revealing her legs as indicative of the nakedness and shame the text attributes to this figure, and notes the roles played in Assyrian law of shortening or removing women’s clothing. Regarding raised skirts in particular, she concludes:



Figure 37.2 Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III, Band IX.3 (= King, Plate L). Bottom register, male and female captives, Qarqar. (©The Trustees of the British Museum.)



Figure 37.3 Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III, Band XIII.4 (= King, Plate LXXV). Bottom register, alleged bare-breasted female captives, Hamath. (©The Trustees of the British Museum.)

The representations of non-Assyrian female captives with raised skirts, therefore, communicate more than simply the facilitation of walking. While these women are not revealing themselves in a sexually explicit manner . . . this gesture appears to be one of sexually implicit exposure, a revelation of a small part of the female body that stood for the eroticized whole. As such, exposure was associated in contemporary texts with impropriety, humiliation and destitution; in the visual record it apparently signified the sexual availability of these women to the Assyrian male viewer.

(Cifarelli 1998: 223)

Regarding the uncovered heads, Cifarelli cites Middle Assyrian Law A 40 to the effect that married women were to have their heads covered in public while prostitutes were expressly forbidden to cover theirs (Cifarelli 1998: 222; so also Marcus 1995: 202 and n. 69). Finally, Cifarelli cites King's Plate LXXV (= *ANEP* 365, lower register) (Figure 37.3) as an example of female prisoners who "appear to be bare-breasted" (Cifarelli 1998: 228 and n. 66; cf. Marcus 1995: 202 and n. 67, Plate VIb).

Cynthia Chapman (2004: 46–47 and nn. 102, 103) has noted Cifarelli's and Marcus' interpretation of the representation of female prisoners in the Balawat reliefs, but has proposed a completely discrepant reading. For Chapman, although some foreign female captives no doubt experienced sexual assault at the hands of their

Assyrian captors, the message conveyed by the Balawat reliefs is ideological: “the point of showing clothed, unmolested, single file lines of foreign women being herded by Assyrian soldiers is to communicate the Assyrian king’s assumption of the role of their new protector/owner,” a role he had taken over from their own failed male protectors (Chapman 2004: 47). She too interprets the captive women in King’s Plate LXXV (= *ANEP* 365) as being bare-breasted, but dismisses that depiction as an aberration (Chapman 2004: 47 n. 103). Chapman does not engage Cifarelli’s points regarding the lack of head-coverings, the resonance with Isaiah 47:1–3 or the implications of Middle Assyrian Law A 40. I would note that A 40 pertains to Assyrian women out and about on main thoroughfares, and prostitutes and slaves are to be bare-headed, as is an unmarried *qadiltu* woman (Roth 1997: 167–169). The following law (A 41) notes that for a concubine to be veiled, a man has to veil her initially in the company of male witnesses; an unveiled concubine has a lesser status (Roth 1997: 169). Thus Cifarelli’s inference that bareheadedness was an indicator of being prostitute-like is overdrawn. I would further note that, albeit in the reliefs of a different king (Ashurbanipal), walking captives whose beards clearly label them as male have the hems of their long robes inclined upward at the front, revealing their lower legs, in a fashion comparable to the Balawat female captives with raised skirts (Barnett 1976: Plates LXVII = AO 19907, LXVIII). Thus arguably, a raised garment may simply be indicative of walking.

When one compares the depiction of captives being led away on Shalmaneser III’s Balawat Gates with extant reliefs stemming from the reigns of Tiglath-Pileser III through Ashurbanipal, striking contrasts emerge. Female captives on the Balawat reliefs are always represented walking as a group and in a single file (King 1915: Plates XV, XVI, XXIII, XLV–VI, L, LXXV–VI); in only one instance is a child depicted as a member of the group (King 1915: Plate XV).¹³ Likewise, males are always grouped together but may be either single (King 1915: Plates IV, X, XXII, XLV–VI, L, LXVII, LXXIV, LXXVII) or double (King 1915: Plates XV, XVI, LXXVI) file; they are always naked or nearly naked and not a single child is depicted among them. Neither males nor females carry belongings. But beginning with Tiglath-Pileser III, representations of at least some (re)conquered populations are radically different. Women and children are grouped together (e.g., BM 118882 = *ANEP* 367; BM 124954 = Reade 1999: 60, fig. 63 = Reed 2007: 121, fig. 4); women, or women and children, ride in oxcarts (e.g., *ANEP* 167; AO 19907 = Barnett 1976: Plate LXVII; Barnett 1976: Plates XVIII, XIX, LXVII and LXVIII; BM 118882 = *ANEP* 367); children ride on animals (e.g., BM 124928 = Reed 2007:

119–120, figs. 2 and 3 = detail Reade 1979: fig. 8; Barnett 1976: Plate XIX); there appear to be family groupings (e.g., Russell 1991: 162–163, fig. 83; BM 124928; BM 124919 = Reed 2007: 122–124, figs. 5–7; Barnett 1976: Plates LXVII, LX, LXIX); typically, they are transporting belongings (e.g., BM 118882 = *ANEP* 367; Russell 1991: 162–163, fig. 83; BM 124928 = Reed 2007: 119–120, figs. 2 and 3 = detail Reade 1979: fig. 8; BM 124954; *ANEP* 168; Barnett 1976: Plates XVIII, XIX, LX, LXVII, LXVIII); they are shown eating and/or drinking (e.g., BM 124919; BM 124954; *ANEP* 168; Barnett 1976: Plate LXIX); and no one in these groupings is naked. The representation of deportees from Lachish ([Figure 37.4](#)) in Sennacherib's palace reliefs fits squarely within this latter type of visualization (BM 124907–8; detail in Russell 1991: 164, fig. 84; for more comprehensive drawings see Reade 1999: 66, fig. 72 and Ussishkin 1982: 84, 86). Women and children are grouped together. They travel in ox carts. There appear to be family groupings. They are transporting belongings. No one in these groupings is naked. And these women have their heads covered.



Figure 37.4 BM 124907; deportees from Lachish. Sennacherib's Palace Without Rival.

That there is a radical change in the depiction of war captives beginning in the reign of Tiglath-Pileser III is no coincidence. According to the calculations of Bustenay Oded, 80 percent of the mass deportations for which the Neo-Assyrian kings were renowned occurred from the reign of Tiglath-Pileser III to that of Ashurbanipal, and it was Tiglath-Pileser III who initiated the period of Assyrian empire-building in earnest (Oded 1979: 19–22, 43). As practiced during this period, which included the reign of Sennacherib, a typical

situation in which mass deportation was employed was as a consequence of a vassal's rebellion. It served both to dissuade disloyalty to the Assyrian crown as well as to undermine any future resistance in territories that had already proved disloyal (Oded 1979: 41–44). Deportees were strategically deployed to maximize their contribution to consolidating the empire (and in some cases, to make room for Assyrian soldiers and civilians to take their place). Many were resettled in the Assyrian heartland while others were moved to key border areas and defensive positions along highways; still others were utilized to repopulate and cultivate abandoned or devastated regions of the empire (Oded 1979: 46–74). Of paramount interest to the concerns of this chapter, there is ample written evidence corroborating the reliefs' depictions of deportees being transported in family and community groups. We also learn from this inscriptional and administrative evidence that deportees were resettled in kin and community groupings (Oded 1979: 23–25). Keeping these social structures, and especially families, intact would have served to promote social stability and to provide some measure of cultural familiarity to war captives in a foreign land. Finally, the Neo-Assyrian kings of this period monitored the transport of war captives “in order to prevent any abuse of authority or exploitation of the captives by the officials, soldiers and various governors charged with carrying out the deportations” (Oded 1979: 38) and to ensure that they arrived at their respective destinations “in good condition, so that they could bring the greatest possible economic, military and political benefit to Assyria [f]or this was the whole purpose of the deportations” (Oded 1979: 35). To these ends, letters and administrative documents reported on the physical condition of the deportees and their being provisioned with food, clothing, and other necessities of the journey (Oded 1979: 37–40; Crouch 2009: 45–46, 60–61).

Concluding remarks

Contextualized within this strategy of mass deportations that strove to keep families together for the good of the empire, let us return to the Rabshekah's speech to those under siege by Sennacherib's forces in Jerusalem. A prolonged siege not only would have entailed the horrors and agonies of disease and starvation, it also would have heightened the likelihood that women and girls among the reconquered population would be sexually abused and/or mutilated.¹⁴ And while it is true that the palace reliefs of Assyrian kings functioned as visual exemplars of royal ideology and propaganda (e.g., Reade 1979; Marcus 1995; Reed 2007; Feldman 2011), the extant letters and

administrative records, which were not produced for display, support the general conclusion that deportees would not have been brutally mistreated for the simple reason that it would not have been in the empire's best interests. Thus I would surmise that females deported within this system ran a lower risk of sexual assault, not because of any inherent respect of female persons per se but because the damage it would have done to the family unit did not cohere with the project of empire. The prospect of deportation may not have been as benign and familiar as Sennacherib's ideological and propagandistic palace reliefs and the Rabshakeh's "on message" speech would have it, but its goals may have offered considerable insulation from the atrocities we know have been perpetrated against women and girls in other wartime circumstances throughout the ages (see Gaca, this volume).

Notes

- 1 All biblical quotes follow the NRSV.
- 2 It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the intricacies of dating the reigns of the kings of the ancient Near East, including Israel and Judah. I am following the chronology provided in Cogan (2008: 235–236).
- 3 More precisely, different editions of Sennacherib's annals (and those of other Neo-Assyrian kings) were produced at different times during his reign. So, for example, if an account of a particular king's first regnal or campaign year was documented in the annal genre shortly thereafter, it tended to be recounted in greater detail than an account of a king's first year as it appeared in an annal spanning six years, or ten years, and so on. For Sennacherib's annals in particular, see Luckenbill (1924) and Frahm (1997). Sennacherib's incursion into Judah and the Levant is recorded as having taken place in his third campaign year. In this case, the account of campaign years one to three as it appears in the Rassam Cylinder became the standard text of later annals, except that the section dealing with Hezekiah sending tribute to Nineveh was omitted (Luckenbill 1924: 60).
- 4 The book of Lamentations is not contextualized within the Neo-Assyrian period; rather, it is set in the aftermath of the Neo-Babylonian king Nebuchadrezzar's 586 BCE siege of Jerusalem. In that this siege was a protracted one (2 Kgs 25:1–3) I have deemed it apt to include elements of Lamentation's description in my consideration of siege conditions.
- 5 See the standard commentaries for discussion of the textual problems in v. 3.
- 6 Biblical Hebrew does not have a word that expresses the sexual violence against women that we in modern, Western societies would identify as rape. The Piel of the verb ' *nh* articulates the experience of shame or humiliation (see *BDB* for examples), sexual violation of a female is sometimes construed as an offence against a girl's or woman's father, brothers or husband (e.g., Gen. 34; Isa. 13:16; Job 31:9–12; cf. Deut. 22:30 [Heb. 23:1]), and there is certainly no sense that a woman could be sexually violated within marriage (e.g., Deut. 20:10–14, 22:28–29). For discussion of sexual violence perpetuated against women specifically in wartime and in contradistinction to peacetime, see Richters (1998: 112–127).
- 7 The annals of Shalmaneser III in particular address the shifting alliances and

power struggles involving Damascus and both Assyria to the east and Israel and other Levantine city-states to the west (Luckenbill 1926: 200–252; Cogan 2008: 12–31).

- 8 The verse evidences some textual problems. See the standard commentaries.
- 9 Amos 1:13 does not explicitly mention a besieged city. It invokes Yahweh's retribution upon the Ammonites "because they have ripped open pregnant women in Gilead in order to enlarge their territory."
- 10 Though not an Assyrian document per se, Sefire Treaty 1A lines 40–41 contain a partially broken section that threatens a recalcitrant vassal with the curse, "so may the wives of Matiel be stripped naked, and the wives of his offspring and the wives of [his] no[ble]" (Fitzmyer 1967: 14–17).
- 11 Though not described as entailing violence, it is nevertheless the case that various Neo-Assyrian king's annals report taking a rebellious vassal king's family, including his wife and daughters, and sometimes his palace women, back to Assyria (e.g., Luckenbill 1926: 259, 281, 1927: 9, 12, 23; Chapman 2004: 45; cf. 1 Kgs 20:3; Jer. 38:21–23). Whether Assyrian kings typically forced such women to have sex with them is not specified. Sennacherib's Rassam Cylinder inscription indicates that Hezekiah's post-rebellion tribute included his daughters and his palace women (Luckenbill 1924: 60, ll. 56–58; Cogan 2008: 115).
- 12 Both Parpola and Watanabe (1988) and Marcus (1995) are working from a detail of BM 124927 that includes only one female figure; hence the (singular) rape of an Arab woman. In its entirety, the middle register of BM 124927 depicts at least three female figures.
- 13 There is a smaller female in the line of women on Plate L, but she is dressed like the other women and like them, raises her skirt. The smaller figure with the line of women on Plate XV appears to be female but is not dressed as the adult women are, so I am suggesting she is a child.
- 14 I do not doubt the veracity of Kathy Gaca's presentation of the routine brutality and sexual violence perpetrated against girls and women generally speaking in the context of ancient warfare (Gaca 2011: 73–88, 273–76). What I am suggesting here is that the particular goals of mass deportation during the period of the Neo-Assyrian Empire potentially tempered any such violence.

References

- Barnett, R. D. (1976) *Sculptures from the North Palace of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh (668–627 B.C.)*. London: British Museum Publications Limited.
- Chapman, C. R. (2004) *The Gendered Language of Warfare in the Israelite-Assyrian Encounter*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Cifarelli, M. (1998) Gesture and alterity in the art of Ashurbanipal II of Assyria. *The Art Bulletin* 80: 210–228.
- Cogan, M. (2008) *The Raging Torrent: Historical Inscriptions from Assyria and Babylonia Relating to Ancient Israel*. Jerusalem, Israel: Carta.
- Crouch, C. L. (2009) *War and Ethics in the Ancient Near East: Military Violence in Light of Cosmology and History*. New York: Walter de

- Gruyter.
- Ephal, I. (2009) *The City Besieged: Siege and Its Manifestations in the Ancient Near East*. Boston, MA: Brill.
- Feldman, M. H. (2011) Assyrian representations of booty and tribute as a self-portrayal of empire. In B. E. Kelle *et al.* (eds) *Interpreting Exile: Displacement and Deportation in Biblical and Modern Contexts*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, pp. 135–150.
- Fitzmyer, J. A. (1967) *The Aramaic Inscription of Sefire*. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute.
- Frahm, E. (1997) *Einleitung in die Sanherib-Inschriften*. Vienna, Austria: Instituts für Orientalistik der Universität Wien.
- Gaca, K. L. (2011) Girls, women, and the significance of sexual violence in ancient warfare. In E. D. Heineman (ed.) *Sexual Violence in Conflict Zones: From the Ancient World to the Era of Human Rights*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 73–88, 273–276.
- Grayson, A. K. (1996) *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC (858–745 BC)*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
- Hallo, W. W. and Younger, K. L. (eds) (2003) *The Context of Scripture, Volume 2: Monumental Inscriptions from the Biblical World*. Boston, MA: Brill.
- Hillers, D. R. (1964) *Treaty-Curses and the Old Testament Prophets*. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute.
- Kelle, B. E. (2007) *Ancient Israel at War 853–586 BC*. New York: Osprey Publishing.
- King, L. W. (1915) *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser King of Assyria B. C. 860–825*. London: Oxford University Press.
- King, P. J. and Stager, L. E. (2001) *Life in Biblical Israel*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Lambert, W. G. and Millard, A. R. (1969) *Atra-Hasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.
- Luckenbill, D. D. (1924) *The Annals of Sennacherib*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Luckenbill, D. D. (1926 and 1927) *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, 2 volumes. New York: Greenwood Press.
- Marcus, M. I. (1995) Geography as visual ideology: Landscape, knowledge, and power in Neo-Assyrian art. In M. Liverani (ed.) *Neo-Assyrian Geography*. Rome: Università di Roma, pp. 193–202 and plates Ia–VIb.
- Mayer, W. (2003) Sennacherib's campaign of 701 BCE: The Assyrian view. In L. L. Grabbe (ed.) *"Like a Bird in a Cage": The Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BCE*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, pp.

- Moore, M. B. (2008) Fighting in writing: Warfare in histories of Ancient Israel. In B. E. Kelle and F. R. Ames (eds) *Writing and Reading War: Rhetoric, Gender, and Ethics in Biblical and Modern Contexts*. Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, pp. 57–66.
- Oded, B. (1979) *Mass Deportations and Deportees in the Neo-Assyrian Empire*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag.
- Parpola S. and Watanabe, K. (1988) *State Archives of Assyria*, Volume 2: *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths*. Helsinki, Finland: Helsinki University Press.
- Reade, J. (1979) Ideology and propaganda in Assyrian art. In M. T. Larsen (ed.) *Power and Propaganda: A Symposium on Ancient Empires*. Copenhagen, Denmark: Akademisk Forlag, pp. 329–343.
- Reade, J. (1999) *Assyrian Sculpture*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Reed, S. (2007) Blurring the edges: A reconsideration of the treatment of enemies in Ashurbanipal's reliefs. In J. Cheng and M. H. Feldman (eds) *Ancient Near Eastern Art in Context: Studies in Honor of Irene J. Winter by Her Students*. Boston, MA: Brill, pp. 101–117.
- Richters, A. (1998) Sexual violence in wartime: Psycho-sociocultural wounds and healing processes: the example of the former Yugoslavia. In P. J. Bracken and C. Petty (eds) *Rethinking the Trauma of War*. New York: Free Association Books, pp. 112–127.
- Roth, M. T. (1997) *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*. Second edition. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.
- Russell, J. M. (1991) *Sennacherib's Palace Without Rival at Nineveh*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Uehlinger, C. (2003) Clio in a world of pictures: Another look at the Lachish reliefs from Sennacherib's southwest palace at Nineveh. In L. L. Grabbe (ed.) *"Like a Bird in a Cage": The Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BCE*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, pp. 221–305.
- Ussishkin, D. (1982) *The Conquest of Lachish by Sennacherib*. Tel Aviv, Israel: Tel Aviv University, The Institute of Archaeology.

WOMEN'S RITUAL PRACTICE IN THE WESTERN PHOENICIAN AND PUNIC WORLD

Meritxell Ferrer Martin and Kathryn Lafrenz Samuels

Introduction

Since the 1980s, the study of gender—especially of women—has had a strong impact on research on the ancient world, both in archaeology and history (e.g., Meyers 1988; Gero and Conkey 1991; Bird 1997; Bahrani 2001; Nelson 2006, 2007). However, this line of analysis has not appeared with the same strength in Phoenician and Punic studies, where gender remains a minor field of inquiry. In fact, the field of Phoenician and Punic studies has traditionally focused on what might be considered masculine topics and, with modern eyes, directly associated with power—topics such as trade, war, monumental architecture, and political and religious institutions (Delgado and Ferrer 2007a: 30). This androcentric bias in Phoenician and Punic studies not only involved a noteworthy lack of attention to women and feminine agency, but also to those research areas where women, and especially their capacity of action, could be visualized more effectively, for example in domestic contexts and other arenas of domesticity. These spaces being traditionally seen as unconnected to power were consequently relegated to secondary roles in the historical development of the western Phoenician and Punic world¹ (for map, see [Figure 38.1](#)).

In spite of the long hegemony of this androcentric focus, it is noteworthy to highlight the emergence in recent years of work on the role of women in the Phoenician colonies and the Punic world, in particular on women's participation in the religious and ritual sphere (Jiménez Flores 2002, 2006; Delgado and Ferrer 2007a, 2007b, 2011a, 2011b, 2012; López-Bertran and Aranegui 2011; López-Bertran

2007). What stands out within these traditional studies focused on institutional religiosity is that women only gain prominence through blood ties with local political authorities or through female sexuality. Blood ties are invoked, for example, for some priestesses whose position is often presented as hereditary and, therefore, mostly due to family connections (Jiménez Flores 2002, 2006; Lancellotti 2003). Importance is placed on women through their sexuality in explanations involving sacred marriage or hierogamy (Lipinski 1995; Jiménez Flores 2006), or sacred prostitution (Delcor 1974; Lipinski 1984; Jiménez Flores 2001, 2006; Ribichini 2004; Budin 2008).

Despite this traditional emphasis on institutionalized cults, we would do well to remember that religion and rituality did not correspond to an isolated field of action in Phoenician and Punic society. On the contrary, as in other ancient and modern societies, religious and ritual beliefs and practices represent a field of action that is spatially and temporally integrated to other areas of human practice (Barrett 1991, 1994: 72–80). The absolute importance of these beliefs and practices in the everyday life of Phoenician and Punic people means that an analysis of their religiosity cannot be limited only to those ritual spaces sponsored by political institutions—temples and shrines financed by the state or local authorities—or to those community members who managed and administered these cultic institutions. Rather, Phoenician and Punic ritual and religiosity must be understood in its holistic complexity, as a field of action that integrates all of society. By doing so we open a window that allows us to account for all members who comprise these communities.

Our aim is to highlight some of the ritual and religious practices carried out by women beyond institutionalized cults, in particular those everyday practices developed in the context of the household. It is in these practices and actions where feminine agency could be drawn out in sharpest relief, where the centrality and importance of some women—both in terms of the maintenance of their own homes and, by extension, of their community—may be most clearly observed.

The house as a cornerstone for Phoenician and Punic communities

Like in the Levant (Meyers 1988: 18, 2002, 2005, 2009, 2012; Nakhai 2014), the house was the basic unit—at the economic, social, and religious level—for western Phoenician and Punic communities. In the following we understand this house unit in its expansive sense,

considering under this term its physical space (its architectural space and the possible lands linked to it), the individuals that inhabited it (members of the family, including those living, dead, or to be born, as well as possible workmen or servants), its material culture, and the set of productive and reproductive activities carried out by all those who were part of its household (Meyers 2002: 284–285).

The centrality of the house for western Phoenician and Punic communities, to their economic, social, and also biological development, converts it into a vital space where the activities carried out by all its members coordinate to meet the productive and reproductive needs necessary for the beneficial perpetuation of the house, the household, and, by extension, the community as well. It is also in this domestic field of action where women acquire a great prominence, especially in their role as nourishers, carers, and keepers of the house and its household. This role for women is seen mainly in their importance in the daily development of the basic and necessary maintenance activities for the domestic economy, the socialization of all household group members, and their own personal development. Some of these everyday activities are, for example, those related to the preparation and cooking of foods, the production of textiles and clothes, reproduction and child-bearing, and the protection of all household group members.

Alongside these everyday activities, women also hold great importance in the development of domestic religiosity and ritual, carrying out and managing different daily and periodic ritual actions and celebrations linked to their own reproduction and the survival of their household—in both the biological and social senses—and to the lifecycle of the house and members of its household, as well as to its care and protection from the supernatural and evil forces that surround them. Through these practices women secure the welfare of the house and its members, but also actively participate in the construction and maintenance of close bonds between all household group members, living or dead, as well as keep and perpetuate the memory of the house and the family (Delgado and Ferrer 2007a, 2007b, 2011b, 2012; Delgado 2008; Oggiano 2012).

The close relationship between daily activities and ritual actions developed within the domestic realm introduces certain difficulties in the archaeological identification of the latter (Fogelin 2007: 60–61; Meyers 2010: 121–122, 2012: 149). Ritual activities mostly employed the same objects used in daily domestic practices (e.g., cooking pots and bowls for the offering of foods, jugs for libations, or lamps to communicate with supernatural beings), to which in certain cases

were added other objects with clear cultic value, for example figurines, amulets, small altars, or more specialized vases. The use of everyday objects in the development of different ritual actions carried out in the ambit of the house evidences the quotidian nature of these practices, as well as their direct emergence from domesticity. They corresponded with and made material the specialized behaviors that served to emphasize maintenance and daily life through specific performances (Bell 1992; Barrett 1994; Brück 1999; Bradley 2005).

Women's ritual practices in the domestic sphere

The archaeological evidence

As also seen in the Levant, in the western Phoenician and Punic world ritual practices and actions carried out within the house and domestic contexts are flexible with respect to time and place, not requiring there to be specific times of day or locations in the domestic sphere to be carried out.² This flexibility matches a constant protection and care of the house and all those included in its household group. These actions carried out and managed by some members of the household, and consequently by some women, constituted a central element of the life and religiosity of Phoenician and Punic women, being developed both in everyday practice and during periodic celebrations which marked critical moments of the house and its members, such as, among others, the birth or death of one of the members of the household, or the building itself, as in the reconstruction or abandonment of the house.



Figure 38.2 Punic terracotta female figurine from Puig des Molins' cemetery (Ibiza), dated to the sixth to fourth centuries BCE (Museo Arqueológico Nacional).

In particular, the use of amulets, jewels, and other small objects with strong magical powers stands out among women's daily ritual practices. Literary sources (Gen. 35:4; Ex. 32:2; Is. 3:16–21; Ezra 16:18, 20) as well as coroplastic items give some indication of how these small objects with ornamental as well as beneficial and apotropaic attributes were used daily by Phoenician and Punic people to protect their wearers and bearers against harm, and possibly to promote their wellbeing too ([Figure 38.2](#)).

These items were worn and borne by men, but mostly by women and infants who—more prone to risks, illnesses, and even death (Meyers 1988: 112–113; Campillo 1995; Willett 2002: 28; Piga *et al.* 2015)—required greater protection against evil forces and demons that surrounded their daily lives (Bloch-Smith 1992: 81–86; Willett

1999, 2002; King and Stager 2001: 276–277; Delgado and Ferrer 2012: 134).

Amulets, scarabs, and jewels not only protect the living, but also the dead. In this case, the great number of amulets found in burials suggests the needs of the deceased for protection, especially when they crossed a liminal space full of demons and evil spirits (Fantar 1970; Ribichini 1987; Xella, 2000; Ribichini and Xella 1994; Delgado and Ferrer 2012: 135). The constant search for protection against the evil forces explains the abundant record of this kind of objects in the graves (see, for example, Bartoloni and Tronchetti 1981; Bénichou-Safar 1982; Bartoloni 1985, 1996; Fernández 1992; Botto and Salvadei 2005)—as well as other protective and repelling malevolent forces such as talismans, masks, bells, or razors among others (see, for example, Cintas 1946; Fantar 1970; Bénichou-Safar 1982; Fernández 1992)—and show how care provided to the living, in particular those care practices carried out by the women of the household, were also extended to the dead (Delgado and Ferrer 2012).

Together with the everyday use of these small magical objects that protected the members of the household from diseases, evil eyes, or the undesired action of evil spirits and demons, women also carried out various ritual practices in their usual workplaces; in other words, in those spaces where, together with the children who were in their charge, women spent the most time. The recovery of certain objects with clear cultural value in house areas where women were carrying out tasks associated mainly with the feminine sphere, such as those related to the processing and cooking of food or textile production, suggest that women carried out their daily activities with several ritual actions intended to promote the welfare and protection of the household.

The constant intersection between maintenance activities and ritual practices is well illustrated in the so-called “House of the Domestic Shrine,” a residence in use during the fifth century BCE in Mozia, an island settlement off the coast of Sicily (Nigro 2004, 2007).³ A small room (locus 1060) was identified in the south-east corner of this house (Figure 38.3), leading to two adjoining rooms, as well as to the central courtyard of the house. Inside this locus were recorded some vessels intended mostly for the consumption and service of foods, as well as the remains of a carbonized vertical loom to which are associated 36 loomweights. The finding of these loomweights *in situ* suggests that one of the main activities developed in this space was the domestic production of textiles (Nigro 2007: 45–46).

Together with these objects, in the south-west corner of this room two arms from a terracotta statue were recorded whose gesture seems to allude to a blessing action. The presence of this statue in a room mainly intended for textile activities suggests that certain ritual practices were carried out in this space, possibly for the protection of this space and, especially, for those members of the household who spent the most time in it (the women responsible for domestic textile production, and the children in their charge while the women performed this task). The possible execution of ritual actions in this room is supported by the discovery just below the loom of a stone incense burner characterized by a tapered body, an Egyptian cyma, and a circular depression on its upper surface (Nigro 2007: 47; Spagnoli 2012). Although this type of perfume burning has been recorded elsewhere in domestic contexts (Hvidberg-Hansen 1984), their usual place of documentation is in sanctuaries (Moscatti and Uberti 1981: 32–33; Fantar 1986: 184) and funerary spaces (Tamburello 1967: 362; Bartoloni 1976; Moscatti and Uberti 1985). In this regard, it is interesting to highlight that for the Phoenician and Punic world, like in the Near East, the burning of aromatic substances, through the smoke and associated smells, worked to achieve the favor of the divinities and the ancestors, as well as to dispel the maleficent spirits and demonic forces. Also in this room was a set of pottery vases of local and imported production mainly intended for drinking consumption and service. The collection of all these materials suggests that in this space the same people who produced textiles—the women of the house—also carried out different ritual practices that surely involved the burning of aromatic substances and the libation or offering of liquids—such as, for example, water, wine, or oil.

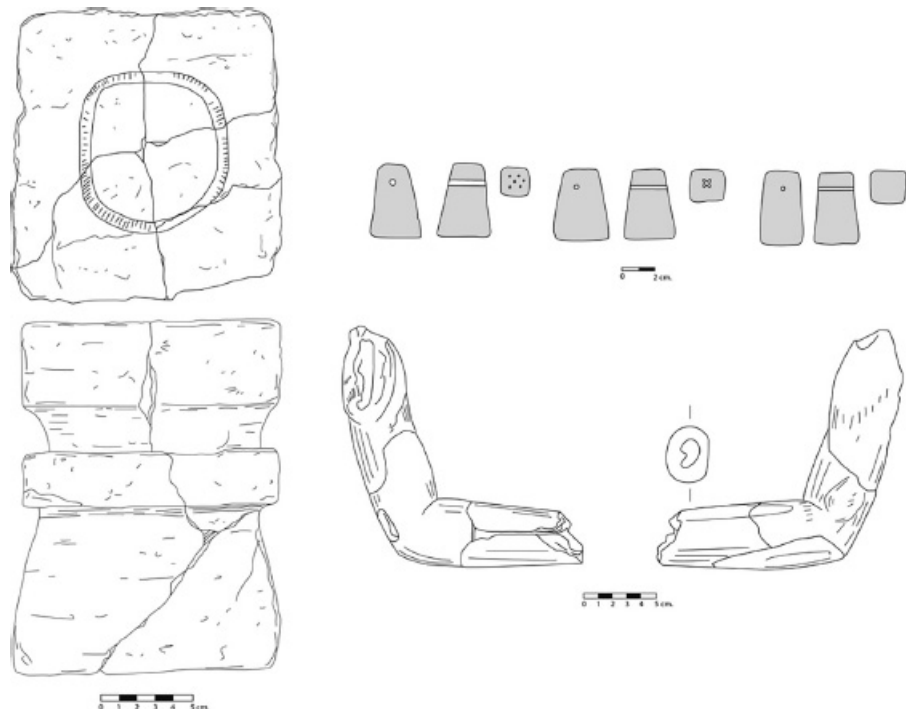


Figure 38.3 Selected materials recorded in “Locus 1060” of the “House of the Domestic Shrine” of Mozia: the stone incense burner, two terracotta arms and some loom weights (after Nigro 2007: tav. XIV, XV, XII). (Reproduced by kind permission of Prof. Dr. Lorenzo Nigro, Missione Archeologica a Mozia.)

The same confluence of maintenance activities carried out primarily by women in ritual practices is also observed in the residential area A of Pani Loriga⁴ (Sardinia), in particular in room I (Oggiano *et al.* 2010). The existence in this space of a central hearth over which was recorded a handmade cook-pot together with some sherds of cooking ware, as well as several consumption vessels, indicates that tasks related to cooking foods and its consumption were carried out in this room. However, the finding of two perfume burners of a type mostly recorded in sanctuaries or funerary spaces (Oggiano *et al.* 2010: 6; Oggiano and Botto 2012: 156) suggests that alongside the quotidian alimentary practices, ritual actions were also carried out (Figure 38.4).

This kind of space with fixed cultic installations is well illustrated, again, in the “House of the Domestic Shrine” of Mozia (Nigro 2004: 192–204). A clay platform with a whitewash surface attached to the wall, a small semicircular installation also with whitewash surface and

clear evidence of combustion in its interior, as well as a small niche in the wall possibly used to host or guard cultic objects have been recorded in a small room located in the south-east corner of the central courtyard of the house (locus 226), close to the staircase that gave access to the upper level of the house. Different items have been recorded in relation to these structures, some of them associated with ritual practices, such as a small terracotta altar, a miniature black gloss cup, an incense burner, a bovine astragalus, and a fragment of deer antler (Nigro 2004: 200). Together with these materials was a column with an Aeolic capital, which reproduced in reduced dimensions the columns used to demarcate the entrance of the Phoenician temples, as is evidenced by some Levantine models or even some tophets' stelae from the same site of Mozia (Nigro 2004: 202).

The documentation of these objects together with this fixed installation speak to the possible performance of ritual practices that include, again, the burning of perfumes and incense, and the offering of food and liquids. Unlike the other spaces, in this liminal space—a meeting point between two levels of the house—and of great concurrence for all the members of the household, it is highly probable that both men and women of the house carried out ritual activities. However, the act of feeding and offering food and liquids to the divinities and the ancestors of the house was probably developed by the women of the house preferentially, who with these actions expanded and enlarged one of their daily activities to the ritual sphere.

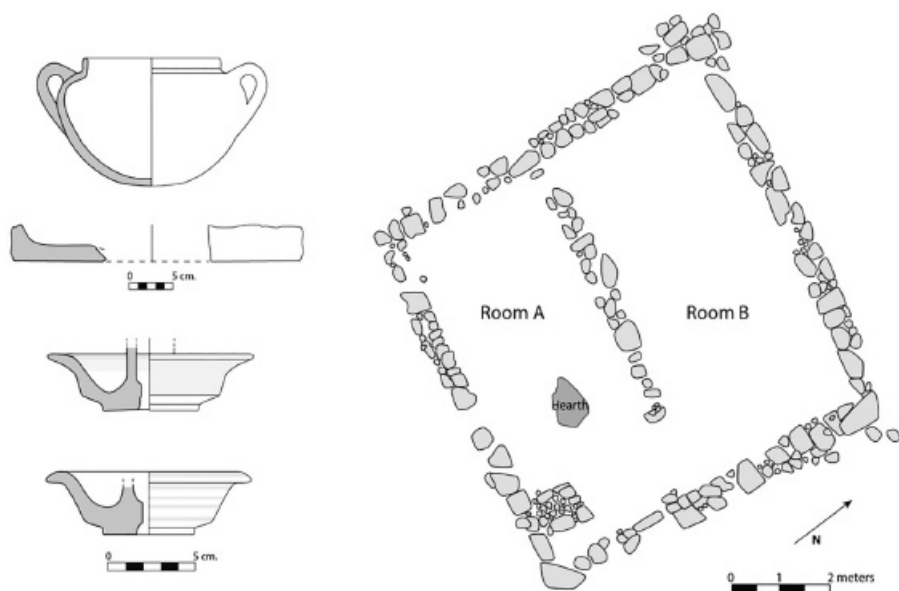


Figure 38.4 Selected materials recorded in room I of the residential area A of Pani Loriga: cooking pot, cooking tray and two perfume burners (after Oggiano et al. 2010: fig. 10, 12, 13; Oggiano and Botto 2012: fig. 9 and 13). (Reproduced by kind permission of Prof. Dr. Ida Oggiano.)

Room 7 of House 2 of cerro del Villar⁵ (Iberian Peninsula) offers another example of domestic space devoted mainly to the performance of domestic ritual practices (Delgado *et al.* 2014). This room, situated in the north-west corner of the house and dating from the seventh century BCE, stands out for presenting a different character vis-à-vis the other spaces that compose this residential unit. Both its reduced size and the kind of materials recorded within it allude directly to the performance of ritual activities. Among the objects recorded in it that stand out are ostrich eggs with ochre remains in their interior resting on one of the walls, three almost complete lamps, two shells with combustion remains in their interior (maybe used as lamps too), a silver lunate earring, and a burned vessel (Delgado *et al.* 2014: 342). Unlike the fixed cultic installation documented in the “House of the Domestic Shrine” of Mozia, the materials recorded in this space, such as the ostrich eggs and ochre, may be symbolic of specific ritual events perhaps associated with the dead and the regeneration of life and point to cultic activities performed in the home by women. These objects would have been accompanied by other elements used to favor divine and ancestral protection and repel evil forces, such as the light, smoke, and aromas produced by the lamps, the burned shells, or the silver lunate. Together with these elements, the presence of an open vessel possibly intended for offerings of food again follows the idea of a ritual practice where the women of the household hold some importance, exerting their role as nourishers that goes beyond the biological subsistence of the living.

Carthage and the epigraphical evidence

Carthage provides additional material on women’s ritual activities in the domestic sphere. Building on what can be garnered from the archaeological evidence within houses, we bring in the epigraphical evidence from rituals related to the maintenance and care of the household. The main collection of epigraphical evidence from the Phoenician and Punic world may be found in Volume I of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum* (CIS), of which the great majority of inscriptions hail from Carthage. Of these, almost all derive from topheet contexts, as engraved stelae dating in the main to the fourth

century BCE and later (for survey treatments of the stelae see Brown 1991; Bénichou-Safar 1995, 2004; Quinn 2011). Tophets are typically characterized as a type of specialized religious sanctuary containing cremated human infant and animal remains dedicated to Baal Hammon and Tanit, in which the stelae would have acted as votive markers commemorating the act of dedication and placed together (or in close association) with the cremated remains.⁶

The information on women's ritual activity culled from the CIS inscriptions furnishes remarkably fertile grounds for illuminating women's ritual activity in ancient Carthaginian society. Approximately 90 percent of the nearly 4,000 CIS inscriptions are from inscribed stelae commemorating a votive offering inscribed with the formulaic phrase: "[Dedicated] to/for the Lady Tanit, face of Baal, and to the Lord Baal Hammon is what [name of the dedicant and their lineage, if any] vowed" (*lrbt ltnt pn b'l wl'dn lb'l hmn 'š ndr* [name of dedicant and their lineage]).⁷ A survey of the inscriptions contained in the CIS shows approximately 12 percent (n = 484) of the inscriptions were commissioned by or for women.⁸ Mirroring the corpus as a whole, the great majority (450 of the 484, or 93 percent) of the inscriptions dedicated by/for women hail from Carthage, from tophet contexts.

Our treatment of tophets as a context that encompassed domestic ritual follows on the expansive understanding of what composed the house unit, as discussed above, to include not only the architectural form, but the household members and holdings that composed its social and economic ambit. This household (composed of the living, dead, and unborn) and its welfare would have been intimately tied to maintaining appropriate links between household members, and with the deities that protected the household. Therefore, we include those spaces marked out for the dead and unborn as relevant for understanding household ritual, and women's ritual practice, and suggest that tophets be understood as some spatial combination of sanctuary, necropolis, and household: a cross-cutting combination otherwise ill-characterized by modern spatial categories and sensibilities. It was a "polyvalent place" (Bonnet 2011: 379).

Understood as such, the Carthaginian tophet offers an excellent opportunity for exploring the case of Punic women. Moreover, the Carthaginian tophets provide a valuable context where we can "see" Punic women visibly in the record and can identify their participation in ritual action.⁹ However, women's visibility in the tophet does prompt the question: what is the meaning of their involvement in the ritual practices performed in the tophet, practices that 90 percent of the time were performed by men? One explanation would be that

Carthaginian women partook in more public functions, possibly on account of enjoying more equitable social status vis-à-vis men, relative to other ancient Mediterranean societies. This explanation would follow from interpretations of the tophet as collective institutions and civic structures where civic and diasporic identities were cultivated and reinforced (Bondi 1979; Bonnet 2011; Quinn 2011, 2013). Additionally, we could underscore the ritual practice as performed by or on behalf of families (specifically parents, or would be parents), and the argument being made here that women's involvement in ritual practice that maintained and protected the household naturally extended to the tophet. Though several degrees removed from the Carthaginian context, Amadasi Guzzo and Zamora (2013) suggest that a votive dedication from a later (second to third century CE) sanctuary dedicated to Saturn—Baal Hammon's Roman equivalent—in N'gaous (Algeria) might shed some light on women's involvement:

From the information available, it is not at present possible to determine and reconstruct in detail how the ceremonies were performed. We don't know what was the mother's role, why occasionally women could perform this rite, why sometimes it was performed on behalf of someone else . . . However, we know that the rites performed were intended for the preservation of life: *anima pro anima, sanguine pro sanguine, vita pro vita, pro Concessae salutem ex viso et voto sacrum reddiderunt molchomor*, as it is written in the sanctuary of Saturn in N'gaous. Originally at least, life could have been understood in a wide sense—fertility, well-being, escape from danger, as the literary sources show—not only or exclusively concerning the health of a single individual.

(Amadasi Guzzo and Zamora 2013: 179)

Furthermore, we can also understand women's ritual practice and their place in Phoenicio-Punic society from the votive dedications collected in the CIS, specifically in how women identify themselves in ritual contexts. Though much of the votive inscription is formulaic, the inscriptions offer a valuable resource on how women dedicants identified themselves through such details as personal names, kinship lineages, professional stations or statuses, and foreign origins. Taken together, this information suggests that women had the opportunity to list those relationships and titles that were most meaningful to them and their place within society, within a ritual context that acted to maintain and reproduce familial bonds and welfare through the protection and favor of Tanit and Baal Hammon. From the inscriptional formula, we know that identifying oneself before the gods was an important and necessary part of the ritual practice, and furthermore that identifying oneself meant identifying one's relationships to others, especially their kinship relations as characterized through lineal descent. If an infant was involved, this additional generation could have acted to further ground the lineage

before the eyes of the gods.

The strongest marker by which women and men identified themselves in the votive inscriptions was by lineage, linking together multiple generations of ancestors (sometimes to the fifth generation) within the ritual act of dedicating the next generation to Baal Hammon and Tanit. Almost all of the inscriptions identify the women through lineage and/or descriptives that characterize the family, such as the place from which their family hailed or a profession. Inscriptions that identified the women only by name were the exception ($n = 18$) rather than the rule. While the lineages given are generally patrilineal,¹⁰ in 16 of the inscriptions the women list their relationship to their husband in place of a lineage,¹¹ and 15 inscriptions assert a matrilineal descent in some form, including 4 citing strictly matrilineal descent, listing only the women's mother's name (CIS I 256, 378, 1407, 1575).¹² Noticeably absent are any inscriptions listing the mother and the mother's mother, which supports the understanding that ancestry was overwhelmingly a patrilineal process. Additionally, there is also a strong correlation between matrilineal descent and the professions of *'bd bt* (temple servant) or *'mt* (temple personnel).

Names are also important sources of information about the women. There are several instances in the inscriptions of names being passed down through a family (e.g., CIS I 815 and 1453 with the name Bodaštart, "servant of Aštart"), which would account for the conservative nature of personal names, as well as the likelihood that families and households identified with individual deities as their protector. By the beginning of the fifth century BCE, Baal Hammon and Tanit had gained the ascendancy in the pantheon of Carthage, coinciding with the defeat at Himera in 480 BCE and the breaking off of relations with the mother-city of Tyre (Ribichini 2001). While Melqart was closely associated with the monarchy in Tyre and Carthage, the rise of Tanit and Baal Hammon has been variously interpreted as the result of 'democratic' (Lancel 1992: 204) or oligarchic (Aubet 1993: 131) movements in Carthage at the end of the fourth century BCE that gave rise to the government of the *suffetes* (a pair of elected senior magistrates). Moreover, different powerful families were of monarchic or oligarchic/democratic ambition, so that Aubet (1993: 131) connects Tanit and Baal Hammon with the Magonidas family, and the revival of Melqart's cult with the ascendancy of the Barcidas family.

Interestingly, Amadasi Guzzo and Zamora (2013: 170) draw attention to several instances in Carthage where dedications are made

by two family members: a father and daughter (CIS I 5702), father and son (CIS I 384), brother and sister (CIS I 4596), two women (CIS I 385), and three dedications made by a woman and man (presumably husband and wife, CIS I 382, 383, and 386; see [Figure 38.5](#)).¹³ These are interesting to compare to other attestations of group dedications found in the hinterland of Carthage, in “Numidian” and “Libyan” communities (these ethnic classifications are not attested materially), typically later in time after the fall of Carthage to the Romans, where the dedications are made by groups who identify as citizens of cities like Dougga, Maktar, and Mididi (Quinn 2011: 402). This difference, which one would expect, given the separate cultural and political contexts of Punic Carthage from the later Numidian cities, is telling for the different corporate ties that held the most significance for the dedicants: kinship in Carthage, or citizenship in the hinterland under Roman rule. The point is that Punic households did extend into and encompass—perhaps even structured—the political and institutional realm.



Figure 38.5 Votive stele from Carthage tophet: CIS I 382, dedicated by a man and woman probably a married couple. (After CIS I pl. LVI no. 382.)

Mixed opinions circulate on the significance of personal names for understanding Phoenician and Punic religion, particularly with respect to whether names are a reliable indicator of institutional or popular religion. Lancel (1992) has cautioned that Punic theophoric names

reflect conservative religious trends rather than popular religion.¹⁴ Ribichini (2001) also notes the archaism of theophoric personal names, but suggests that “a certain distinction between family worship and public religion” be understood. This is an important point to question, and we return to our earlier assertion that women’s role in Punic society and their ritual practice can only be properly accounted for through an expansive understanding of the household, in its role and reach, as a cornerstone of Phoenician and Punic society. While a context of popular religion—a tophet displaying the rise of Tanit and Baal Hammon—might seem at odds with dedicants bearing archaizing theophoric names, this is only an apparent disjuncture. The distinctions made between conservative versus popular religion break down when we understand the tophet to be an extension of domestic households into institutional/public space. The apparent disjuncture between institutional/popular religion, as well as public/private space, is produced through a lens that wishes to separate neatly domestic contexts from institutional and public contexts. Dedicants to the tophet sanctuary were engaged in ritual action in a public space, but at the same time were maintaining and reproducing household relations (between the living, dead, and unborn), and seeking divine protection for this household.

The privileged connections individual households held with specific deities are also made clear through references to affiliations with temple service, as in the case of lineages which cite a *‘bd bt* (temple servant), attested in CIS I 253, 256, 378, 3776, 3780 (CIS I 2868 may or may not be a female votive). In these inscriptions the vocation of temple servant is typically mentioned in relation to a maternal line.¹⁵ Of the 15 inscriptions dedicated by women that cite a matrilineal lineage (in at least one generation), 4 mention a *‘bd bt*, in which 3 cite *‘bd bt* as their mother’s positions (CIS I 256, 378, 3776), and 1 as their maternal grandfather’s position (CIS I 253; see [Figure 38.6](#)). According to previous interpretations of women *‘bd bt* as ritual prostitutes, the matrilineal lineage to the first generation might have been explained as the result of a daughter not knowing the identity of her father. However, thanks to persuasive critiques of the existence of ritual prostitution (Budin 2008), the more likely explanation is these positions were hereditary or persisted through generations, as CIS I 3776 might be interpreted as both the daughter and mother being connected to Aštart Erycinae: “Arišatbaal, daughter of Amatmelqart, daughter of Abdmelqart, female personnel (*‘mt*) of Aštart Erycinae” (for translation of *‘mt* see Krahmalkov 2000: 380; see also Smith, this volume).¹⁶ Or perhaps tracing one’s maternal lineage to a *‘bd bt* was a matter of social prestige. Other specific deities to which *‘bd bt* are

linked include Hator Miskar (CIS I 253), Sid-Melqart (CIS I 256), and Šamaš (CIS I 3780), whereas two inscriptions do not specify a deity (CIS I 279 and 378). Overall, we would like to embed this epigraphical evidence for women's work in institutionalized cults back into the ritual context in which these dedications were made, and foreground how households and families may have comprised institutional religion. Again, we see the extension of households into institutional contexts, blurring the lines between the two.

Overall, the professions of ancestors are cited in approximately 12 percent (n = 52) of the women's votive inscriptions when identifying themselves. Besides the case of *'bd bt* (temple servant), women's identifications with professions remained primarily with the professions of their male ancestors or progenitors. These included *reb* (*rb*, in CIS I 231, 232, 372, and 375), "master craftsman" (*rb hrš*, CIS I 64), *suffete* (*špt*, 34 examples),¹⁷ *'mdd* (CIS I 349), "writer" (*lmy'ms*, CIS I 273), "servant" (*'bd*, CIS I 280, 320, and 3185), "king" (*mlk*, CIS I 307), and "physician" (*rp'*, CIS I 321). Probably the most complex inscription in this category is CIS I 47, where the woman first gives her father's name and his vocation (*suffete*), and then gives her husband's name and three generations of his family. Also interesting is CIS I 3185, from a male offerant, who traces his ancestry back to his grandfather, who was the servant of one Amatmelqart, wife of Adonibaal (or if not the grandfather, then the man making the dedication was the servant). Overall, the range of professions from prestigious (e.g., *suffete*) to that of slaves is worth noting.

Some of the votive inscriptions dedicated by women indicate place-based origins for their ancestry, either identifying with the Phoenician cities of Sidon or Saar (Tyre), or their names are of foreign derivation (Libyan, Egyptian, Cypriot, Sardinian, Berber, or Greek). In five inscriptions (CIS I 119, 273, 279, 280, 281, and 308) the women identify their family or themselves as from Sidon, perhaps as a means of embracing their connection with Sidon as a marker of elite status.¹⁸ Similarly, Saar (Tyre), the mother-city to Carthage, is expressly mentioned in two inscriptions dedicated by women (CIS I 302 and 304).



Figure 38.6 Votive stele from Carthage tophet: CIS I 253, denoting the relative of an *'bd bt* (temple servant). (After CIS I pl. XLIX no. 253.)

Several inscriptions give personal names that express foreign origins of the woman or her ancestors. Six votive dedications (CIS I 470, 1480, 2074, 2181, 3833, and 3834) are made by a Labat, a name variously translated as either “Libyan” (Benz 1972: 337) or “Lioness” (Krahmalkov 2000: 252). Musrit, meaning “Egyptian” (Krahmalkov 2000: 305) is the name given in four inscriptions (CIS I 2216, 2279, 2907, and 3839), and Šardanit, “Sardinian” (Krahmalkov 2000: 481)

appears in three (CIS I 280, 879, and 2030).¹⁹ Girgašy, a name given in CIS I 1573, may be related to the Ugaritic *grgš*, which is both a personal name and a location, and furthermore *grgšy* is the name of a people in Genesis 10:16 (Benz 1972: 299; Krahmalkov 2000: 142). Zibeqat, given in CIS I 3800, may indicate an indigenous personal name (Benz 1972: 188–189). Some of these appellatives may have been nicknames, rather than birth names, for example, given to foreign slaves. Several Greek names are also included in the corpus from Carthage: Euklea (CIS I 191), Palmina (CIS I 1301), and Phlipna (CIS I 3148).²⁰ Overall, the attestation of dedications made by women of foreign derivation or ancestry suggests that ritual practices in the tophet were accessible to the cross-section of Carthaginian society, including foreign-born women and slaves.

Conclusion

With the passing centuries, and histories told by the victors, knowledge about the Phoenician and Punic world has suffered in comparison to more well-known ancient societies. In turn, the study of Phoenician and Punic society has tended to neglect matters relating to women and gender. Given the patchy material and historical record, we have drawn together archaeological evidence from ritual practices within the household with the epigraphical record from the Carthaginian tophet to foreground the central role held by women in Phoenician and Punic society by maintaining society and especially the family—in a society where the family and household formed the building blocks of political and institutional life. Women's ritual practice positioned them as nurturers and protectors, by invoking the goodwill of deities and warding off malevolent forces. In Phoenician and Punic society, women maintained their household across generations (the living, dead, and unborn), so that religious institutions like the tophet could be understood as domestic spaces. Blurring the lines between households and the kinds of civic (political and religious) institutions normally privileged in accounts of Phoenician and Punic society we suggest offers one way forward in rendering ancient women more visible, and their central role in society honored more fully.

Notes

- 1 We use Phoenician and Punic more or less interchangeably in this chapter, to frame our discussion as encompassing the lived experiences of women in the Phoenician settlements of the western Mediterranean. We offer this chapter more as a contribution to the field of Phoenician and Punic studies on women's

ritual practice than a statement on the historical authenticity of these terms, i.e., the individual subjectivities or collective identities that women in the western settlements would have espoused at the time (for discussions on identification see Aubet 1993; Prag 2006, 2014; Xella 2008, and contributions in Quinn and Vella 2014). In other words, we use Phoenician and Punic as an analytical category, with Phoenician indicated until the sixth century BCE, and Punic from this moment onwards, when Carthage gains hegemonic ascendancy in the western Mediterranean.

- 2 Regarding place, ritual practices associated with the house and, especially with the household, have been documented in small spaces or fixed installations within the same houses—see, for example, locus 226 in the so-called “House of the Domestic Shrine” of Mozia (Nigro 2004) or the room 7 of the House 2 of cerro del Villar (Delgado *et al.* 2014). These were located within other residential areas mainly associated with different domestic practices, such as the preparation, cooking, and eating of everyday meals—see, for example room 1 of Pani Loriga (Oggiano *et al.* 2010)—or textile production (Nigro 2007) as well as in some communal places where deceased family members would be cared for and honored such as at cemeteries. This wide spatial distribution also suggests that these ritual practices associated with the house and its household could be carried out at different times of the day. Probably some of these rituals were practiced at specific times—such as those celebrated around fixed installations or in communal spaces—while others would depend on the performance of other domestic activities, such as those associated with the domestic production or the daily feeding of the household group.
- 3 Mozia is located on the island of San Pantaleo in the Lagoon of Marsala, off the western coast of Sicily. The first colony of Sicily, either Phoenician or Greek, was founded in the mid-eighth century BCE on this small island. After the First Punic War (264–241 BCE), the importance of Mozia decreased in favor of Lilybaeum, a nearby Punic city located on the Sicilian coast, close to modern Marsala.
- 4 Pani Loriga is a Phoenician-Punic settlement dated between the seventh and fourth centuries BCE. It is located in the southwestern area of Sardinia, in a hilltop area of the current town of Santadi (Sardinia).
- 5 The Phoenician colony of cerro del Villar is located on a fluvial island at the ancient mouth of Guadalhorce river, close to modern Málaga (Spain). This colony is dated between the eighth and sixth centuries BCE.
- 6 Amadasi Guzzo and Zamora (2013: 159–160) offer an archaeological (material) definition of tophets as “open-air sites constantly located on the margins of towns, where pottery containers are buried in which the burnt remains of babies and/or baby animals, mostly sheep, are deposited.” The main thrust of their argument is that a tophet is a sanctuary, not a necropolis. We will discuss the significance of such debates about the proper function of the tophet further.
- 7 Sometimes the dedication formula is extended to include *ksm’ ql’* “because she heard my voice (supplication),” given in 27 of the inscriptions, or *ksm’ ql’ brk’* “because she heard my voice [and] she blessed me,” seen in 9 inscriptions. Throughout the following discussion, spelling conventions for the Phoenician language are based on Cunchillos and Zamora (1997).
- 8 Lafrenz Samuels scanned the nearly 4,000 inscriptions included in the CIS for the words *bt* (daughter) and *št* (wife), although the method is not fool-proof since sometimes the woman’s name occurs in a male-authored inscription (e.g., CIS I 13, 40, 46, and 3185), while occasionally the woman’s name stands alone

without her lineage given (CIS I 430, 859, 1163, 1316, 1604, 1982, 2153, 2385, 2657, 2788, 2818, 3087, 3212, 3238, 3279, 3456, and 3831). A few instances use *bn* (son) instead of *bt* (daughter) in construction with a feminine name (CIS I 2069, 2576, 3013, and 3546). See also Amadasi Guzzo (1988) and Ferjaoui (1999) for similar surveys.

- 9 It would be useful to survey the archaeological evidence from residential quarters in Carthage for evidence of domestic rituals related to women's activities, to link up with the evidence introduced above from Mozia (Sicily), Pani Loriga (Sardinia) and cerro del Villar (Spain) in the first half of this chapter. Domestic contexts in Carthage pose their own challenges. Much of the domestic architecture of ancient Carthage was razed in the Roman periods or later, or remains buried under Roman remains (Moussa 2013; see also Docter 2007 for a catalogue of published settlement contexts in Carthage). Excavations in the east Byrsa (Bir Massouda) area have uncovered luxurious residences (Maraoui Telmini *et al.* 2014; Docter *et al.* 2006; Chelbi *et al.* 2006a, 2006b), but these lack obvious markers of domestic ritual. It could be that a more thorough survey of the domestic contexts in Carthage and the Bir Massouda excavations would turn up material related to household rituals.
- 10 By far the most common lineage given is patrilineal, and of these the most customary are the daughter listing her father (169 inscriptions, 35 percent), and the daughter listing both her father and her paternal grandfather (172 inscriptions, 36 percent). Less frequently used is a lineage extending back to the father's grandfather (67 or 68 inscriptions, 14 percent) and additionally there are at least 4 to 6 instances of patrilineal ancestry going back 4 generations, 1 of which might list 5 generations (CIS I 372). Approximately 30 inscriptions are too fragmentary to determine the number of paternal generations cited.
- 11 Sixteen inscriptions (3 percent) make some mention of the woman's husband, including ten that provide his lineage, either citing the husband's father and grandfather (CIS I 232, 1253, 1885, 2647, 3637, and 3822), or only his father (CIS I 41, 158, 385, and 3569). CIS I 385 discloses two husbands, presumably one of whom had passed away.
- 12 The majority of the matrilineal inscriptions are hybrids of a sort, giving the woman's mother and then the mother's father (CIS I 1543, 2051, 3347, 3546, 3776, and 3840). Possibly CIS I 2798 is in this category as well, as it reads *ʿrštʿl bt sdnt bt ʿšrtyn*, where *sdnt* could either be a personal name, a substantive for a personal name (i.e., "daughter of a Sidonian"), or the epithet "Daughter of Sidon." Two inscriptions (CIS I 1573 and 2397) add the mother's father and paternal grandfather to the lineage.
- 13 They also note a dedication made by two brothers in Mozia (citing Amadasi Guzzo 1986: 28–30, n. 22).
- 14 Lancel (1992: 194) notes:

"The study of Punic names, based mainly on the votive inscriptions of the tophet, is even one of the sources of our knowledge of Carthage's "pantheon." But it is a source that should only be used with some precautions. Although the large majority of these votive inscriptions date from the last stage of Punic Carthage . . . the onomastic material they contain appears very conservative, if not archaic. The divine elements predominating are the names of old Phoenician divinities who were most honored in Tyre: Melqart, Astarte and Eschmoun. While the dedications of these ex-votos reveal the overwhelming predominance of Tanit and Baal Hammon in Carthaginian devotions at this time, only four instances of the former's name can be found among the names of the dedicants.

As for Baal Hammon, he is completely absent from the list, in the full form of his divine name, even if it is tempting to see him . . . in the abbreviated form of the impersonal Baal.”

- 15 Of all the votive inscriptions dedicated by women, the position of temple servant is mentioned in only two inscriptions that do not cite a maternal line, one of which is too fragmentary to distinguish whether the lineage is matrilineal or patrilineal (CIS I 2868), and the second, though also fragmentary, is likely patrilineal, and appears to cite the women’s father as a temple servant of the sun god Šamaš (CIS I 3780).
- 16 Aštart Erycinae, “Aštart of Eryx,” had a famous sanctuary in Eryx (present day Erice), located in western Sicily, though dedications to Aštart Erycinae existed elsewhere too in Sicily (CIS I 135) and Sardinia (CIS I 140) (Krahmalkov 2000: 72).
- 17 CIS I 47, 207, 212, 216, 221, 222, 228, 371, 438, 595, 644, 661, 912, 1181, 1209, 1267, 1416, 1560, 1583, 1923, 2351, 2411, 2446, 2485, 2535, 2647, 3026, 3214, 3321, 3567, 3569, 3689, 3825, and 3833.
- 18 Another inscription in the corpus (CIS I 119) citing Sidonian heritage has a provenance from Piraeus in Athens, third century BCE, and is bilingual.
- 19 Versions of the name Elišy/Elišat/Elišaty are very popular, given in 26 inscriptions, and while the name may be translated as “Cypriote” (Krahmalkov 2000: 56), it is more likely not indicating origin but instead a popular name, named after the mythical founder of Carthage woman.
- 20 The votive offering of Euklea (CIS I 191), discovered in Carthage, is written in the standard formula, though her name alone is written in Greek letters. The stela of Palmina includes a lineage, and her father bears a Phoenician/Punic name: Baalyaton. Phlipna also lists her father, who also has a Phoenician/Punic name, Abdas (“Servant of Isis, see Krahmalkov 2000: 354). The CIS corpus of Phoenician inscriptions also includes examples of Greek female names from beyond Carthage: Arsinoes (CIS I 93, from Idalion, Cyprus), Athada (CIS I 47, from Kition, Cyprus), and Irene (CIS I 120, from Athens, near Piraeus).

References

- Amadasi Guzzo, M. G. (1986) *Scavi a Mozia: Le Iscrizioni*. Rome: Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche.
- Amadasi Guzzo, M. G. 1988. Dédicaces de femmes à Carthage. In E. Lipinski (ed.) *Studia Phoenicia VI: Carthago*. Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 26. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 143–149.
- Amadasi Guzzo, M. G. and Zamora, J. Á. (2013) The epigraphy of the tophet. *Studi Epigrafici e Linguistici* 30: 159–192.
- Aubet, M. E. (1993) *The Phoenicians and the West: Politics, Colonies, and Trade*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bahrani, Z. (2001) *Women of Babylon: Gender and Representation in Mesopotamia*. London: Routledge.
- Barrett, J. C. (1991) Towards an archaeology of ritual. In P. Garwood (ed.) *Sacred and Profane: Proceedings of a Conference on Archaeology*,

- Ritual and Religion*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 1–9.
- Barrett, J. C. (1994) *Fragments from Antiquity*. London: Blackwell.
- Bartoloni, P. (1976) *Le Stele Arcaiche del Tofet di Cartagine*. Rome: Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche.
- Bartoloni, P. (1985) Monte Sirai. 1984. La necropolis (champagne 1983 e 1984). *Rivista di Studi Fenici* 13: 247–263.
- Bartoloni, P. (1996) *La Necropolis di Bitia*. Rome: Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche.
- Bartoloni, P. and Tronchetti, C. (1981) *La Necropoli di Nora*. Rome: Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche.
- Bell, C. (1992) *Ritual Theory/Ritual Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bénichou-Safar, H. (1982) *Les Tombes Puniques de Cartaghe (Topographie, Structure, Inscriptions et Rites Funéraires)*. Paris: Editions du centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.
- Bénichou-Safar, H. (1995) Les fouilles du tophet de Salammbô à Carthage (première partie). *Antiquités Africaines* 31: 81–199.
- Bénichou-Safar, H. (2004) *Le Tophet de Salammbô: Essai de Reconstitution*. Rome: École Française de Rome.
- Benz, F. L. (1972) *Personal Names in the Phoenician and Punic Inscriptions*. Rome: Biblical Institute Press.
- Bird, P. (1997) *Missing Persons and Mistaken Identities: Women and Gender in Ancient Israel*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Bloch-Smith, E. (1992) *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield University Press.
- Bondì, S. F. (1979) Per una reconsiderazione del tofet. *Egitto e Vicino Oriente* 2: 140–145.
- Bonnet, C. (2011) On gods and earth: The tophet and the construction of a new identity in Punic Carthage. In E. S. Gruen (ed.) *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*. Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, pp. 373–387.
- Botto, M. and Salvadei, L. (2005) Indagini alla necropoli arcaica di Monte Sirai, relazione preliminare sulla campagna di scavi del 2002. *Rivista di Studi Fenici* 33: 81–167.
- Bradley, R. (2005) *Ritual and Domestic Life in Prehistoric Europe*. London: Routledge
- Brown, S. (1991) *Late Carthaginian Child Sacrifice and Sacrificial Monuments in Their Mediterranean Context*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Brück, J. (1999) Ritual and rationality: Some problems of interpretation in European archaeology. *European Journal of*

- Budin, S. L. (2008) *The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Campillo, D. (1995) Mortalidad y esperanza de vida en la península ibérica desde la Prehistoria a la Edad Media. In R. Fabregas, F. Pérez and C. Fernández (eds) *Arqueoloxía da morte na Península Ibérica desde as Orixes ata o Medievo*. Xinzo de Limia, Spain: Concello, pp. 317–340.
- Chelbi, F., Maraoui Telmini, B. and Docter, R. F. (2006a) Bilan des fouilles du terrain de Bir Massouda (Carthage): Campagnes 2002 à 2004. *AFRICA. Nouvelle série. Scéances scientifiques (Institut National du Patrimoine)*: 207–225.
- Chelbi, F., Maraoui Telmini, B. and Docter, R. F. (2006b) Découverte d'une nécropole du huitième siècle av. J.-C. à Carthage Bir Massouda. Rapport préliminaire sur les fouilles de l'Institut National du Patrimoine (Tunis) et l'Université de Gand. *ceDAC Carthage Bulletin* 22: 13–25.
- Cintas, P. (1946) *Amulettes Puniques*. Tunis, Tunisia: Institut des Hautes Études de Tunisie.
- Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum* (CIS). (1881–1962) *Corpus Inscriptionum ab Academia Inscriptionum et Litterarum Humaniorum conditum atque Digestum*, Vol I. Paris: E Reipublicae Typographeo.
- Cunchillos, J.-L. and Zamora, J.-A. (1997) *Gramatica Fenicia Elemental*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas.
- Delcor, M. (1974) Le hieros gamos d'Astarté. *Rivista di Studi Fenici* 2: 63–76.
- Delgado, A. (2008) Alimentos, poder e identidad en las comunidades fenicias occidentales. *Cuadernos de Prehistoria y Arqueología de la Universidad de Granada* 18: 163–188.
- Delgado, A. and Ferrer, M. (2007a) Alimentos para los muertos: Mujeres, rituales funerarios e identidades coloniales. *Treballs d'Arqueologia* 13: 29–68.
- Delgado, A. and Ferrer, M. (2007b) Cultural contacts in colonial settings: The construction of new identities in Phoenician settlements of the Western Mediterranean. *Stanford Journal of Archaeology* 3: 18–42.
- Delgado, A. and Ferrer, M. (2011a) Life and death in ancient colonies: Domesticity, material culture and sexual politics in the Western Phoenician world, eighth to sixth centuries Bce. In E. Cassella and B. Voss (eds) *The Archaeology of Colonialism: Intimate Encounters and Sexual Effects*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 195–

- Delgado, A. and Ferrer, M. (2011b) Representing communities in heterogeneous worlds: Staples, foods and ritual practices in Phoenician diaspora. In G. Aranda, S. Montón and M. Sánchez-Romero (eds) *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner: Feasting Rituals in the Prehistoric Societies of Europe and the Near East*. London: Oxbow Books, pp. 184–202.
- Delgado, A. and Ferrer, M. (2012) La muerte visita la casa: Mujeres, cuidados y memorias familiares en los rituales fenicio-púnicos. In L. Prados (ed.) *La Arqueología funeraria desde una perspectiva de género*. Madrid: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, pp. 123–155.
- Delgado, A., Ferrer, M., García, A., López, M., Martorell, M. and Sciortino, G. (2014) Arquitectura doméstica en el cerro del Villar: Uso y función del espacio en el Edificio 2. In A. M. Arruda (ed.) *VI Congresso Internacional de Estudos Fenício Púnicos*. Lisbon, Portugal: Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa, pp. 338–343.
- Docter, R. F. (2007) Published settlement contexts in Punic Carthage. *Carthage Studies* 1: 37–76.
- Docter, R. F., Chelbi, F., Maraoui Telmini, B., Bechtold, B., Ben Romdhane, H., Declercq, V., De Schacht, T., Deweirdt, E., De Wulf, A., Fersi, L., Frey Kupper, S., Garsallah, S., Joosten, I., Koens, H., Mabrouk, J., Redisssi, T., Roudesli Chebbi, S., Ryckbosch, K., Schmidt, K., Taverniers, B., Van Kerckhove, J. and Verdonck, L. (2006) Carthage Bir Massouda: Second preliminary report on the bilateral excavations of Ghent University and the Institut National du Patrimoine (2003–2004). *BABESCH* 81: 37–89.
- Fantar, M. (1970) *Eschatologie phénicienne et punique: collection notes et documents*. Tunis, Tunisia: Ministère des Affaires Culturelles.
- Fantar, M. (1986) *Kerkouane: cité punique du cap Bon (Tunisie), III. Sanctuaires et Cultes. Société – Economie*. Tunis, Tunisia: Institut national d'archéologie et d'art.
- Ferjaoui, A. (1999) Les femmes à Carthage à travers les documents épigraphiques. *Reppal* 11: 77–86.
- Fernández, J. (1992) *Excavaciones en la Necropolis del Puig des Molins (Eivissa). Las Campañas de d. Carlos Román Ferrer: 1921–1929*. Eivissa, Ibiza: Treballs del Museu Arqueològic d'Eivissa i Formentera.
- Fogelin, L. (2007) The archaeology of religious ritual. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 36: 55–71.
- Gero, J. and Conkey, M. (1991) *Engendering Archaeology: Women and Prehistory*. London: Wiley Blackwell.

- Hvidberg-Hansen, F. O. (1984) Due arule fittili di Solunto. *Analecta Romana* 13: 25–48.
- Jiménez Flores, A. M. (2001) Cultos fenicio-púnicos de Gadir: Prostitución sagrada y puellae gaditanae. *HABIS* 32: 11–29.
- Jiménez Flores, A. M. (2002) El sacerdocio femenino en el mundo fenicio-púnico. *SPAL* 11: 9–20.
- Jiménez Flores, A. M. (2006) La mano de Eva: Las mujeres en el culto fenicio-púnico. In J. L. Escacena and E. Ferrer (eds) *Entre dioses y los hombres: El sacerdocio en la Antigüedad*. Seville, Spain: SPAL Monografías VII, pp. 83–102.
- King, P. and Stager, L. (2001) *Life in Biblical Israel*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Krahmalkov, C. R. (2000) *Phoenician-Punic Dictionary*. Studia Phoenicia XV. Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 90. Louvain, Belgium: Peeters.
- Lancel, S. (1992) *Carthage: A History*. Trans. A. Nevill. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Lancellotti, M. G. (2003) La donna. In J. A. Zamora (ed.) *El Hombre Fenicio: Estudios y Materiales*. Rome: CSIC.
- Lipinski, E. (1984) Vestiges phéniciens d'Andalousie. *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 15: 81–132.
- Lipinski, E. (1995) *Dieux et Déesses de l'Univers phénicienne et punique*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Peeters.
- López-Bertran, M. and Aranegui, C. (2011) Terracotas púnicas representando a mujeres: Nuevos códigos de lectura para su interpretación. *Saguntum* 43: 83–94.
- López-Bertran, M. and García-Ventura, A. (2012) Music, gender and rituals in Ancient Mediterranean: Revisiting the Punic evidence. *World Archaeology* 44: 393–408.
- Maraoui Telmini, B., Docter, R., Bechtold, B., Chelbi, F. and Van de Put, W. (2014) Defining Punic Carthage. In J. C. Quinn and N. C. Vella (eds) *The Punic Mediterranean: Identities and Identification from Phoenician Settlement to Roman Rule*. Cambridge, UK: British School at Rome and Cambridge University Press.
- Meyers, C. (1988) *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Meyers, C. (2002) From household to house of Yahweh: Women's religious culture in Ancient Israel. In A. Lemaire (ed.) *Congress Volume Basel. Supplements to Vetus Testamentum* 92. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill, pp. 277–303.
- Meyers, C. (2005) *Households and Holiness: The Religious Culture of Israelite Women*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.

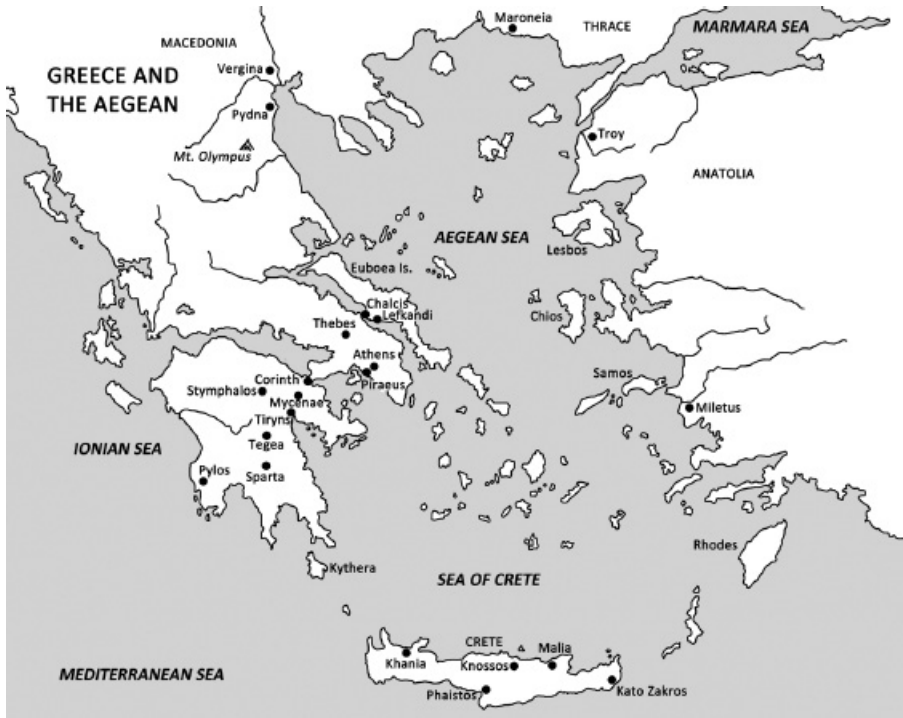
- Meyers, C. (2009) In the household and beyond: The social world of Israelite women. *Nordic Journal of Theology* 63: 19–41.
- Meyers, C. (2010) Household religion. In F. Stavrakopoulou and J. Barton (eds) *Religious Diversity in Ancient Israel*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, pp. 118–140.
- Meyers, C. (2012) Women's religious life in Ancient Israel. In C. Newsom, S. Ringe, and J. Lapsley (eds) *Women's Bible Commentary*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, pp. 354–361.
- Moscatti, S. and Uberti, M. L. (1981) *Scavi a Mozia: Le Stele*. Rome: Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche.
- Moscatti, S. and Uberti, M. L. (1985) *Scavi al Tofet di Tharros: I Monumenti Lapidei*. Rome: Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche.
- Moussa, F. K. (2013) Berber, Phoenicio-Punic, and Greek North Africa. In P. Mitchell and P. Lane (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of African Archaeology*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 765–776.
- Nakhai, B. A. (2007) Gender and archaeology in Israelite religion. *Religion Compass* 1: 512–528.
- Nakhai, B. A. (2014) The household as sacred space. In R. Albertz, R. Schmitt, B. A. Nakhai and S. Olyan (eds) *Household Religion: Toward a Synthesis of Old Testament Studies, Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Cultural Studies*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, pp. 53–71.
- Nelson, S. M. (ed.) (2006) *Handbook of Gender Archaeology*. Oxford, UK: AltaMira Press.
- Nelson, S. M. (2007) *Women in Antiquity: Theoretical Approaches to Gender and Archaeology*. New York: Thames & Hudson.
- Nigro, L. (2004) *Mozia – X. Zona C. Il Kothon. Zona D. Le pendici occidentali dell'Acropoli. Zona F. La Porta Ovest. Rapporto preliminare della XXII campagna di scavi – 2002*. Rome: Missione Archeologica a Mozia.
- Nigro, L. (2007) *Mozia – XII. Zona D. La Casa del sacello domestico, il Basamento meridionale e il Sondaggio stratigrafico I. Rapporto preliminare delle campagne di scavi XXIII e XXIV (2003–2004)*. Rome: Missione Archeologica a Mozia.
- Oggiano, I. (2012) Scopi e modalità delle azioni rituali femminili nell'area siro-palestinese del I millennio a.C. Il contributo dell'archeologia. In V. Nizzo and L. La Roca (eds) *Antropologia e Archeologia a Confronto*. Rome: E. S. S. Editorial Service System, pp. 223–249.
- Oggiano, I. and Botto, M. (2012) Le site Phénico-Punique de Pani Loriga (Sardaigne). Interprétation et contextualisation des résultats d'analyses organiques de contenus. In D. Frère and L. Hugot (eds) *Les Huilles Parfumés en Méditerranée occidentale et en Gaule (VIII*

- Siècle AV.–VIII Siècle APR. J. C.). Rennes, France: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, pp. 151–166.
- Oggiano, I., Botto, M., Candelato, F. and Pedrazzi, T. (2010) Le indagini 2007–2008 all’abitato fenicio-punico di Pani Loriga. *The Journal of Fasti Online* volume: 1–18.
- Piga, G., Guirguis, M., Thompson, T. J. U., Isidro, A., Enzo, S. and Malgosa, A. A. (2015) A case of semi-combusted pregnant female in the Phoenician-Punic necropolis of Monte Sirai (Carbonia, Sardinia, Italy). *Journal of Comparative Human Biology*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jchb.2015.09.001>.
- Prag, J. (2006) Poenus plane est—But who were the “Punickes”? *Papers of the British School at Rome* 74: 1–37.
- Prag, J. (2014) Phoinix and Poenus: Usage in antiquity. In J. C. Quinn and N. C. Vella (eds) *The Punic Mediterranean: Identities and Identification from Phoenician Settlement to Roman Rule*. Cambridge, UK: British School at Rome and Cambridge University Press, pp. 11–23.
- Quinn, J. C. (2011) The cultures of the tophet: Identification and identity in the Phoenician diaspora. In E. S. Gruen (ed.) *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*. Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, pp. 388–413.
- Quinn, J. C. (2013) Tophets in the “Punic World”. *Studi Epigrafici e Linguistici* 30: 23–48.
- Quinn, J. C. and Vella, N. C. (2014) *The Punic Mediterranean: Identities and Identification from Phoenician Settlement to Roman Rule*. Cambridge, UK: British School at Rome and Cambridge University Press.
- Ribichini, S. (1987) Concessione dell’oltratomba nel mondo fenicio e punico. In P. Xella (ed.) *Archeologia dell’Inferno*. Verona, Italy: Essedue, pp. 147–161.
- Ribichini, S. (2001) Beliefs and religious life. In S. Moscati (ed.) *The Phoenicians*. London and New York: IB Tauris, pp. 120–152.
- Ribichini, S. (2004) Al servizio di Astarte. Ieroulia e prostituzione sacra nei culti fenici e punici. In A. González, G. Matilla and A. Egea (eds) *El Mundo Púnico. Religión, Antropología y Cultura Material*. Murcia, Spain: Estudios Orientales 5–6, pp. 55–68.
- Ribichini, S. and Xella, P. (1994) *La Religione Fenicia e Punica in Italia*. Rome: Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche.
- Spagnoli, F. (2012) Un altare bruciaprofumi punico dalla Casa del sacello domestico a Mozia. *Vicino Oriente* XVI: 71–96.
- Tamburello, I. (1967) Palermo-Necropoli: L’esplorazione 1953–54. *Notizie degli Scavi della Antichità* 28: 354–378.

- Willett, E. (1999) Women and household shrines in Ancient Israel. PhD dissertation. University of Arizona, Department of Near Eastern Studies.
- Willett, E. (2002) Infant mortality and family religion in the biblical periods. *DavorLagos* 1(1): 27–42.
- Xella, P. (2000) Death and the afterlife in Cannanite and Hebrew thought. In J. Sasson (ed.) *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East, Vol. III*. New York: Hendrickson, pp. 2059–2068.
- Xella, P. (2008) I Fenici e gli “altri”: Dinamiche di identità culturale. In M. Congiu, C. Micciché, S. Modeo, and L. Santagati (eds) *Greci and Punici in Sicilia tra V e IV secolo a.C.* Caltanissetta, Italy: Salvatore Sciascia Editore, pp. 69–79.

PART VI

The Aegean, Bronze Age and historical



Map by Paul C. Butler.

Chronology

Bronze Age Aegean chronology is reckoned according to two main systems. The older, more traditional method is the tripartite division into Early (E), Middle (M), and Late (L) periods, each with their own tripartite subdivisions, originally assigned according to changes in pottery styles. This remains the more standard form of establishing chronology for the Mainland. On the island of Crete, a second system is in place determined by the rise and fall of the distinctive palace structures on the island: Prepalatial, First Palace Period, Second Palace Period, and Third Palace Period. Both versions will appear in

these pages, and all dates are approximate and debatable. The fall of the Bronze Age in the Aegean is generally agreed to have occurred between 1200/1150–1050, with a subsequent “Subminoan/Submycenaean” period followed by the Geometric Age, both named for pottery styles and decoration. The chronology in the Iron Age uses numerical dates BCE.

EM=Early Minoan	
MM=Middle Minoan	
LM=Late Minoan	
EH=Early Helladic	
MH=Middle Helladic	
LH=Late Helladic	
3100–1900	Prepalatial Crete (EM I–MM IA)
3000–1900	Early Helladic Greece
1900–1650	First Palace Period on Crete (MM IB–MM IIB)
1650–1500	Middle Helladic–Late Helladic II in Greece (Era of the Shaft Graves)
1650–1450	Second Palace Period on Crete (MM IIIA–LM IB)
1450–1200	Third Palace Period on Crete, LH IIIB in Greece
1200–1050	Late Minoan IIIC and Late Helladic IIIC
1050–800	Dark Age
1050–900	Subminoan, Submycenaean (pottery styles)
900–750	Geometric Period (pottery styles)
800–490	Archaic Age
490–323	Classical Age
323–31 BCE	Hellenistic Age

Introduction

Prepalatial Crete

Crete has been inhabited since at least the seventh millennium, with the earliest settlements, probably of farmers, appearing at Knossos. Already at this early date sea trade is evident in the presence of obsidian on Crete, indicating contacts with either Melos in the Cyclades or western Anatolia, the two Aegean sources for this material. The household evidence from this Neolithic period (seventh to fourth millennium) suggests small, nuclear families living together in clan-like villages.

In the EM I and EM II periods is the rise of villages on Crete, notably at Haghia Triadha, Gournia, Knossos, Malia, Mochlos, Myrtos, Palaikastro, Phaistos, and Vasiliki. The evidence from these sites suggests an undifferentiated society, where most people were farmers who also took part in other crafts, such as pottery and weaving. Society seems to have been based on individual family units, with larger family units living together in village-like communities.

Changes occurred in the EM period which transformed the simple, somewhat egalitarian farmer community into a political and social hierarchy. A hierarchy of settlements developed as some Early Bronze Age (EBA) communities grew much larger than others. Knossos was always the largest, achieving a size of 5 hectares already in the EBA. Phaistos, Malia, and even Mochlos grew and absorbed their neighbors. The growth of populations at these centers not only indicates a possible migration into “urban” areas, but, combined with data from the tombs, indicates an overall population growth during the EBA.

Finally, as early as EM II at Palaikastro and EM III at Knossos, monumental architecture appeared in Crete. The buildings were much larger than the simple homes of the EBA Minoans, and it appears that one of their original purposes was the storage of agricultural surplus. Another early use of these grand structures was craft production, indicating that the homogenous, agricultural society of EM I and II was now giving way to a more specialized society. Both early functions indicate a communal use for these early proto-palaces, suggesting they were erected not for a political elite, but as a collective project. Nevertheless, the ability to organize the workers and supplies necessary in such undertakings shows that at least some kind of “managerial” class was coming into being.

First Palace Period

Perhaps the most significant development in the prehistory of Minoan Crete is the rise of the palaces, which first occurred at the end of the twentieth century BCE at Knossos, Phaistos, and Malia. A “palace” is a large architectural structure organized around a north–south oriented central court. It may contain other courts, as well as substantial storage facilities, production areas, administration and archive rooms, areas for religious ritual, state rooms, and reception halls. In the midst of all of these were also food preparation areas, lavatories, and living quarters. The creation of the palaces indicates a new societal organization in Minoan Crete, with a supposed elite class (those who inhabit the palaces), occupational differentiation and craft specialization, and state control over aspects of life such as long-term planning and trade, both domestic and foreign. The fact that the three earliest palaces are very similar in plan also suggests that there was island-wide trade and communications by the EM III–MM I period, indicating the beginnings of a homogenous Minoan culture.

In the First Palace Period, direct contacts emerge between Crete and Egypt. To the north, Minoan wares become more common in the

Aegean. But the main contacts occur between Crete and the Near East. Crete's main trading partners were the western coast of Anatolia, especially the site of Miletos, and the islands off Turkey's southern coast, especially Rhodes. As early as MM I Minoan wares appear on the island of Cyprus. By the eighteenth century, the people of "Kaptara" appear in texts from the ancient Syrian city of Mari. These Kaptarians traded in the Syrian port city of Ugarit, and comparisons between this name and the ancient Egyptian name for Crete—Keftiu—strongly suggest that the Kaptarians were Minoan traders.

The volcano of Thera erupted somewhere around 1650 BCE, starting an age of serious urban renewal.

Second Palace Period

This apex of Minoan civilization took place between MM III and LM I, roughly between 1650 and 1450. The Minoans took the opportunity after the havoc wrought by the Theran eruption to rebuild their palaces on an even grander scale, creating monumental structures at Knossos, Phaistos, Malia, and Zakro. These palaces share a number of similar features and styles. While part of this is certainly because they served similar functions (e.g., storage), this architectural similarity can also be attributed to close connections throughout Crete during this period. Island-wide communications are also evident in the pottery. Coarse wares (simple pots used mainly for food preparation and transportation) from east and central Crete are found throughout the island, indicating island-wide trade in specialized commodities.

Perhaps as a result of improved communications and contact, or perhaps resulting in them, the organization of society that was visible in the First Palace Period becomes even more elaborate during this period. At the pinnacle of this society are the palaces, although who ruled the palaces is a matter of debate. Greeks who lived 1,000 years later tell stories of three brothers—Minos, Rhadamanthys, and Sarpedon—who were the kings of Knossos, Phaistos, and Malia, respectively. By contrast, the Bronze Age evidence seldom depicts kings in the art, where females predominate, leading some to suggest that Crete was ruled by women, either in the guise of queens or priestesses.

Beyond the Aegean, Minoan Crete had increasingly frequent contact with the great powers of the Near East during the Second Palace Period. In Egypt, records from the reigns of Queen Hatshepsut and King Thutmose III mention gifts brought by the "Keftiu," who in the

Egyptian wall painting appear dressed in Minoan-style garb. To the east, pottery from the island of Cyprus and the eastern coast of the Mediterranean appear in increasing quantities in Crete during the seventeenth through fifteenth centuries. Likewise, Minoan pottery begins to appear in quantity on Cyprus in the LM IA period, and from Cyprus to Canaan to Egypt by LM IB.

The early Greeks and the Third Palace Period

Greek-speakers probably arrived on the Mainland c.2200, at the interface of EH II and EH III. At this point, the flourishing civilization exemplified at, *inter alia*, Lerna in the Argolid was destroyed while a new style of pottery appeared: Minyan Ware. This new population was mostly quiet through much of the Middle Helladic period, until the transition from MH III–LH I, the era of the Shaft Graves. This is when a new, wealthier, more militarily active society emerged throughout the Mainland, first identifiable in Grave Circles A and B in Mycenae, dating to 1650–1550 (B) and 1600–1500 (A) (they were discovered chronologically backwards, hence the B–A order). The art from these graves shows an intense interest in violence: hunting and warfare. Other items, such as ostrich eggs and Baltic amber, reveal the extent of international trade at the dawn of the Late Helladic. The pottery and other arts of this period are marked by a strong influx of Minoan styles and imports.

To the east, Miletos, formerly maintaining close ties with Crete, appears to become a Mycenaean colony at this time, while the islands of Lemnos and Knidos and the Turkish site of Halikarnassos served as Mycenaean trading ports. To the west, as early as LH I, Mycenaean pottery begins to appear in the Lipari Islands and on the island of Ischia west of Italy. The Mycenaeans may have been looking for new sources of metals, especially tin, at this time. To the south, LH I wares appear in abundance in Egypt.

Such contacts continued and expanded in LH II–LH IIIA. LH II pottery appears in quantity at several sites along the eastern Mediterranean, notably Ugarit (Ras Shamra), Alalakh (Tell Atchana), and Byblos in Syria-Lebanon, and Gezer and Lachish (Tel ed-Duwair) in Palestine. In the west, the Mycenaeans settled the Italian city of Taranto in LH IIB, possibly as they sought out new sources of important metals, such as copper and tin. Internationally, though, the most important event during this period was the conquest of Knossos which occurred c.1450, leading to the rise of the Third (and last) Palace Period.

By LH IIIB, the Mycenaeans reached the apex of their power, with Mycenaean goods reaching as far as Wessex. Trade continued with Egypt, Cyprus, and the Levant, while the powerful kingdom of Ahhiyawa (Greece or part thereof) began to appear in official texts found in the palace archives of the Hittites. At home, the Mycenaean palatial archives, especially those of Pylos and Knossos, recorded hundreds of daily transactions in the local Linear B adapted from the Minoan Linear A, but recording the Greek language, from gifts to the gods to reckonings of sheep.

But at the end of the Bronze Age Mycenaean Greece and Crete collapsed like the majority of civilizations in the Mediterranean. Mycenae was burnt down, as were the palaces of Tiryns and Pylos. In Crete, the palatial centers and harbor towns were slowly abandoned, being replaced by new villages high in the hills. Many Greeks of the twelfth century moved east and settled the islands off the coast of Turkey, such as Samos, Lesbos, and Rhodes, and eventually the western coast of Anatolia itself. Some of these, such as Rhodes, had already been settled by the Mycenaeans, so in many ways the Greeks were heading out to familiar territories. Likewise for a long-time trading partner of the Minoans and Mycenaeans—Cyprus. The Mycenaeans settled on the western edge of Cyprus at Maa Paleokastro as early as 1190. Farther east, a group of “barbarians” settled in the southern Levant, called Philistines in the Bible, Peleset in the Egyptian records. These Philistines appear in the Bible wearing Mycenaean-style armor, including distinctively Greek greaves on the shins. Archaeology has shown that the pottery of these Peleset is in most respects similar to that used by the Helladic populations of Greece and Cyprus. It appears that some of the disenfranchised Mycenaeans, having attempted some mercenary attacks against Egypt, relocated north and settled in the land which came to take their name—Palestine (= Peleset).

The Dark Age

The period from 1050 to 800 in Greece is called the “Dark Age,” a period of cultural decline; the monumental architecture that distinguished Mycenae and Tiryns ceased to be produced; literacy was lost entirely. Nevertheless, the Dark Age was not a period of utter barbarism in Greece. It was during this period that iron technologies were developed, leading to the dawn of the Iron Age. Foreign contacts were still maintained, especially among Attica, Euboea, Crete, Cyprus, and the Near East. Some Greek regions even prospered at this time, notably Lefkandi on the island of Euboea. And it was probably during

this period that the Homeric epics—*Iliad* and *Odyssey*—were composed, reflecting as they did elements of both Mycenaean and Iron Age culture. Archaeologically, this period is known as the “Geometric Age” based on the geometric decoration typifying Mainland pottery at this time.

The Archaic Age

The Dark Age comes to an end in 800; the following period, from 800–490, is the Archaic Age. The traditional date assigned to the full introduction of the alphabet into Greece is 750, heralding in a new, literate age. During this period appear new trends in the display of elitism, especially in the building and furnishing of sanctuaries; the initial conglomeration of the Greek city-states; as well as the birth of the idea of “Greece.” Finally, it is during this period that the Greeks begin their colonization of the Mediterranean.

One of the most important developments of the Archaic Age is the rise of the *polis* (pl. *poleis*), the city-state, which became the standard political unit of Greece until the rise of the Hellenistic kingdoms. A *polis* is a small, independent, self-governing community composed of a city and its surrounding countryside. Citizenship varied from *polis* to *polis*, but usually consisted of all adult male landowners, who expressed their citizenship by meeting in some kind of assembly and by being both subjected to and protected by a common set of laws. Citizenship for women did not hold the same political prerogatives, although citizen women, as men, were protected under the laws of the city. Both male and female citizens participated in the various city cults.

The first Greek colonies were in the west, in Italy and Sicily. The first was Pithekoussai, on the island of Ischia just off the western coast of central Italy, which was settled around 750. The literary sources claim that it was settled by a combined party from Eretria and Khalkis on the island of Euboia. Henceforth there was a continual relocation of Greeks to Italy and Sicily, followed by further (and farther) colonization efforts in the later Archaic Age, flinging Greeks as far afield as Spain, Libya, Egypt, and the Ukraine. Some cities were extremely active in colonization, such as Khalkis, and Miletos on the Ionian coast. Others, like Athens, only started colonizing in the later Archaic Age, occasionally stealing land from earlier colonies. Sparta was unique in that, to solve her land hunger problem, rather than establishing colonies she simply enslaved her next-door neighbor Messenia.

“Classical Greece”: the fifth and fourth centuries

The fifth century is the first period of Greek history known fully from written texts. Herodotos of Halikarnassos recorded the events of the earlier fifth century in his “Inquiries” (*historia* in Greek) which mainly focused on the rise of Persia and the events leading up to, and through, the Persian Invasions. The period following, from the retreat of the Persians and the rise of the Athenian Empire until the middle of the Peloponnesian War, was recorded by Herodotos’ protégé, Thucydides, an Athenian general who wound up in exile in Sparta. The end of the war and the events following in the fourth century were preserved by Xenophon.

The Classical Age of Greece began in the early fifth century when the Greeks united (temporarily) to fend off two invasions by the Persian Empire, one in 490 under Darius which was unsuccessful, and the second in 480–479 under Xerxes which succeeded in Persia’s objective of sacking Athens. The next 50 years mark the rise of the Athenian Empire, starting with Athens and Sparta leading an anti-Persian alliance of Greek *poleis*, and ending with the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War. In Book 1, 18, 2–3 of his *History*, Thucydides relates:

By a common effort the Barbarian was repelled. But not long afterwards both those Greeks who fought against the King and those in the alliance parted ways, either siding with the Athenians or the Lakedaimonians [Spartans]. For it became apparent that these were the most powerful states, the one strong on land, the other in ships. And for a short time the defensive league endured; then the Lakedaimonians and Athenians splitting apart waged war with each other along with their respective allies. Concerning the other Greeks, if any should stand aloof, the war was brought to them anyway. So from the time of the Persian Invasion to the present war, they were continually making treaties and fighting either with each other or with allies who revolted, so they became well-prepared and trained for war by constantly dealing with the real thing.

The Peloponnesian War thus began in 431 and lasted, off and on, until 404 BCE. Sparta won, but graciously elected not to destroy Athens in recognition of Athens’ role in repelling the Persians. The fourth century was marked by a period of shifting alliances, with different *poleis* rising to the role of *hegemon* (leader) over the decades. At first there was victorious Sparta, later Athens again, and for a brief period starting at the Battle of Leuktra in 371, even the northern city of Thebes under its preeminent general, Epameinondas. Other *poleis* united themselves into protective Leagues, such as the Aetolian League and the Akhaian League.

But the true *hegemon* rising on the horizon was Macedon under King

Philip II. In 338, when Greece was exhausted after a century of almost non-stop infighting, he conquered his southern neighbors at the Battle of Khaironea, thus making himself master of Greece. When Philip was assassinated at his daughter's wedding just two years later, his 20-year-old son Alexander took over. Having confirmed his control over Greece, Alexander decided to fulfill his father's dream of conquering Persia. In 333 Alexander and his army confronted King Darius at the Battle of the Issos River. The army did not capture the King, although Alexander did achieve a stunning victory which acquired for him the route to Syria. From here, Alexander conquered all of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. In Egypt, the Pharaoh adopted Alexander as his official heir, not only allowing Alexander and his own heirs legitimately to inherit Egypt, but also raising Alexander to the status of a god. In northern Egypt Alexander established the city of Alexandria, one of the intellectual capitals of the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

In 331 Alexander and Darius once again met on the field of battle at Gaugamela by the Tigris River in northern Mesopotamia. Once again, Alexander was victorious and pushed the Persian army past Babylon, which he then occupied. From here, he proceeded to the capital of the Persian Empire itself, Persepolis, which he burnt to the ground. Heading east, in Afghanistan Alexander made his first diplomatic marriage to a princess named Roxana, daughter of the Sogdian leader Oxyartes. This marriage helped to stabilize Alexander's control and legitimacy. In 327 Alexander brought his army past the Hindu Kush and into India, the northern portion of which he conquered. By this point, Alexander's empire stretched from Macedon and Greece in the west, Egypt in the southwest, and India in the east.

Alexander set India as his eastern boundary and returned to Babylon, where he attempted to unite the Macedonian/Greek and Persian elements of his empire into one cultural/political whole. This he tried to achieve through forced marriages between Greek soldiers and Persian women, as well as the Persian technique of leaving local authorities in control of their own territories—at least once they had shown their loyalty to Alexander. Alexander himself died at age 33 on June 13, 323, apparently after a long bout of drinking.

The Hellenistic Age

Alexander's primary generals divided his conquests up into their own empires. After considerable infighting both among themselves and the rest of Alexander's family (his mother Olympias was quite formidable), in 312 all the successors were in need of rest, and so

peace was declared. This peace acknowledged Kassander as general of the European territories, Lysimakhos as head of Thrace, Ptolemy as head of Egypt, and Antigonos as head of Asia, all until Alexander IV, Alexander the Great's infant son and actual heir reached maturity. But in 310 Alexander IV was killed in secret, and any notion of reuniting Alexander's empire died with him. The various successors had themselves crowned king of their territories shortly thereafter—Antigonos in 306, Ptolemy in 305, and Seleukos in Babylon in 304.

In the late third–early second centuries the Kingdom of Macedon fought a series of wars with the new power in town—Rome. Rome was victorious, and the Antigonid family was removed from the Macedonian throne. The first of the Hellenistic Kingdoms came to an end, and in 148 Macedon became a Roman province. To the east, the Seleukids were having their own problems with Rome. Already in 192–188 the Romans had come into conflict with Antiokhos III when he fought on the side of the Aetolian League against Macedon in alliance with Rome. Between Rome, Pergamum (supported by Rome), and Egypt, the Seleukids continued to lose territory until by 129, after the death of Antiokhos VII, they were left with only a sliver of northern Syria, which was eventually conquered by Rome.

The last Hellenistic dynasty to fall was the Ptolemies of Egypt, whose power lasted until the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE. Here Queen Cleopatra VII in alliance with the Roman general Marc Antony lost a sea battle to Octavianus Caesar, heir to Julius Caesar. Cleopatra committed suicide rather than be humiliated in Rome, and the final Hellenistic Kingdom came to its end.

FROM THE CAVES OF THE WINDS TO MYceNAE RICH IN GOLD

The faces of Minoan and Mycenaean women

John Prag

Sir Mortimer Wheeler once wrote that ‘the archaeologist is digging up, not *things*, but *people*’, which he intended as an exhortation to archaeologists not to become fixated on our sherds and our pottery typologies but to remember the real people who made and used the pots whose battered remains now obsess us.¹ He would surely have approved of a volume that sets out to describe ‘real women across the ancient world’ – and can there be a more ‘real’ way of meeting the women (and indeed the men) from that ancient world than seeing them face to face? Working with their physical remains allows one to really get to know the people one is studying and often to develop an understanding and a sympathy with them: seeing their faces develop takes that a step further and turns them into real individuals.

Facial reconstruction – putting the ‘flesh’ back onto the bony skull – has a history going back to the work of the anatomist His in the late nineteenth century, or indeed much earlier if one includes the tradition of taking death masks from the recently deceased, while the skulls from Neolithic Jericho with their faces restored in plaster date back to the seventh millennium BC.² However, it is probably fair to say that until the later twentieth century such reconstructions were seen (at least by the more ‘serious’ members of the archaeological profession) as something of a fairground entertainment, more suitable to a waxwork display than to a ‘proper’ museum.

Happily, attitudes have changed in recent years. This is in part because of the growing interest in and understanding of human remains from excavations and in museums coupled somewhat ironically with an increasing concern that those remains should be

treated with proper respect. With the exponential growth of archaeological science, 'traditional' archaeologists – those brought up on pottery typologies and stylistic analysis – have increasingly overcome their suspicion, one might even say their fear, of accepting evidence derived from such unfamiliar approaches. The change has also come about because the methods and techniques used by those practising facial reconstruction have progressed by leaps and bounds since the mid-1980s.³ Done properly, a facial reconstruction brings together all the information gathered by the other specialists in an archaeological team into what is in effect a three-dimensional report, something that is far more easily comprehended than a dry printed account, and far more exciting. For that reason, two such reconstructions have come to play an important role in many modern museum displays, often giving visitors a sense of ownership and kinship with those whom they now see as their ancestors or at least as their predecessors in local life.

Put in its simplest terms, the bony skull is the hard armature over which the fleshy muscles of the face are laid according to known measurements and strict rules that take into account age, sex and ethnicity, in exactly the same way as a steel frame gives a building its form and the service ducts and the surface cladding (of whatever material) have to follow that predetermined shape. Their thickness can vary, just as a person may put on or lose weight, but the underlying form remains the same.⁴ It makes no fundamental difference whether the reconstruction is carried out 'manually' by building up the muscles in clay or wax on a cast of the skull, or by using computer programmes to replicate the skull from CT scans and then to add or mould the soft parts onto it digitally, or indeed by a combination of both approaches. It has to be said that (allowing for the skill and the humanity of the sculptor) the hands-on approach nearly always produces a result that is less bland and thus more 'real' than an impersonal computer can deliver. In the end, every skull is different and so every face is different and unique. 'It is a common wonder of all men, how among so many millions of faces there should be none alike' was how Sir Thomas Browne put it in 1643.⁵ One may be able to identify a reconstruction as belonging to an ethnic group, but that is simply because the skull of the individual on whom the reconstruction is based gives that information, not because the medical artist has set out to create a particular type of face.

Carried out properly, facial reconstruction must be a totally objective technique whose results are dictated entirely by the evidence of the bones. That it succeeds in producing a recognisable face has been demonstrated not only by controls carried out in the Manchester

Medical School and elsewhere but also by the many forensic cases it has helped to solve around the world, as viewers of the BBC's *Crimewatch UK* and other television programmes will know.⁶ Its method is to work outwards from the bones to produce a face which will be recognised and identified by the family or friends of a dead or missing person, whether of a modern murder victim or an archaeological reconstruction: Alexander the Great would have recognised the Manchester reconstruction of the skull from Vergina as the face of his father Philip II. Only afterwards are the extra superficial details like the hair and beard added: before the identification, they can only be indicated in a generic fashion. What the technique cannot do is create a true portrait, which works from the outside inwards and takes into account all those little details like crow's feet and laughter lines which leave no trace on the bone, and in which the artist's understanding of the person before him plays an essential role. Rembrandt's great self-portraits inhabit a different world from even the best facial reconstructions, because their intention and their methodology are utterly different.

Facial reconstruction has had many practitioners, but Richard Neave and his colleagues in Manchester have played a major part in developing the technique, extending its application and so ensuring a wider acceptance: the story is told in *Making Faces Using Archaeological and Forensic Evidence*.⁷ One of the most important of the Manchester 'cases' was that of the skull from Tomb II at Vergina in Macedonia, where the careful (and long-drawn-out) study of the remains and the ensuing reconstruction were key to the identification of the individual as Philip II.⁸ Because this very striking face with its dramatic eye-wound belonged to such a high-profile individual, it gained worldwide publicity and fired interest in the possibilities of facial reconstruction not just among the general public but also in the academic world. So came the question 'After Philip, why not Agamemnon?' – the so-called 'Agamemnon' behind one of the gold masks from Mycenae. Sadly, none of the skeletons discovered by Schliemann in Grave Circle A in his excavations in 1876 proved suitable for reconstruction. However, a suggestion for a study of the faces from the slightly earlier Grave Circle B (c.1600–1500 BC) discovered in 1951 led to the reconstruction of seven faces, one of them that of a woman. Aside from the sheer interest of seeing what these people looked like and of an associated further study of their remains using techniques and information not available at the time they were excavated, this project had the added purpose of using facial reconstruction for the first time as a tool to assist the archaeological interpretation. The graves, spread over three or four

generations, were originally distributed in three distinct areas within the circle: archaeology could provide information on their dating, sequence and relative wealth, but it could not clarify how the individuals were related to each other, and since this was prehistory there was no literary evidence to help. However, we tend to resemble our close relatives: proper objective facial reconstruction should be able to demonstrate facial similarities and with them likely kinship among the graves. And so it proved: it revealed two very distinct groups of faces (the 'long faces' and the 'heart-shapes'), and one individual who had a quite different shape of head and was at best only remotely related to either of them. What was also very interesting was what it revealed about the status of the one woman whose face could be reconstructed (skull 58 from Grave Gamma).⁹

However, the interest sparked by the reconstruction of Philip II was further fuelled by the work on the Mycenaean faces, leading to two proposals for reconstructions from Crete, of the 'priest and priestess' from Anemospilia near Archanes above Knossos, and of a man and woman whose remains formed part of a cross-disciplinary research project at Armenoi near Rethymnon. The Anemospilia pair date from MMII/IIIA (1750–1600 BC) and thus lived earlier than the Mycenaeans we have been discussing, so we should look at the female halves of these two Minoan couples next.

As part of a wider research programme in the 1970s in the area of Mount Juktas and Archanes, Drs Yannis and Efi Sakellarakis had discovered and excavated what they interpreted as a tripartite Middle Minoan temple on a spur of Mount Juktas rather dramatically named Anemospilia, 'the Caves of the Winds'. The building had evidently been destroyed by an earthquake followed by a fire. Inside were the remains of four people, apparently killed while carrying out a ceremony: a young man lay on the altar; sprawled across him was a man aged between 30 and 40 – the 'priest'; a young woman who had fled into a corner of the building in a vain attempt to find shelter – the 'priestess'; and another young man (?) who had been trying to escape from the building. The interpretation was contested from the outset on the grounds that the building was unique in Minoan architecture and also apparently incomplete: there appears to be evidence that it had once been larger, but that other rooms had been eroded down the hillside. One cannot be sure that it was in fact a shrine. Further, some of the details have been disputed – for example, the priest's sacrificial 'knife' has also been identified as a spearhead, fallen from a shelf above. However, this is not the place to continue that debate: for present purposes, it is satisfactory to follow the Sakellarakises' analysis. These were the first individuals discovered in the Knossos

area to have been killed in the earthquakes which disrupted the region, and in the light of the results from Vergina Yannis Sakellarakis was keen to have as many of their faces reconstructed as was practical. His hopes were twofold. First, there was the potential that other eyes from other disciplines would notice something that had been overlooked which might help answer some of the outstanding questions about this rather extraordinary site. Second, he was planning a new display in the Archanes museum: although there are plenty of illustrations of faces in Minoan art, not only were these virtually all from slightly later periods, mostly Late Minoan, but they only told us how the Minoans wished to be seen, not how they really looked. Here were potentially four fine physical specimens, important people, who might help remedy that lack, and might provide a centrepiece for the display: real people from the ancient world.

In the end only two of the Anemospilia skulls were suitable for reconstruction, the 'priest' and 'priestess': the others were too badly damaged. Even putting the fragments of those two into a state where it was possible to make a cast that was sufficiently complete to form an accurate armature on which to rebuild the face, was a slow and painstaking process, not unlike that employed by air crash investigators: the fragments were laid out on a table, the larger recognisable pieces on one side, the miscellaneous fragments and teeth on the other. Gradually joins were recognised and it came together: the priestess was the better preserved since her remains had escaped the fire which swept through much of the building, and despite all that it had undergone, her skull yielded some interesting information about her medical history. She was a small woman, only 5 ft. $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (1.54 m) tall, in her twenties when she died. The vault of her cranium was abnormally thickened while the parietal bones at the sides of the skull apparently showed marked osteoporosis, though this is not always easy to identify with certainty: it was cautiously ascribed to 'an undiagnosable haemoglobinopathy', a condition that is more to be expected in post-menopausal women than in men. Despite their low average life expectancy, osteoporosis is surprisingly common in Minoan skeletons, and apart from causing bones to become brittle it is a secondary symptom of numerous other diseases, most of them linked to the menopause: recent research suggests that as well as diet and hormonal change, genetic and even racial factors are significant. It has been suggested that this can be explained by the prolonged breastfeeding and premature ageing of Bronze Age life when compared with modern living patterns (see also Budin, "Aegean," this volume).¹⁰

Worse was to follow. The thickening of the skull implied that she

suffered from anaemia: blood is formed in the bone marrow, and some anaemias stimulate the marrow to make good the deficiency they cause, a process known as reactive hyperplasia which is usually particularly marked in the bones of the vault of the skull. Anaemia exists in two forms, congenital and acquired: establishing the form of the priestess's anaemia would have required access to the rest of her skeleton, which was not possible at the time. Ancient Greece was a malarial area, and anaemia can provide some protection against the disease because the parasite that causes it does not thrive in the damaged blood cells of anaemia sufferers. Thus it would be easy to assume that she suffered from congenital anaemia, probably of the type known as thalassaemia (at one time so prevalent here that it was also called Mediterranean anaemia). However, recent research shows that acquired anaemia, particularly iron-deficiency anaemia, is more likely to cause the changes apparent in the priestess's cranium than the congenital form of the disease. It also gives us an indication that the standards of hygiene and nutrition under which she lived left something to be desired. Though not as debilitating as the inherited sickle-cell anaemia found in black Africans, it would still have been painful and she would have suffered from lack of energy; had she survived the earthquake it would probably have shortened her life.¹¹

Her skull was not only fragmentary but also rather fragile, so on this occasion each piece was covered with burnished foil before being cast in plaster in Athens. These plaster replicas were then taken back to the studio in Manchester where they were floated into place on a clay matrix to form a complete skull, on which the face was then built up according to the method described above ([Figure 39.1](#)).



Figure 39.1 The face of the ‘priestess’ from Anemospilia.

The face that grew as the reconstruction progressed appeared strikingly attractive, but when I described her in such terms in the first draft of the report for *BSA* I was firmly reprimanded by the editor: we cannot speak for Minoan ideas of what made a face attractive. However, in purely anatomical terms, her facial proportions were classically those of a female, the orbits large in proportion to the rest of the face and the width-to-height ratios of the reassembled skull very different from those of her male companion. There was nevertheless one element in the story of her face that even her Minoan contemporaries must have found unattractive. Her teeth were in a good state, she did not suffer from caries, and had only lost one tooth at the time of her death, but the amount of calculus, particularly on her lower teeth, showed that her dental hygiene was minimal and that she had made no attempt to keep them clean. Her breath must have smelled terrible.

This much was certain from the primary evidence of the bones; we do not and cannot claim it as a portrait, but this face is one that those who died with her would have recognised. However, it still needed to be given hair, and for this we now had to turn to Minoan art. At the time the best source appeared to be LMIIIA wall-paintings such as the dancer from the Queen’s Megaron at Knossos and the ‘Parisienne’ that are some two centuries later. It might be foolish to think that Cretan fashions had not changed in the interval, but it was the best evidence we had. All these ladies sported long locks hanging over their shoulders with their faces framed by a series of small curls and a

single curl in the centre of the forehead, and so the priestess from Anemospilia followed suit.¹² The MMIIIB (c.1600 BC) figurines of the 'snake goddesses' seem to wear their hair in a similar fashion and they are closer in date to the priestess. Interestingly, they have the same wide forehead and cheekbones as she does, although their faces are a little more triangular than the priestess with her firm jaw: overall one might suggest that this is a particularly Cretan shape of face. It can often be found in the Minoan period, and it also recurs very strikingly in the 'Daedalic' faces of Archaic Cretan art. While human figures in Minoan art sometimes convey a softness or prettiness, the gems carved with idiosyncratic human faces or indeed the merry crowd on the 'Harvester vase' from Agia Triada show clearly that it was not necessarily idealising in its approach, and our priestess does not have a 'soft' face.¹³

So the second Cretan face we were asked to reconstruct came as something of a surprise.

In 1996–97 Drs Holley Martlew and Yannis Tzedakis (1999) set up a project called 'Archaeology meets science' whose original aim was:

[a]n in-depth application of scientific analyses to a group of Minoan and Mycenaean ceramic artefacts. If successful, the tests would tell us what had been cooked, eaten, stored, or drunk. The intention was to establish concrete evidence of a kind never before produced.

The project was indeed successful, and extended its range of sites and dates as well as including skeletal remains, using what were then highly innovative techniques such as stable isotope analysis, and incorporated an in-depth environmental study of the LMIII site of Armenoi south of Rethymnon. It culminated in publications and an exhibition at the National Archaeological Museum in Athens in 1999.¹⁴ Largely with the exhibition in mind, Dr Martlew asked for reconstructions of the faces of the two individuals from Tomb 132 in the Armenoi cemetery dated to LMIIIB1 (c.1320–1200 BC). This was a project whose underlying theme was to use the artefacts to clarify as much as possible about the lives of the people who used them, so to combine the information in three-dimensional interpretations was utterly logical.

The remains had been studied by Darlene Weston and Dr David Whittaker (then at the Institute of Archaeology, UCL, and the University of Wales Dental School respectively):¹⁵ the man (aged around 45) had very poor dental health and suffered from osteoarthritis which was particularly severe in his neck, so he was perhaps a weaver. But the woman – presumably his wife since they

were buried together in the only larnax from the site containing more than one burial – was in much better health. In her early forties, she was a delicately built and very small woman standing only 1.41 m (4 ft. 7½ in.) tall; she had lost two teeth as the result of abscesses, but the rest showed only moderate wear with a little caries, suggesting a diet rich in carbohydrates. Several teeth showed the horizontal grooves caused by enamel hypoplasia, so in her childhood she had suffered from malnutrition or infectious diseases. Unlike the Middle Minoan priestess, she seems to have been good at keeping her teeth clean, for they had little calculus. Apart from possible muscle strain in her lower legs and incipient arthritis in two toes and a finger there was little to report on her skeletal pathology: unusually for her age she had no degenerative joint disease, which, together with the small size of the muscle insertions on the bones, implied that she had done no heavy physical labour. If she helped her husband (if such he was) with his weaving, it was only with the lighter tasks. She seems to have been free from any chronic pathological conditions and was probably carried off by an acute illness.

Given the nature of the Armenoi project, it seemed wisest simply to give her a short head of hair which did not distract the viewer from the face itself rather than attempting another elaborate hairstyle. The face that emerged from the reconstruction is a very different one from that of the priestess, narrower and more graceful in its build, as one might expect from her overall physique. Where the priestess has a high and rather massive forehead, this person has a much larger face in relation to the rest of her skull, giving her a lower forehead and more prominent features (Figure 39.2).¹⁶ What one might call the ‘Daedalic’ triangular face of the priestess was clearly not the only type of face to be seen on ancient Crete: there is plenty of scope for more work.



Figure 39.2 The face of the woman from Tomb 132 at Armenoi.

So what of the faces from the Mycenae Grave Circles? The facial reconstruction had produced three different facial types, and from them it was possible to postulate relationships across the groups of graves as well as the generations in Circle B. Excitingly, a pioneering study of ancient DNA in ancient human remains later confirmed some of those relationships.¹⁷ Two of the ‘heart-shapes’ from Grave Gamma, one of the latest graves in the circle with a sequence of five burials, were very closely related, probably brother and sister, possibly just cousins: Gamma 55, the man next to whose remains was found the only mask from this circle, and Gamma 58, the only woman in the grave. They both very strikingly showed the wide cheekbones, wide-set eyes and delicate features typical of this family. He was in his early to mid-thirties when he died, she was probably very slightly older. She was a strongly built person, probably fairly slim and tall (1.61 m = 5 ft. 7 in.), but beginning to suffer from arthritis in her lower back and hands, and at some point had broken her upper right arm but this had healed well. While her skull is large enough to be male, details such as the lack of brow-ridges and the sharpness of the upper edges of the eye-sockets along with the markedly female pelvis confirmed her sex.

The bone of her skull is noticeably thick and heavy which might indicate Paget’s disease, a chronic disorder which can result in enlarged or even misshapen bones, sometimes resulting in arthritis or fractures. Unlike osteoporosis, it is typically localised and affects only one or a few bones and not the whole skeleton. This might have caused her some headaches or hearing loss, but it is not life-

threatening. Although much of the centre of the frontal skull was missing, the rest of the cranium was largely intact and the vertical and horizontal dimensions were secure so one could undertake the reconstruction with some confidence: her face is heart-shaped, the eyes relatively small and wide apart (like Gamma 55's), but her mouth appears larger and her forehead prominent when seen in profile, with a strong jaw ([Figures 39.3 and 39.4](#)).¹⁸

Like the priestess from Anemospilia, Gamma 58's unadorned face when reconstructed from the bone evidence needed to be given an appropriate hairstyle: at Mycenae as in Crete there is a lack of illustrations of the period to provide a model. After considerable discussion and experiment by Diana Wardle at Birmingham University, her coiffure was based on the fresco of the 'Mistress of the Animals' from Xeste 3 at Thera (see Younger, this volume), on the basis that she is of virtually the same date. Further, although Theran lifestyle in the Middle and Late Bronze Ages was probably closer to Minoan Crete than to Mycenaean Greece, the jewellery which the ladies depicted on the Theran frescoes wore on their heads and in their hair has much in common with the earrings, hairpins and beads found in the Shaft Graves, suggesting that fashions in the two places had much in common. So Gamma 58 was given a pony-tail and three long locks hanging down the back of the head held in place by a band wound around them (a touch which seems to have been particularly popular at Mycenae), three little plaits on the top of her head that stood up in a rather spiky and surprisingly modern style, but are identical to those on the Thera frescoes, and a row of curls over her forehead that were very much to Mycenaean taste. Working this out and understanding it could only be achieved in three dimensions, therefore, the reconstruction took the form not of a head but of a bust, so that her long locks could fall properly over the shoulders. While this may not yet be the definitive version of the hairstyle worn at Mycenae around 1600 BC, the challenges of creating an accurate and informed reconstruction compelled everyone involved – including the museum visitor and you, gentle reader – to look at the people of Mycenae afresh.¹⁹



Figure 39.3 The face of 'Gamma 58' from Grave Circle B at Mycenae.

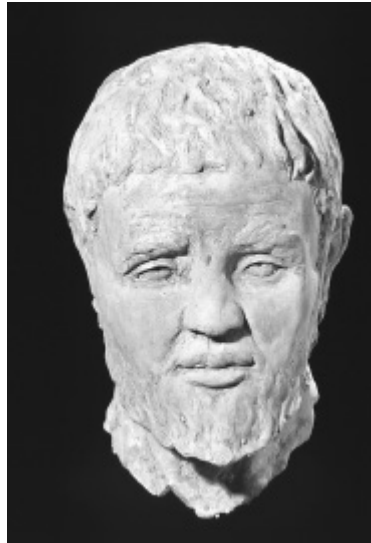


Figure 39.4 The face of 'Gamma 55' from Grave Circle B at Mycenae.

These two had been buried within a few months of each other, since Gamma 58's skeleton was still intact when the grave was re-opened and her remains moved aside in the customary manner to give space for her brother's body to be interred, along with that of another (probably unrelated) man, Gamma 51. The proof of kinship is very important. There are relatively few women buried in the Grave Circles (out of some 35 individuals only 4 have been identified as certainly female in Circle B) and there is no evidence for brother-sister

marriage in the Aegean Bronze Age: therefore we can be certain that she was buried here among people who were on any interpretation members of the elite in her own right and not just as somebody's wife.²⁰

But our story of the Mycenaean women did not finish here. During preparations at the National Archaeological Museum by Dr Papazoglou-Manioudaki for exhibitions linked to the 2004 Olympics, two skeletons were rediscovered that had been excavated in 1877 in Grave VI in Grave Circle A at Mycenae by Panayiotis Stamatakis, the representative of the Archaeological Society during Schliemann's excavations at the site. This find had several exciting consequences.

The first was a reconstruction of their faces linked of course to a complete study of those skeletons – both were men, aged 20–25 and 25–35 respectively, closely related to each other but apparently to none of the others studied.²¹

Second, it led to a reassessment of the rest of the skeletal material from Schliemann's excavations of 1876 from which sprang a programme of strontium isotope ratio ($^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$) analysis of samples of dental enamel from 11 individuals buried in Grave Circle A at Mycenae in order to explore their local versus non-local geographical origin – that is, to answer the question of whether these people were native to Mycenae or came from somewhere beyond the immediate hinterland. The sample was necessarily small and the evidence is still far from conclusive, but 3 of the 11 are certainly of non-local origin, 2 are certainly local, while the conclusions for the other 6 remain tentative though they too are probably local – their higher strontium levels may simply reflect a diet which included more 'imported' food, in particular seafood. Interesting for the present chapter is the fact that the non-locals include the only two securely identified females in the group. If this conclusion really reflects marital customs at Mycenae, then the fact that the females of high social ranking are of non-local origin and perhaps of a different cultural background implies that the men stayed at home and 'married out', bringing in wives who would consolidate social or political alliances. The sample size is still tiny, but the implications for social patterns at Mycenae are important and need to be investigated further by a sampling programme in the Argolid and beyond to enlarge the database of local biologically available strontium at other major sites, as has been done for the South Aegean.²²

Finally, it inspired a proper study of Stamatakis' unpublished reports on those excavations which threw much light on Schliemann's

often hasty and imprecise account. From this sprang a reassessment by Oliver Dickinson of the whole social and political background of the Grave Circles.²³

Most relevant to this discussion is what emerged about the women buried here. One of the 'non-local' females, MYC2 from Grave III, was buried with a mass of valuable goods, implying a very high rank, perhaps a priestly role. She seems to have been buried in the centre of the grave, apparently with a baby wrapped in gold (only the wrappings survive) on her chest. On either side lay two men (probably), dressed in gold-bedecked robes and with many other rich goods – but no weapons: very mysterious and very likely significant. Dr Dickinson (to whom I owe this observation) suggests that these burials may have been carried out simultaneously, or else that these were all 'ritual specialists', with the woman as a high-ranking wife as well. He notes the presence of likely ritual vessels of faience in the grave, and also some unusual gold dress-attachments which have links with Minoan religious symbolism such as the crook-pin found on the woman's body.²⁴

Stamatakis' account of the distribution of the famous gold masks from these graves implies that at least one from Grave IV (burial Sigma) was linked to a female skull, and an almost identical mask came from a second burial (Rho) in the same grave from which no bones survive, but there were at least two other probable females in the grave and it may have belonged to one of them. They are very similar to the electrum mask from Grave Gamma in Circle B mentioned above which was found not over the face of the male Gamma 55 with which it is always associated but leaning against a jug some distance behind it, much too far away ever to have lain on his head: it could well originally have been buried with his sister Gamma 58 and left behind when her (by now decomposing) remains were moved to one side.²⁵ None of the masks has facial hair or any other male characteristics and cumulatively the case for linking them with the women is almost irrefutable. Dickinson (whose arguments I am following here) suggests therefore:

[e]ither the association of masks with male burials was a secondary development, or both males and females could hold a position which was recognised in burial by the provision of a burial mask; either possibility must radically affect our ideas about the nature of the social hierarchy at Mycenae.²⁶

He goes on to discuss the heterogeneous nature of the burials in the two Grave Circles and the difficulty of interpreting the evidence as normal kin-groups, since there appear to be several families involved,

and suggests that the best explanation is that we have here an outstandingly successful instance of what Wright described as a ‘faction’. A faction could have a family or group of families at the core, but might draw in other unrelated members even from other communities and might encourage outstanding individuals to marry into the core group. This would explain the preponderance of men buried in the Grave Circles – the successive leaders of the factions and perhaps their most important allies. The relatively few females owe their places not necessarily to marriage or descent but to holding some special status, signified in some cases by their gold burial masks.²⁷

Helen’s face may have launched a thousand ships from Mycenae to Troy. The face of Gamma 58 (‘Clytemnestra’, as the Manchester team inevitably named her) has made us look again at the way we see women – and men – in Mycenae, and indeed the rest of the ancient world. Facial reconstruction has come of age.

Acknowledgements

This work could not have been done without the involvement and support of the many colleagues mentioned in the text, and as ever they deserve my warmest thanks. On this occasion, I am especially grateful to Oliver Dickinson for reading a draft of the chapter, for answering endless questions, and for allowing me to cite his new ideas on the place of women in the Grave Circles at Mycenae. All illustrations reproduced courtesy of Manchester Museum, University of Manchester.

List of abbreviations

LM Late Minoan.

MM Middle Minoan.

Notes

- 1 Wheeler 1956: 13.
- 2 Prag and Neave 1997: [chapter 1](#), especially pp. 12–15.
- 3 E.g. Prag and Neave 1997: [chapter 2](#); Wilkinson 2004; Prag in Dickinson *et al.* 2012: 161–163.
- 4 E.g. Prag and Neave 1997: 20–33; Wilkinson 2004: chapters 3–6.
- 5 Browne 1643: pt. ii, §2.
- 6 E.g. Prag and Neave 1997: 33–39, 228–230; Wilkinson 2004: [chapter 7](#).

- 7 Prag and Neave 1997; also Prag in Dickinson *et al.* 2012: 161–163; Wilkinson 2004: [chapter 6](#).
- 8 E.g. Prag and Neave 1997: [chapter 4](#), further references at 235, n. 1; more recently e.g. Musgrave and Prag 2011.
- 9 Musgrave *et al.* 1995: esp. 126, fig. 13; Prag and Neave 1997: [chapter 6](#), especially 140, fig. 26.
- 10 Musgrave *et al.* 1994; Prag and Neave 1997: [chapter 7](#), esp. 149–156 (with references), figs. 2 (priest), 7 (priestess). See also Budin, this volume.
- 11 Musgrave *et al.* 1994; Prag and Neave 1997: 244 n. 7.
- 12 Musgrave *et al.* 1994: 95–96, figs. 7–8; Prag and Neave 1997: 155, fig. 9 and 244 n. 9.
- 13 E.g. Musgrave *et al.* 1994: 94, figs. 4–5; Prag and Neave 1997: 152, figs 4–5, 244 n. 9.
- 14 Tzedakis and Martlew 1999.
- 15 Tzedakis and Martlew 1999: 232–238, nos. 212–213, 242–243.
- 16 Also Tzedakis and Martlew 1999: 238 and 242 n. 213; her tomb-companion's face is illustrated at 238 and 243 n. 212.
- 17 Prag and Neave 1997: 140, fig. 26. DNA: Brown *et al.* 2000; Bouwman *et al.* 2008.
- 18 Musgrave *et al.* 1995: 121–122, pls. 16, 18; Prag and Neave 1997: 137–139, figs. 21–25.
- 19 A full account is given at Prag and Neave 1997: 137–139, figs. 23–25; Musgrave *et al.* 1995: 122–125, figs. 10–12.
- 20 Dickinson *et al.* 2012: 180–186.
- 21 Papazoglou-Manioudaki *et al.* 2009.
- 22 Papazoglou-Manioudaki *et al.* 2010; Nafplioti 2009; also Nafplioti 2011; Dickinson *et al.* 2012: 171–186.
- 23 Dickinson *et al.* 2012, esp. 180–186.
- 24 Schliemann 1880: 193 n. 292; Marinatos and Hirmer 1960: fig. 200 left.
- 25 Mylonas 1973: 47. The masks: Marinatos and Hirmer 1960: figs. 164–165; Prag and Neave 1997: pls. VI and VII (top).
- 26 Dickinson *et al.* 2012: 177.
- 27 Wright 2001; Dickinson *et al.* 2012: 181–184.

References

- Bouwman, A. S., Brown, K. A., Prag, A. J. N. W. and Brown, T. A. (2008) Kinship between burials from Grave Circle B at Mycenae revealed by ancient DNA typing. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 35: 2580–2584. Available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jas.2008.04.010>.
- Brown, T. A., Brown, K. A., Flaherty, C. E., Little, L. M. and Prag, A. J. N. W. (2000) DNA analysis of bones from Grave Circle B at Mycenae: A first report. *BSA* 95: 115–119.

- Browne, T. (1643) *Religio medici*. Menston, UK: Scholar Press, 1970 (facsimile).
- Dickinson, O. T. P. K., Papazoglou-Manioudaki, L., Nafplioti, A. and Prag, A. J. N. W. (2012) Mycenae revisited part 4: Assessing the new data. *BSA* 107: 161–88. Available at CJO doi:10.1017/S0068245412000056.
- Marinatos, S. and Hirmer, M. (1960) *Crete and Mycenae*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Musgrave, J. and Prag, J. (2011) The occupants of Tomb II at Vergina: Why Arrhidaios and Eurydice must be excluded. In A. Kottaridi and S. Walker (eds) *Heracles to Alexander the Great*. Oxford, UK: Ashmolean Museum, pp. 127–130.
- Musgrave, J. H., Neave, R. A. H., Prag, A. J. N. W., Sakellarakis, E. and Sakellarakis, J. A. (1994) The priest and priestess from Archanes-Anemospilia: Reconstructing Minoan faces. *BSA* 89: 89–100.
- Musgrave, J. H., Neave, R. A. H., Prag, A. J. N. W. and Thimme, D. I. (1995) Seven faces from Grave Circle B at Mycenae. *BSA* 90: 107–136.
- Mylonas, G. E. (1973) *Ho taphikos kyklos V tōn Mykēnōn (Grave Circle B at Mycenae)*. Athens, Greece: Archaiologike Hetaireia.
- Nafplioti, A. (2009) Mycenae revisited [part 2](#). Exploring the local versus non-local geographical origin of the individuals from Grave Circle A at Mycenae: Evidence from strontium isotope ratio ($^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$) analysis. *BSA* 109: 279–291.
- Nafplioti, A. (2011) Tracing population mobility in the Aegean using isotope geochemistry: A first map of biologically available $^{87}\text{Sr}/^{86}\text{Sr}$ signatures. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 38: 1560–1570.
- Papazoglou-Manioudaki, L., Nafplioti, A., Musgrave, J. H., Neave, R. A. H., Smith, D. and Prag, A. J. N. W. (2009) Mycenae revisited part 1: Two new faces from Shaft Grave VI and strontium isotope analysis of human remains from Grave Circle A at Mycenae. *BSA* 104: 233–277.
- Papazoglou-Manioudaki, L., Nafplioti, A., Musgrave, J. H. and Prag, A. J. N. W. (2010) Mycenae revisited [part 3](#). The human remains from Grave Circle A at Mycenae. Behind the masks: A study of the bones of Shaft Graves I–VI. *BSA* 105: 157–244.
- Prag, J. and Neave, R. (1997) *Making Faces Using Forensic and Archaeological Evidence*. London: British Museum Press. Reprinted with corrections 1999.
- Schliemann, H. (1880) *Mycenae a Narrative of Researches and Discoveries at Mycenae and Tiryns (A new edition . . .)*. New York: C.

Scribner's Sons.

- Tzedakis, Y. and Martlew, H. (1999) *Minoans and Mycenaeans: Flavours of Their Time*. Athens, Greece: Greek Ministry of Culture/Kapon Editions.
- Wheeler, M. (1956) *Archaeology from the Earth*. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books.
- Wilkinson, C. (2004) *Forensic Facial Reconstruction*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Wright, J. C. (2001) Factions and the origins of leadership and identity in Mycenaean society. *BICS* 45: 182.

MINOAN WOMEN

John Younger

Introduction

Although Crete seems to have been first inhabited in the Palaeolithic (Strasser *et al.* 2010), another colonization of the island occurred at the end of the Neolithic (Broodbank and Strasser 1991). From then, the internal chronology of Crete follows two systems, a ceramic development (Early, Middle, and Late Minoan with internal subdivisions) and a system based on architectural phases: Prepalatial (EM–MM IA, c.3000–1900 BCE), Protopalatial (MM IB–II, 1900–1750), Neopalatial (MM III–LM IB, 1750–1490), Final Palatial (LM II–IIIA:2/B1, 1490–1300), and Post Palatial (LM IIIB–C, 1300–1100). The last two periods comprise Mycenaean Crete.

The Cretan “Hieroglyphic” and Linear A scripts were developed in the Protopalatial period (Godart and Olivier 1996; Younger 2005); Linear A survives into the Neopalatial period (Godart and Olivier 1976–1985; Younger 2000); and Linear B writes Greek in the Final Palatial period (Killen and Olivier 1989).

The Minoan woman’s world

Identifying women

There are three main ways of identifying females in Aegean art: costume, hairstyle (following age grades), and skin color in fresco. Females are always clothed (males may be nude) and women are often depicted in elaborate “court” dress (see below), textiles made of wool that were also exported to Egypt and the Near East. The fairly consistent Egyptian color convention of painting the flesh of females white and males reddish brown (Eaverly 2013; but cf. Blakolmer 2004, 2012) was also followed in Minoan fresco (Hood 1985).

Almost all our information about Minoan women comes from their depictions in art: figurines, sealstones and fingerrings, pottery, and fresco. Clay figurines and statuettes come mainly from MM II onwards, and bronze figurines primarily from MM III–LM I. Sealstones rarely depict people before the Malia Workshop (MM II). There are few representations of women on pottery but females are prominent in the frescoes.

Texts give us limited information. In Linear B women were denoted by the logogram *102 MUL . Cretan “Hieroglyphic” has a logogram for women, *004 MUL , but it appears only twice (#049 and #264). Linear A has a unique logogram (*352 ) that looks like it may depict a woman; its sole occurrence, on Khania Wc 2100 (VIR-*352-JA), confirms that *352 is a person, perhaps with a feminine ending.

The Knossos Linear B texts mention some 20 women by name (e.g., Ln 1568); some of these names incorporate Linear B signs thought to transcribe unknown Minoan sounds (e.g., *da*-*22-*ti-ja*, a woman from place *da*-*22-*to*).

Women can be inferred from the presence of loomweights at an archaeological site (all weaving was done by women from age 8; Barber 1994: 283–298). Women may also have produced certain classes of pottery, like cooking pots (Vitelli 1995). It is probably not coincidence, therefore, that weaving patterns appear on early pottery (Berggren 1993) and seals (e.g., CMS II, 5 nos. 152–156). One problem persists: sexing skeletons has only been sporadically practiced (Strömberg 1992).

Age grades in the arts

Hairstyles and body development allow us to identify six stages of a woman’s life (Davis 1986; Younger 1992, 288–289; Laffineur 2000):

- stage 1: shaved head, back- and forehead-locks (Akrotiri Xeste 3, youngest crocus gatherer);
- stage 2: longer locks, top-, forehead-, back-, and right temple (“Horus”) lock (Akrotiri West House, “Priestess”; Xeste 3, “Veiled Girl”);

- stage 3: locks cut, new growth of short curls (Xeste 3, other crocus gatherers; Mycenae ivory mirror handles);
- stage 4: front forelock replaced by fillet knot; long tresses (Xeste 3, “Necklace Swinger” and “Wounded Woman”);
- stage 5: pendulous breasts (Akrotiri House of the Ladies);
- stage 6: heavy body (Xeste 3, upstairs “matrons”).

Stages 1 to 3 chart girlhood to adolescence. The loss of the front lock, stage 4, deliberately marks sexual maturity. Stages 5 and 6 mark changes in adulthood.

Age grades in the Knossos Linear B tablets

The Linear B tablets from Knossos list women with their daughters (*ko-wa*) and sons (*ko-wo*). These children are further characterized as “younger” (*me-wi-jo-e*) and “older” (*me-zo-e*) and as “apprentices” (DI for *di-da-ka-re*, “under instruction”; cf. Ak 781) and, for the daughters only, “old apprentices” (PA DI for *pa-ja-re di-da-ka-re*; cf. Ak 614). Since the younger children get half rations, the distinctions between the age grades, younger and older, must have been explicit (Carrier 1983: 9–10; Ventris and Chadwick 1973: 162). The Xeste 3 wall paintings (see [Figure 40.1](#)) depict these age grades: the youngest crocus-gathering girl corresponding to the Linear B “younger” girls; the girls with tight curls corresponding to the “older” girls; and the DI girls corresponding to the Wounded Woman and the (PA DI *ko-wa*) Necklace Swinger.

Men are listed with their sons (Am 819), but never with their daughters. Presumably, daughters stayed with their mothers and learned their mother’s profession, while sons eventually joined their fathers in their father’s profession (see Budin, “Aegean,” this volume).

Xeste 3, Akrotiri

Xeste 3, a large building at Akrotiri on the Cycladic island of Santorini, currently offers the most detailed representations of Aegean women ([Figure 40.1](#); Doulas 1992: 126–175; Palyvou 2005: 54–62). Its size, ashlar masonry, and almost complete absence of domestic vessels imply that it was a public building. Half of the rooms contain wall paintings.

A distinctive feature of the building is the Lustral Basin on the ground floor set against the north wall. Lustral Basins are small, rectangular sunken chambers approached by a short dog-leg flight of steps (cf. Platon 1967; S. Alexiou 1972; Graham 1977; Nordfeldt 1987). There are fewer than 30 of these features in Crete (6 at Phaistos and Knossos, 5 at Malia, 3 at Zakros, 2 at Tylisos and Palaikastro, and 1 each at Amnisos, Gournia, and Khania). Only one Lustral Basin is found outside Crete—in Xeste 3. The function of Lustral Basins is not known. The stairs and chamber have stone floors and wall revetments, often of gypsum. They look similar to small swimming pools or Jewish *mikvahs*, but, since there is no drain, they could not have been filled with water. The earliest Basin occurs at Malia, Quartier Mu (MM II); none was constructed after LM IB. In the Throne Room at Knossos, a Lustral Basin is located directly in front of the throne. Both features continue into the Final Palatial period (Niemeier 1986), but this is the only Lustral Basin to do so; all others do not survive the LM IB destructions.

At Xeste 3, wall paintings adorn the walls above the Lustral Basin and these give the best clues for its function. The space to the west was divided into a north (“viewing”) platform and a south area with wall paintings of four nude males of different ages (Doumas 1992, figs. 109–115): a young boy and a young adolescent carrying gold vessels; an older adolescent (16–18?) carrying a textile; and an adult man holding a bronze hydria.

Directly over the Lustral Basin is a complex painting (Figure 40.1, bottom; Doumas 1992, pls. 100–145). Over the stairs leading into the basin a young woman (“Necklace Swinger”) carries in her left hand a necklace. In the middle of the composition, the “Wounded Woman” sits on a rocky outcrop; blood streams from her foot. Her costume is unique: she wears the usual blue robe (the *heanos*) but below the waist she is wrapped in a belt from which hang strips of cloth or lappets, a skirt that simultaneously reveals and conceals the lower body. At right, a young adolescent, the “Veiled Girl,” wears a white robe with flounced kilt and a diaphanous saffron yellow veil with red dots over her head and body (cf. the small girl held in the hands of an enthroned goddess from the Cult center at Mycenae: Demakopoulou ed. 1990, 183 no. 152–153).

The east wall of the Lustral Basin area is decorated with an ashlar shrine façade decorated with red lily blossoms with red streaks, perhaps saffron stigmas, or, more sensationally, drops of blood; an olive tree may be growing within or behind the shrine. Upstairs (Figure 40.1, top), over the Lustral Basin, multicolored rocks suggest a

mountainous landscape in which two girls on the east wall, one younger, one older, are picking crocus flowers. The younger girl, on the right, has her hair shaved with a long lock above the forehead and a longer, looped lock from the crown of her head. Her open bodice shows no breast development. Perhaps she is less than 10 years old. The older girl has begun to let her hair grow out in tight, incised curls, but her sideburns are still shaved. She wears a white or diaphanous bodice, open at the chest where we see red nipples. This girl has begun to mature; she should be about 12 years old.

On the adjacent north wall of the room, just around the corner, a third girl carries her basket full of stigmas. She has red hair and blue eyes. From her curls and the nipple showing through her open bodice, she should also be about 12 or so.

Beyond a real window, the rest of the north wall carries a scene that takes place on an elevated wooden platform supported by altars. At the extreme left of this low platform, a girl pours crocus stigmas into a pannier. She is dressed in a yellow open bodice (no breast development) and kilt that reaches to her ankles. She wears a top knot of hair above the forehead and a loop of hair at the back; otherwise, her hair is a mass of short (not incised) curls. In age, she may be between the two girls on the east wall, 10–12 years old.

Between the girl and the window, a central platform rises in two steps. At left, to the right of the girl, a blue monkey (Rehak 1999) steps onto the central platform and offers crocus stigmas to a young woman seated on the highest level. Behind the young woman, a griffin leaps, leashed illusionistically to the real window frame.

The young woman sits on a pile of saffron-colored cushions or textiles. Her hair is luxuriant. She wears a diaphanous, light blue robe open to show a full breast with red nipple. Over the robe she wears a flounced kilt. A crocus blossom is painted or tattooed on her cheek. Her jewelry includes a large circular gold earring and three necklaces. The woman is universally thought to be a goddess, probably the Aegean Artemis (Rehak 2007).

Three distinct age grades for the girls can be identified: the younger girl on the east wall; the girl in front of the goddess; and the older girl on the east wall and the redhead on the north wall.

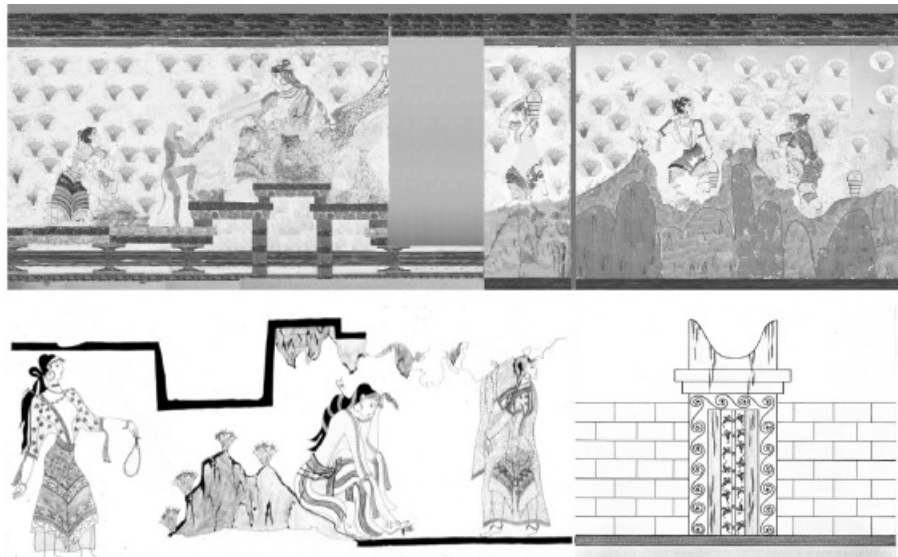


Figure 40.1 Xeste 3, Akrotiri, room 3 downstairs (left: drawing by P. Rehak; right [shrine]: after N. Marinatos 184, 75, fig. 53) and upstairs (computer reconstruction by the author after Doumas 1990, figs. 116, 122, 129).

The two youngest girls in the upper story wear no necklaces while the red-headed girl and the older girl on the east wall both wear necklaces. Perhaps necklaces were offered when a girl passed into the next age grade, as is depicted in the wall painting over the Lustral Basin (Younger 2009: 209 n. 27). The goddess with her plethora of necklaces would then represent the entire transition to womanhood (Wrede 1975; Hughes-Brock 1999: 280).

From the corridor on the upper floor also come two compositions that include old women.

A synthetic explanation for most of the images in Xeste 3 would suggest that the building saw a complete set of rites for all stages of a woman's life from childhood to old age (N. Marinatos 1994; Younger forthcoming).

A Minoan woman's life

Infants and girls

The burials of perinatals (still-borns and infants one month or less) are occasionally separate from the cemeteries of adults (Becker 2006,

While one creeping nude infant (boy) is known from Palaikastro, there are no depictions of infant girls on their own (Budin 2011: 267–299). The youngest girl depicted may be the one leaning against two older women in the Neopalatial Ivory Triad found at Mycenae (Younger 2009): two adult women crouch side by side with a small child in front of them (see image in Burke, this volume). One woman has a long tress down her back, the younger of the two. The older woman has her arm around the younger's shoulder; they both share a mantle. The younger woman extends her right arm to touch the shoulder of the child, who leans against the knees of the older woman. The child's head is shaved, but by the ankle-length robe it wears it should be a girl. The two women are costumed in dresses with open bodices and patterned kilts. All three figures wear necklaces. If the Ivory Triad were envisioned as depicting a mortal family, a grandmother, mother, and young daughter, we could imagine them engaged in the transmission of female knowledge (Younger 2009).

The second youngest girl in Aegean art is the crocus-picking girl with shaved head on the upper east wall of Xeste 3; the lock of hair over her forehead and a back lock have been growing for about two years. The next age grade (or next two) will allow the hair to grow into tight curls. Other indications of girlhood are the short, calf-length kilt and a peculiar bend to the knees as if depicting a frontal squat. Such is the way the older girl is depicted on Xeste 3's upper east wall as well as girls on ivory mirror handles (Wace 1921–23: 368, pl. LIXA, B).

Girls apparently picked the autumn crocus. We have no evidence that anyone else picked crocus (except blue monkeys; Immerwahr 1990: 170 Kn No. 1, "Saffron Gatherer"), but to obtain the large amounts of saffron that would be needed to supply vitamins A and B, and as an emmenagogue and abortifacient, adults had to have been the primary pickers of crocus. In the Saffron Gatherer fresco, a monkey substitutes for a young girl, as it does in scenes of shrine decorating (an incised ivory pyxis has a girl decorating a shrine (Durm 1907, fig. 27); a fresco fragment from Akrotiri substitutes monkeys (Doumas 1992, fig. 147)).

The Xeste 3 girls picking crocus in a mountain setting are barefoot and wear elaborate flounced kilts and open bodices. It is unlikely that real girls would have gone into the mountains to pick crocus so attired, especially barefoot—the actual setting must be closer to home (Shaw 1993). An outcropping of bedrock in the east wing of the

Palace of Phaistos has artificial hollows. The outcrop could have served as a surrogate mountain with planter holes for crocus where mothers could keep careful watch over their daughters in an enactment of the mountain activity.

That adults did go into the mountains to pick crocus is implied in the “Sanctuary” rhyton from Zakros. Although it depicts no people, people had been there for they left a curved branch atop an altar in the sanctuary and on the back of the rhyton there are three crocus clumps, two of which have been plucked of their flowers. These plants may allude to women as an “absent presence”; they have visited the sanctuary, plucked crocus, left the branch as an offering, and departed.

Girls were also participants and attendants in cult. From the West House at Akrotiri comes a wall painting with a life-size girl with cropped hair, a red ear, and red lips; she carries an incense burner (cf. a miniature fragment from Pylos; Lang 1969, pl. C, no. 33 H sw). On a sealing from Khania, a girl offers a long frond to an enthroned woman (CMS VS, 1A, no. 177); compare the girls on a mirror handle from Mycenae (Xenaki-Sakellariou 1985, pl. 72 no. 2899).

Adolescent women

Becoming a woman

I assume that “becoming” an adult woman was a long process that culminated in a woman’s first child birth (Chapin 1997–2000). I also assume that with the onset of menopause older women gained new status and levels of power, as survivors and wise women. Minoan families, like classical families, were probably not large and women were probably not continuously pregnant after their second or third surviving child, after which their role in adult life must have shifted from child bearing and rearing to cultural transmission.

This process would have gone through several stages. We have seen these already in the general age grades documented in the frescoes and in the Linear B tablets: infant, young girl, older girl, adolescent, mothers with their daughters and young sons, mothers with older daughters, the older matron. Within the phase “adolescence,” there would have been a complex shift from the girl dependent on her mother (cf. the Knossos Ak texts) to the young woman who became wife, mother, and mistress of her own household.

These subphases rely on “marriage,” for which there is almost no evidence. The Linear B tablets that list mothers, with their daughters and young sons, and fathers with older sons imply that the children knew their parents, which in turn implies that parents at least kept track of each other after the birth of their children. The Knossos Ag series (seven tablets) lists small groups of people, probably families (Carlier 1983: 9–10). Ag 88 is complete: *pe-re-ko* VIR 1 MUL 1 *ko-wa* 2 *ko-wo* 1: Pereko the one man (with) one woman, two daughters, one son.

If these tablets list families, they imply a state-acknowledged partnership (a marriage) for the purpose of (at least) bearing (legitimate) children. Perhaps such a partnership/marriage is reflected in gold rings that carry a scene with only a man and a woman (e.g., CMS I, no. 101) or in a sealing from Phaistos (CMS II, 5, no. 324; MM II context), where a man and woman stand so close their hands touch.

Another possible artistic representation of such a union appears on a gold ring from the Tiryns Treasure (CMS I, no. 180) and has a complicated scene involving a ship with crew, a woman and man saluting each other on shore, and another man and woman greeting each other in a building. One could argue for a sequential narrative, like the abduction of Helen or Ino (Herodotus 1.1.2–4). The scene on the ring is almost exactly duplicated on a Late Geometric *louterion* (Langdon 2008: 21, figs. 1.1–3), and there the man takes the woman by the wrist, the classic wedding gesture *kheir epi karpon*.

Bull-leaping

Bull-sports might have played a role in the transition to adulthood. Since bull-leaping may have taken place at select places (Knossos, perhaps Malia and Phaistos), adolescents leaping bulls there might have signified a rite of passage for all Minoan adolescents.

Bull-leaping may have taken place in palace central courts (Younger 1995). Neopalatial bull-leaping is depicted on a variety of media (sealstones, gold rings, and wall paintings) which unanimously portray large and powerful bulls, and adolescent and lithe leapers. All leapers wear the typical outdoors activity garb familiar from the Harvester Vase and bronze statuettes: a tightly cinched belt above a type of breechcloth, moccasins and high socks or a complex boot; many wear jewelry; and some have their hands wrapped.

From the Court of the Stone Spout at Knossos come fragments from as many as seven panels that decorated a room in an upper story

(Immerwahr 1990: 175 Kn. No. 23). In each panel, a bull charges left in flying gallop with three participants, one leaper and front and back assistants. The leaper is usually red-painted, but a fragmentary panel presents a white leaper. Similar bull-leaping panels come from Mycenae (Shaw 1996) and Tiryns (Immerwahr 1990: 202 Ti. No. 1, a white-painted leaper).

The color differences in the leapers should refer to males and females participating in bull-leaping, though this conclusion has been strongly resisted by a few scholars. Since the white-painted figures apparently lack breast development (none of them, however, has a completely preserved chest) and wear the same codpiece-loincloth as the red-painted figures, two scholars have suggested that the white-painted figures are actually different kinds of males or males at another time in the sport (Damiani-Indelicato 1988; N. Marinatos 1987).

I am unwilling to throw out the otherwise persistent color convention in favor of interpretations that demand special pleading. It is well known that energetic athletic activity arrests puberty, which would account for the absence of breast development (if that is the case) in the white-painted figures. It is also well known that many activities are so gendered that when members of the opposite sex participate, they wear the conventional costume (like the lyre player on the Ayia Triada sarcophagus who wears a woman's robe, as did classical male kithara players).

Athletic contests often marked age grades in antiquity and were appropriate for deciding the success of suitors (cf. the myths of Oinomaos, Atalanta, and Penelope and the story of Cleisthenes and his daughter Agariste: Herodotus 6.126.2). Whole families went to the Olympic and Heraia games at Olympia to look over possible suitors (Xenophon of Ephesus 1.2; Achilles Tatius 1.18).

Dancing

As a genre of poetry accompanied by dancing, the *parthenion* presented nubile young women to the rest of the community (Stehle 1997; cf. the Kea statues below). Several gold rings and the "Grove" fresco from Knossos (Immerwahr 1990: 173 Kn No. 16) depict central women who could be dancing (Warren 1981). Terracotta models (e.g., from Palaikastro: Dawkins 1902–1904; Carter 1995: 293, fig. 18.4) depict circle dances: women dancers in "court" costume and a male lyre player.

Three circular stone platforms of different sizes (Ds. 3.00, 3.22, 7.64 m) were excavated at Knossos behind the Little Palace (LM II–IIIA:1), perhaps dancing circles (Warren 1984); compare Homer’s “dancing circle of Ariadne” (Homer *Iliad* 18.590ff.; Lonsdale 1995).

From a room in the Protopalatial palace at Phaistos come two vases that may show women dancing (Immerwahr 1990: 33–34 and col. pls. II [bowl] and III [fruit stand]). A one-handled bowl depicts a central figure flanked by two women who gesticulate and wear petaloid (hide?) skirts. The central figure is a red pyramid topped with a woman’s head, perhaps a deity or armless effigy (*xoanon*).

Life-sized terracotta statues from Ayia Irini in Kea probably represent women as shrine attendants (Caskey 1986). From back rooms in the Temple come fifty or more statues of women, probably made by several artisans over many years. The women have prominent bare breasts, slightly flexed knees, and hands on hips—they probably are dancing. Each wears a short-sleeved bodice open at the front; some wear flat or rounded garlands around the neck. Since there are too many figures to represent individual deities, they should represent a group of female votaries, a *thiasos*. Plutarch (*De mul. vir.* 249d–e) records how Kean maidens (*parthenoi*) attended festivals and sang and danced while suitors watched. Perhaps it is these young women whom the clay statues represent.

Sex and fertility

There are no overt references in Minoan art to sex, pregnancy, childbirth, or lactation, as if the entire subject of begetting children was considered inappropriate for explicit depictions (Budin 2011: 275–276). Only two Bronze Age representations probably intended to show people having sex. A stamp-seal (CMS II, 1, no. 446a; EM II–III context) depicts a woman (?) apparently sitting on a man’s lap (cf. an Archaic seal: Boardman 1970: 137 pl. 279). And a Mycenaean terracotta now in Budapest shows two people reclining on a bed, their arms perhaps around each other (Richter 1966, figs. 24, 25).

Pregnancy

There is no Minoan representation of an obviously pregnant woman, unlike the Archaic terracottas from the Eileithyia sanctuary at Inatos (Price 1978: 86–87, fig. 2c).

A couple of feminiform vases have been identified as representing

pregnant women, but their vase shape is simply round, not woman-shaped with swollen and extended belly. The most explicit of these vessels is a rhyton from Gournia (LM III A2–B context; Boyd Hawes *et al.* 1908: 46a, pl. 10.11), shaped like a sitting female with breasts and a round body decorated with stripes and hatching; she wears a double necklace. Her vulva is swollen with her clitoris prominent. At the top of the head, there is a hole for poring liquids into the vessel and below the clitoris is a small hole for letting the liquids out.

A couple of terracotta appliqués have also been described as depicting pregnant women (Karetsou *et al.* eds. 2000: 2, 58–59, nn. 35 and 36). In both instances, the figure is nearly circular, her arms wrapped around a rotund body, her hands just below her pendulous breasts. Except for their rotund bodies, there is nothing that suggests pregnancy.

Childbirth

From Malia, Chrysolakkos comes an EM III–MM IA jug painted monochrome black with an incised scene of three figures ([Figure 40.2](#); Demargne 1932, 1945, 23–24 pls. XXXI.1, XXXVII). At the left side of the jug is a kneeling or squatting nude woman, facing frontal; two fragmentary figures precede her. The woman's triangular pubic area is prominent and closely hatched. My guess is that the woman is ready to give birth and the two other figures stand by to help (cf. the double birth goddess Eileithyia worshipped at Amnisos: Knossos Gg 705).

Lactation

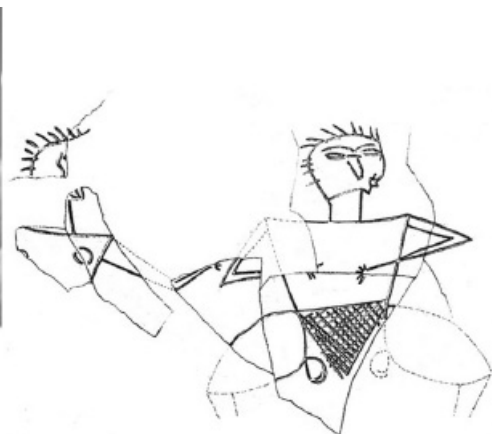


Figure 40.2 HM 8660, incised jug from Malia, Chrysolakkos: left, photo author; right, drawing after Demargne 1945, pl. XXXVII.1.

Three faience figurines show women with their hands to their breasts, as if emphasizing lactation (Foster 1979: 78 fig. 11). A wall painting from the House of the Ladies, Akrotiri, depicts a woman bending over to convey a kilt to a girl (Jones 2014); she has heavy and pendulous breasts, a testament to her having breast-fed infants, as mother or nurse.

Feminiform vases

Several Minoan feminiform vases (vessels in the shape of women) hold miniature jugs like babies (Fowden 1990). The metaphor “woman as container” was a prevalent classical notion (Younger 2005: 140); presumably Minoan feminiform vases expressed the equivalent idea.

From Phournou Koryphi comes the Myrtos “Goddess” (EM II; Warren 1972: 85–86, 209–210, pls. 69–70). Fairly tall (21.1 cm), the vessel has a flat base (no legs), a long neck, and two pellet breasts. With two thin arms she holds a small pitcher at her left side (a “baby” vessel); the interior of the mother vessel connects with the interior of the pitcher (is this a child’s feeding cup?). There are hatched designs on the body of the mother vessel, including her pubic area.

There are other, EM II-III feminiform vessels, some of which cradle small vases that connect with the interior of the vessel (e.g., from Koumasa: Evans 1921–1935: [PM IV] 163, fig. 121; Xanthoudides

1924, pls. II and XIX) and others that are rhyta with holes in the top of their head to receive liquids and prominent, pierced breasts for pouring liquids out (e.g., from Malia: Buchholz and Karageorghis 1973, pl. 1193; and from Mochlos: Seager 1912: 64, figs. 32, 34; Marinatos and Hirmer 1960, pl. 88).

Adult women

Costumes

In this study, I have termed the adult woman's formal attire a "court" costume. This consists of an undergarment, *heanos* in Linear B (Jones 2014, fig. 12), a long transparent blue shift, possibly of linen with short sleeves, open from the throat to the waist to reveal the chest. A wool kilt is wrapped around the waist and belted; it consists of a set of embroidered horizontal flounces. Girls also wear the kilt although it is shorter, ending at calf-level. Adult women, presumably of lesser status, can wear just the *heanos*. Women wearing both sets of costume appear in the Knossos "Grandstand" fresco (Immerwahr 1990: 173 Kn No. 15).

Several seals and rings show procession figures carrying a garment usually with a long fringe; this may be an offering. Two men carry a double axe and a fringed robe (*CMS* II, 7, no. 7); and of two women in undergarments, one holds a fringed kilt and a double axe (*CMS* II, 3, no. 8) and another carries a yoke across her shoulders from which hangs a flounced kilt (*CMS* II, 6, no. 26).

Another element of costume is the Sacred Knot: a loop of long cloth tied with another loop at the nape of the neck; the rest of the textile trails down the back (S. Alexiou 1967). Other than the armless female, "La Parisienne," in the Knossos Campstool fresco there is just one depiction of a woman wearing the Sacred Knot: a woman archer on a gold ring (*CMS* XI, no. 26). Otherwise, the Knot appears as an isolated motif: in frescoes (e.g., from Nirou Khani, Xanthoudides 1922, fig. 9), on vases (Furumark 1941, motif 38.8; Marinatos and Hirmer 1960, pl. 82), on seals by itself or with double axes or figure-8 shields (e.g., *CMS* I, no. 205; II, 8, no. 127), and fashioned as skeuomorphs in ivory or faience (Evans 1921–1935: [PM I] 432, figs. 308, 309, 310d). In its most detailed representations, the Sacred Knot is patterned like a tartan with long warp threads. It may be, therefore, the same type of cloth shown in wall paintings (held by the adolescent male in Xeste 3 and by a sitting woman from Phylakopi: Immerwahr 1990: 189, Ph

Waist compression

Minoan women and men are often depicted with “wasp” waists that are either constricted by a tall belt (worn by both red- and white-painted bull-leapers) or a tight-laced bodice like that worn by a faience snake handler from Knossos. The practice of waist compression (Younger 2004) probably did not extend to the Mainland. In the Iron Age, there is continued evidence for the tall belt from Late Geometric vase painting through Cretan Daedalic sculpture.

Corseting or tight lacing is an artificial process that alters body shape, specifically at the waist with secondary effects at the hips and chest, pushing the abdominal organs up into the thoracic cavity, swelling the ribs out and lifting the chest high (the high-chested “pouter pigeon” look). According to modern practitioners, waist compression separates the upper body with its breathing, feeling, and thinking from the lower body with its sensations of motion and sexual energy. Waist compression makes normal body positions uncomfortable; practitioners tell how sitting cross-legged on the floor is preferable to sitting in chairs (cf. the Knossos “Grandstand” fresco).

Classes of women

Frescoes depict at least three classes of women. The Grandstand fresco shows a crowd of women with their heads depicted in a band of white paint. A second class of women stands at the top of stairs dressed in a simple robe (*heanos*). A third class of women sits or kneels on the top of the stairs or on platforms. These last women are depicted twice as large as the other women in the fresco, and they are dressed in “court” costume.

Thus we would seem to have three classes of women: elites, women who accompany them (cf. Mycenaean *a-pi-qo-ro*, Greek ἀμφίπολοι), and the women masses (e.g., those who did manual labor like the women who fetch water in the Akrotiri West House fresco and the gangs of anonymous women workers in the Linear B tablets).

A fourth class of women would have constituted religious personnel (the “Priestess” from the West House, the “Veiled Girl” in Xeste 3).

Sex segregation

The Grandstand and Grove frescoes segregate the sexes: the men as only heads or upper bodies outlined in a thick band of red paint; the women placed separately, heads in a band of white paint and full figures in more detail. The West House frescoes confirm this, with the women on the rooftops and the men everywhere else, especially outside (Flotilla). Only when two women fetch water (Meeting on the Hill), do we see men near them.

It is likely therefore that Minoan society segregated the sexes, at least partially, with the Grandstand and Grove frescoes referring to the practice explicitly.

Women and work

Minoan women are rarely depicted at work. One Neopalatial terracotta model from the Kamilari tholos shows a woman grinding corn or kneading bread in a kitchen while a male figure peers at her from an open window (Levi 1961–62: 123–148; Novaro 2000; Lefèvre-Novaro 2001; see image in Budin, “Aegean,” this volume). I assume that women taking care of small children had other domestic duties: food preparation, weaving, pottery making, stone tool production. If so, there are several implications: the home in general would be a woman’s space (cf. the classical *gynaikonitis*) since child rearing, weaving, and food preparation would be taking place everywhere there. Women would have to have been knowledgeable about food sources, fibers, clays, and pottery production and firing. As women moved beyond their child-bearing years, their social roles probably changed: biological reproduction would have given way to cultural reproduction: especially the transmission of women’s knowledge (food, medicine, child birth and child rearing; teaching and counseling).

Malia Quartier Mu contained a bronze foundry, and a sealstone and potter’s workshop. Two seals may depict women potters (CMS II, 8, no. 243; XIII no. 80). Since women are assumed to be the first major gatherers of plants for food (as opposed to hunters), they may also have been the first potters (Vitelli 1995: 55–63; London 2002): both crafts involve similar attention to minutiae, an awareness of variables, and a long tradition of inherited knowledge. With cooking comes a detailed knowledge of plants (including their medicinal uses), how to prepare them for consumption, and how to transmit this preparation via recipes to one’s daughters.

From archaeology and from the Linear B tablets we know more

about women textile workers (see Burke and Shelmerdine, this volume; Barber 1991, 1997; Carington Smith 1992; Nixon 1999; Tzachili 2001, 2007; Nosch 2003, 2014). Interestingly, many of the women weavers and spinners in the Pylos Aa/Ab/Ad tablets are listed, not as slaves, but by their names which are often derived from distant islands or port towns as if these were foreign women who might have had a knowledge of exotic weaves and patterns.

Women in cult

Almost all of our information about women in cult activities comes from art, especially gold fingerings and wall paintings. The Linear B tablets from the Mainland mention priestesses (*i-je-re-ja*) in various capacities, but only one tablet from Knossos mentions a priestess. Knossos Fp 1 lists olive oil given in the month of “Deukalion” to divinities at Knossos (Diktaian Zeus, Pan, “All the gods”), at the “Daidaleion,” and at Amnisos (“all the gods,” the Erinyes, and the “priestess of the winds”; see also Boëlle-Weber, this volume).

Several gold fingerings show complex cult scenes that feature prominent women; most of these have been found on Crete. On several rings, a single, large woman in “court” costume stands in the center of a paved sanctuary making expressive gestures (dancing?) while a man tugs at a tree on one side and, on the other, either a figure-8 shield draped with a Sacred Knot (*CMS* I, no. 219), or a man hugs a baetyl (Archanes ring; Sakellarakis and Sakellarakis 1997: vol. 2, 654–660, figs. 722–724), or a woman leans over a table (*CMS* I, no. 126). Or the central woman makes expressive gestures while a woman hugs baetyls (*CMS* VI, no. 278). On other rings, women attend shrines (e.g., *CMS* I, nos. 86, 127, 191; II, 3, nos. 15 and 305) or a peak sanctuary (Poros ring; Dimopoulou and Rethemiotakis 2000).

The Knosso fresco in the Procession Corridor leading from the west court depicted a group of at least 22 life-sized figures (Immerwahr 1990: 174–175, Kn No. 22; Boulotis 1987: 149, figs. 4a–b). In at least two groups, men flank and approach two central, important women. In the Campstool fresco (Immerwahr 1990: 176 Kn No. 26, pl. 44), two registers of men face one another on campstools and toast each other (cf. *CMS* I, no. 179), the entire scene framed by at least two large-scale women. One (now lost) sat on an elaborate throne. The other is the well-known “La Parisienne.”

The Ayia Triada sarcophagus (Figures 40.3a and 40.3b) is made of limestone, stuccoed and painted (LM III A2; Long 1974; La Rosa 2001;

Marinatos and Hirmer 1960, color pl. XXVII–XX). The two ends (Figure 40.3a) carry white-painted women riding chariots: on one (Figure 40.3a, left), the women’s caps are simple and the chariot is drawn by horses with the added horns of *agrimia*; on the other (Figure 40.3a, right), the women’s caps are plumed and the chariot is drawn by griffins (a baby griffin above).

On one long side (Figure 40.3b, bottom), the panel is divided into four sections. From left to right: four women process right in pairs; a fifth woman leads them and extends her hands toward a bovine trussed for sacrifice atop an offering table; beneath are two recumbent goats. Behind, is a male flautist (*aulete*). Farther to right, a woman in a “hide skirt” touches a low altar in front of a large double axe on a stand. At the right edge of the panel stands a wall surmounted by Horns of Consecration; branches of an olive tree overlap the wall (cf. the Lustral Basin fresco, Xeste 3).

The other long side (Figure 40.3b, top) carries seven individuals in two processions. At left, three figures process left toward two double axes on stands framing a large krater (from right to left: a male lyre player in a long tunic; a woman wearing a long tunic and a cap carries a yoke from which two buckets suspend; a third woman in a “hide skirt” pours a liquid into the krater). At the right, three bare-chested men wearing hide skirts process right, carrying offerings (two small bulls, probably simulacra, and a model boat). At the extreme right, the goal of the men’s procession: a three-stepped base, a small tree, an armless male statue (*xoanon*) wrapped in a long robe (cf. the “Parisienne”), and the façade of a building.

The *xoanon* should represent the deceased buried in the sarcophagus and the building behind him, his (ideal) tomb. The bull simulacra and boat model would then represent offerings placed in the tomb, the real animals would be sacrificed, and the liquids would be poured in his honor. On the ends, if griffins were considered liminal, the women in that panel could be immortal, guardians of the tomb or spirits to accompany the deceased to an afterworld. The women in the other end panel may be mortal: their caps are simple and the animals that draw the chariot were intended to be real, whether horses or *agrimia*.

There seem to be two classes of women on the sarcophagus: low-status women in hide skirts performing actual sacrifices (pouring the liquid, presenting offerings at the altar), and high-class women in long tunics, one of whom also does work (carrying the yoke and buckets) and the “fifth” woman who conducts the sacrifice—she should be a

priestess and have administrative duties. There is also a gendered division of labor: the women perform the rites, while men carry offerings to the deceased and provide music (their costume refers to their transitional gender while playing music).



Figure 40.3a Ayia Triada sarcophagus, ends: at left (west end): two women drive chariots driven by horses/agrimia; at right (east end): two goddesses (?) drive chariots driven by griffins. (Photo: author.)



Figure 40.3b Ayia Triada sarcophagus, long sides: top (north side), left to right: women offer liquids, male lyre-player, men offer objects, xoanon, tomb(?); bottom (south side), left to right: women process toward sacrificial bovine, aulete, woman at altar, shrine(?). (Photo: author.)

Old women

The only certain representation of old women is in Xeste 3, the upstairs corridor (Dumas 1992, pls. 131–134; Petrakou 2001: 78 col. fig. 84). They wear full robes, have full breast development, hair that is bound up in snoods, and wisps of hair on their forehead, temple, and back of the neck. From the wisps of hair, their age can be estimated as 40 to 50 years, old by Minoan standards.

Women's health

Few women's skeletons have been analyzed and published. The woman that lay in the far corner of the western room at Anemospilia (Musgrave *et al.* 1994) was short (154 cm [5 ft. ½ in.]), in her early twenties, and suffering from poor dental hygiene and anemia (see Prag, this volume).

She seems, therefore, to have been a typical Minoan woman (Calnan 1992): height about 154.6 cm (5 ft. 1 in.), average life expectancy about 28 years, with a peak mortality of 20 to 25 years old (there are few 70-year-olds) and a “high incidence of deficiency diseases and ante-mortem tooth loss” (McGeorge 1988: 48). Death in pregnancy would probably have been common. For instance, an elite burial at Pankalokhori in western Crete (LM IIIA2; Markoulaki and Baxevas-Kouzioni 1997) contained the bones of a young pregnant woman (fetus bones in the abdominal area).

If a woman survived to nurse her child, she may have developed a weakened immune system due to prolonged lactation. The female body needs 27,000 calories of stored fat (15 to 20 percent of total body mass) to sustain a pregnancy, and nursing involves the loss of 1,500 calories/day, about as many calories/day that a woman received as rations in the Pylos workforce (Palmer 1989: 106).

The few women who survived beyond 45 (i.e., beyond their child-bearing and -rearing years) were in better health than the men and with teeth that were less carious. One such is the LM IIIB woman from Armenoi tomb 132, in her mid-forties, short and delicate (h. 141 cm. [4 ft. 7 in.]). Although enamel hypoplasia of her teeth indicates an interrupted diet, her bones do not show signs of hard work (Tzedakis and Martlew eds., 1999: 238, no. 213: color forensic reconstruction of her face).

Diet seems to have been poor due to the necessity of storing food. Meat (pig, sheep/goat, some beef, and very little bird and tortoise) would have had to have been eaten quickly or salted or smoked; fresh meat would have been rare (Trantalidou 1990; Riley 1999). There is little evidence, contrary to expectation, that fish and seafood contributed much to the Minoan diet (Berg 2011).

Food that can be stored dry includes cereals, pulses, and dried fruits (figs, prunes, raisins, dates) and cheese (storeable milk). All these are high in carbohydrates and poor in iron, vitamin C, and protein, contributing to anemia, dental disease, and a low life expectancy (McGeorge 1988: 53). Other contributing factors include seasonal food shortages leading to nutritional deficiency and arrested growth that

leaves tell-tale marks (“Harris lines”) on bones and teeth (McGeorge 1987: 412). In the Armenoi cemetery, 86 percent of the individuals displayed such lines, with women constituting the overwhelming majority (82.5 percent). Most periods of arrested growth occurred at 14 to 18 years, suggesting that the demands of adolescence and the onset of menarche contributed to a woman’s nutritional deficiency.

An analysis of rations in the Linear B tablets from Knossos leads to similar conclusions (Palmer 1989). Women workers received barley and/or wheat, figs, oil, and wine per day as rations. Regardless of the amounts or proportions, Palmer found that women workers either had to have been supplemented with unrecorded calories and nutrients or they were “consistently underfed.” Women with small children would have had to share their rations; adolescent girls received their own rations; but mothers with young girls and young boys received rations of only up to one-and-a-half that of an adult woman’s alone. Not all women, of course, received reliable rations, and women outside the palace ration system may have had even less consistent access to proper nourishment.

Women and death

Adult women had to prepare the dead body for burial and to mourn the deceased (M. Alexiou 1974; Bloch and Parry eds. 1982). For example, a LM III A:2–B larnax from the Messara carries one of the earliest prothesis scenes: a long-robed woman stands on a footstool behind a couch while she readies a body (indicated by wavy lines for hair) for the funeral (*pace* Rethemiotakis 1995/1997; cf. the Minoanizing larnakes from Tanagra in Boeotia, LH III A–B: Aravantinos 2010: 101–105, 108–115).

The importance of Minoan women

Neopalatial Crete presents the best candidate for a matriarchy—if one ever existed. The period marks a cultural peak in the Aegean world (Rehak 1997), and no one denies that Minoan women were prominent then. Women play important roles in large-scale frescoes; they are seated or enthroned (men rarely) and are attended by standing people and by animals; women tend to be represented at a larger scale, in central positions, in landscapes, and with elaborate costumes.

Balancing these examples, however, are a number of male “power icons,” such as the long-robed men who hold maces (*CMS* II, 3, no.

147) and the Khania “Master” atop his city (*CMS* V, Supp. 1A, no. 142).

Prominent women, however, are depicted in the Knossos Grove and Grandstand frescoes that seem to take place in the West and central courts. Since only women are shown seated in Neopalatial art, a circumstantial case can be made for the use of “bench rooms” by groups of women; these are large rectangular rooms with stone benches along one or more sides (cf. Ayia Triada, Phaistos, and the Knossos Throne Room; see, however, Koehl 1997). And if Lustral Basins are associated with women, the presence of such a basin in the Knossos Throne Room implies the consistent, formal presence of women in that room.

Women participated in activities that may seem more “natural” to men—at least to us. I have already discussed the evidence for women bull-leapers. Women also bore weapons and were hunters: a woman with a sword on *CMS* II, 3, no. 16 and a woman with a bow on *CMS* XI, no. 26 (cf. the new Pylos fresco: Breckouliki *et al.* 2008). In the “Boar Hunt” fresco from Tiryns, fragments show red and white (male and female) boar hunters (Rodenwaldt 1912: 116–137, especially p. 121, #157, pl. XIV.1 and #158, fig. 52; and p. 122, #160, fig. 54). Women also drive chariots (the Ayia Triada sarcophagus (Figure 40.3a), and a fresco from Tiryns: Immerwahr 1990: 202 TI No. 6a).

At the end of LM IB, almost every Neopalatial site in Crete was destroyed by fire, with the exception of the central palace at Knossos (Driessen and Macdonald 1997; Rehak 1997). These destructions clearly marked a major societal change. The pottery that follows, LM II, is more formal and architectural rebuilding is rare. By the next period, LM IIIA1, Mycenaeans are in charge of Crete; they have established new megarons at a few sites (Ayia Triada, Gournia), and their scribes (native Minoans?) are writing documents in Greek (Linear B).

It is debated whether the destructions were the result of an internal rejection of the Knossian palatial system or whether Mycenaeans from outside played a role. Regardless, after these destructions, the status and roles of women changed: no more bench rooms, Lustral Basins, large-scale women in landscapes, or imported blue monkeys. Also gone are stone relief vessels, stone bull’s head rhyta, and ivory and faience figurines. In other words, after LM IB, all the products and propaganda that reflect the Neopalatial ideology of Knossos disappear.

Because of the violence of the LM IB destruction of Minoan society

and the eventual re-establishment of order by Mycenaeans, it is difficult not to see a rejection of important and powerful women, certainly as a result of the destructions, maybe even a catalyst for them.

Legacies and survivals

Under the Mycenaeans, Crete entered her most prosperous—and uneventful—period. Some aspects of Minoan culture survived the end of the Bronze Age. Early Iron Age pottery continued a pictorial tradition, and myths about Minos and his family and about local goddesses like Diktyнна persisted. Many prehistoric sites experienced continuity into the Early Iron Age. At Knossos, an Archaic city grew up around the palace and a shrine to “Rhea” was erected on the ruins of the palace (Diodorus V.68; Evans 1921–1935 [PM II], 7); a similar Early Iron Age temple can be seen atop the Theatrical Stairs at Phaistos.

Based on the persistence of myth and on archaeological evidence, a supposed Minoan matriarchy has been the subject of many popular books from Mary Renault’s *The King Must Die* (1958) to John Dempsey’s *Ariadne’s Brother* (1996).

It was in connection with the study of Palaeolithic and Neolithic society that modern scholars like Maria Gimbutas first proposed the concept of a great mother goddess (e.g., 1974, 1999). Since then, fans of Minoan women have come to Crete on organized “Goddess Tours” or by themselves as individual pilgrims. While the academic world has remained largely skeptical (Talalay 1994; Meskell 1995; Conkey and Tringham 1995; Eller 2000), the idea of a Minoan matriarchy, or at least of powerful Minoan women—and their goddesses—has been popular (Goodison and Morris 1998)—and persistent ([Figure 40.4](#)).



Figure 40.4 Gold axe from Arkalokhori (LM I) and “labrys,” a modern symbol of women’s power. (Photo: author.)

References

- Alexiou, M. (1974) *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Alexiou, S. (1967) Contribution to the study of the Minoan “sacred knot”. In W. C. Brice (ed.) *Europa. Studien zur Geschichte und Epigraphik der Frühen Aegaeis. Festschrift für Ernst Grumach*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, pp. 1–6.
- Alexiou, S. (1972) Περί των μινωϊκών “δεξαμένων καθαρμών”. *Kretika Khronika* 24: 414–434.
- Aravantinos, V. (2010) The Archaeological Museum of Thebes. E-book, available at <http://www.latsis-foundation.org/en/elibrary/1/64/book.html>.
- Barber, E. J. W. (1991) *Prehistoric Textiles: The Development of Cloth in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages with Special Reference to the Aegean*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Barber, E. J. W. (1994) *Women’s Work: The First 20,000 Years*. New York: Norton.
- Barber, E. J. W. (1997) Minoan women and the challenges of weaving for home, trade and shrine. In R. Laffineur and P. P. Betancourt (eds) *TECHNE. Craftsmen, Craftswomen and Craftsmanship in the Aegean Bronze Age / Artisanat et artisans en Égée à l’âge du Bronze. Proceedings of the 6th International Aegean Conference / 6e Rencontre égéenne internationale, Philadelphia, Temple University, 18–21 April 1996 (Aegaeum 16)*. Liège, Belgium and Austin, TX: Université de Liège and the Program in Aegean Prehistory and Scripts, University of Texas, pp. 515–519.
- Becker, M. J. (2006) Review article: The archaeology of infancy and childhood: Integrating and expanding research into the past. *AJA* 110(4). Available at <http://www.ajaonline.org/review-article/166>.
- Becker, M. J. (2007) Childhood among the Etruscans: Mortuary programs at Tarquinia as indicators of the transition to adult status. In J. Rutter and E. D’Ambra (eds) *Constructions of Childhood in the Ancient World*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Berg, I. (2011) Towards a conceptualisation of the sea: Artefacts, iconography and meaning. In G. Vavouranakis (ed.) *The Seascape in Aegean Prehistory* (Monographs of the Danish Institute in Athens 14). Athens, Greece: Danish Institute of Archaeology, pp. 119–137.
- Berggren, K. (1993) Why embroider pottery? *Journal of Prehistoric*

- Blakolmer, F. (2004) Colour in the Aegean Bronze Age: From monochromy to polychromy. In L. Cleland and K. Stears (eds) *Colour in the Ancient Mediterranean World* (BAR-IS 1267). Oxford, UK: John and Erica Hedges Ltd, pp. 61–67.
- Blakolmer, F. (2012) The missing “barbarians”: Some thoughts on ethnicity and identity in Aegean Bronze Age iconography. *Talanta* 44: 53–77.
- Bloch, M. and Parry, J. (eds) (1982) *Death and the Regeneration of Life*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Boardman, J. (1970) *Greek Gems and Finger Rings*. London: Thames & Hudson
- Boulotis, C. (1987) Nochmals zum Prozessionsfresko von Knossos: Palast und Darbringung von Prestige-Objekten. In R. Hägg and N. Marinatos (eds) *The Function of the Minoan Palaces: Proceedings of the Fourth International Symposium at the Swedish Institute in Athens, 10–16 June, 1984* (Skirifter Utgivna av Svenska Institutet i Athen, 35). Stockholm, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, pp. 145–156.
- Boyd Hawes, H. B., Williams, B. A., Seager, R. B. and Hall, E. H. (1908) *Gournia, Vasiliqe, and other Prehistoric Sites on the Isthmus of Hierapetra, Crete. Excavations of the Wells-Houston-Cramp Expeditions, 1901, 1903, 1904*. Philadelphia, PA: The American Exploration Society, Free Museum of Science and Art.
- Brecoulaki, H., Zaitoun, C., Stocker, S. R. and Davis, J. L. (2008) An archer from the Palace of Nestor: A new wall-painting fragment in the Chora Museum. *Hesperia* 77: 363–397.
- Broodbank, C. and Strasser, T. (1991) Migrant farmers and the Neolithic colonization of Crete. *Antiquity* 65: 233–245.
- Buchholz, H.-G. and Karageorghis, V. (eds) (1973) *Prehistoric Greece and Cyprus: An Archaeological Handbook*. New York: Phaidon Press.
- Budin, S. L. (2011) *Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age. Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity, and Gender in the Ancient World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Calnan, K. A. (1992) The health status of Bronze Age Greek women. Unpublished PhD dissertation. University of Cincinnati.
- Carington Smith, J. (1992) Spinning and weaving equipment. In W. A. McDonald and N. C. Wilkie (eds) *Excavations at Nichoria in Southwest Greece, II: The Bronze Age Occupation*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 674–711.
- Carlier, P. (1983) La femme dans la société mycénienne. In E. Lévy (ed.) *La Femme dans les Sociétés Antiques* (Actes des Colloques de Strasbourg). Strasbourg, France: University of Strasbourg, pp. 9–32.

- Carter, J. B. (1995) Ancestor cult and the occasion of Homeric performance. In J. B. Carter and S. Morris (eds) *The Ages of Homer: A Tribute to Emily Townsend Vermeule*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, pp. 285–312.
- Caskey, M. E. (1986) *Keos 2: The Temple at Ayia Irini*. Princeton, NJ: American School of Classical Studies.
- Chapin, A. P. (1997–2000) Maidenhood and marriage: The reproductive lives of the girls and women from Xeste 3, Thera. *Aegean Archaeology* 4: 7–25.
- Conkey, M. W. and Tringham, R. E. (1995) Archaeology and the goddess: Exploring the contours of feminist archaeology. In D. C. Stanton and A. J. Stewart (eds) *Feminisms in the Academy*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, pp. 199–247.
- Damiani-Indelicato, S. (1988) Were Cretan girls playing at bull-leaping? *Cretan Studies* 1: 39–47.
- Davis, E. (1986) Youth and age in the Thera frescoes. *American Journal of Archaeology* 90: 399–406.
- Dawkins, R. (1902–1904) Palaikastro III. *Annual of the British School at Athens* 10: 217–219.
- Demakopoulou, K. (ed.) (1990) *The Mycenaean World. Five centuries of Early Greek Culture 1600–1100 BC. National Archaeological Museum 15 December 1988–31 March 1989*. Athens, Greece: Ministry of Culture.
- Demargne, P. (1932) Deux représentations de la déesse minoenne dans la nécropole de Mallia (Crète). In *Mélanges Gustave Glotz*, I. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, pp. 305–318.
- Demargne, P. (1945) *Mallia nécropoles, I: Exploration des nécropoles (1921–1933) (Études crétoises VII)*. Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner.
- Dimopoulou, N. and Rethemiotakis, G. (2000) The “sacred conversation” ring from Poros. In W. Müller (ed.) *Minoisch-Mykenische Glyptik. Stil, Ikonographie, Funktion. V. Internationales Siegel-Symposium, Marburg, 23–25 September 1999 (CMS Beiheft 6)*. Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, pp. 39–56.
- Doumas, C. (1992) *The Wall-Paintings of Thera*. Athens, Greece: The Thera Foundation.
- Driessen, J. and Macdonald, C. F. (1997) *The Troubled Island: Minoan Crete Before and After the Santorini Eruption (Aegaeum 17)*. Liège, Belgium and Austin, TX: Université de Liège and University of Texas at Austin.
- Durm, J. (1907) Über vormykenische und mykenische Architekturformen. *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen archäologischen*

- Everly, M. A. (2013) *Tan Men, Pale Women: Color and Gender in Ancient Egyptian and Greek Painting*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Eller, C. (2000) *The Myth of Matriarchal Prehistory: Why an Invented Past Won't Give Women a Future*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Evans, A. (1921–1935, 1936) *Palace of Minos*. London: Macmillan (PM I 1921; II 1928; III 1930; IV 1935; V (index by Joan Evans) 1936).
- Foster, K. P. (1979) *Aegean Faience of the Bronze Age*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Fowden, E. (1990) The early Minoan goddess: Images of provision. *Journal of Prehistoric Religion* 3/4: 15–18.
- Furumark, A. (1941) *Mycenaean Pottery: Analysis and Classification*. Stockholm, Sweden: Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antiquitets Akademien.
- Gimbutas, M. (1974) *The Gods and Goddesses of Old Europe, 6500–3500 B.C. Myths and Cult Images*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Gimbutas, M. (1999) *The Living Goddesses*, edited and supplemented by M. Robbins Dexter. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Godart, L. and Olivier, J.-P. (1976–1985) *Recueil des Inscriptions en Linéaire A (Études Crétoises 21)*. Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner.
- Godart, L. and Olivier, J.-P. (1996) *Corpus Hieroglyphicarum Inscriptionum Cretae (Études Crétoises 31)*. Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner.
- Goodison, L. and Morris, C. (eds) (1998) *Ancient Goddesses: Their Myths and the Evidence* Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Graham, J. W. (1977) Bathrooms and lustral chambers. In K. H. Kinzl (ed.) *Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean in Ancient History and Prehistory: Studies Presented to Fritz Schachermeyr on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, pp. 110–125.
- Hood, S. (1985) The primitive aspects of Minoan artistic convention. In P. Darcque and J. C. Poursat (eds) *Iconographie Minoenne: Actes de la table ronde de l'École française d'Athènes les 21 et 22 avril 1983 à Athènes*. Athens, Greece: École française d'Athènes, pp. 21–26.
- Hughes-Brock, H. (1999) Mycenaean beads: Gender and social contexts. *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 18: 277–295.
- Immerwahr, S. (1990) *Aegean Painting in the Bronze Age*. University Park, PA and London: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Jones, B. (2014) A new discovery and interpretation of the fragmentary figure fresco from the House of the Ladies, Thera. *Journal of Prehistoric Religion* 24: 51–73.

- Karetsoy, A., Andreadakis-Vlaziaki, M. and Papadaki, N. (eds) (2000) Κρήτη-Αίγυπτος. Πολιτισμικοί δεσμοί τριών χλυστιών. Heraklion, Greece: Ministry of Culture.
- Killen, J. T. and Olivier, J.-P. (1989) *The Knossos Tablets* (MINOS supp. 11). Salamanca, Spain: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca.
- Koehl, R. (1997) The villas at Ayia Triada and Nirou Chani and the origin of the Cretan andreion. In R. Hägg (ed.) *The Function of the Minoan Villa. Proceedings of the Eighth International Symposium at the Swedish Institute at Athens, 6–8 June, 1992*. Stockholm, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, pp. 137–147.
- Laffineur, R. (2000) Dress, hairstyle and jewellery in the Thera wall paintings. In S. Sherratt (ed.) *The Wall Paintings of Thera. Proceedings of the First International Symposium, Petros M. Nomikos Conference centre, Thera, Hellas, 30 August–4 September 1997*. Athens, Greece: The Thera Foundation II, pp. 890–906.
- Lang, M. (1969) *The Palace of Nestor, II. The Frescoes*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Langdon, S. (2008) *Art and Identity in Dark Age Greece, 1100–700 B.C.E.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- La Rosa, V. (2001) Minoan baetyls: Between funerary rituals and epiphanies. In R. Laffineur and R. Hägg (eds) *POTNIA. Deities and Religion in the Aegean Bronze Age. Proceedings of the 8th International Aegean Conference / 8e Rencontre égéenne internationale, Göteborg University, 12–15 April 2000* (Aegaeum 22). Liège, Belgium and Austin, TX: Université de Liège and the Program in Aegean Scripts and Prehistory, University of Texas, pp. 221–227.
- Lefèvre-Novaro, D. (2001) Un nouvel examen des modèles réduits trouvés dans le grande tombe de Kamilari. In R. Laffineur and R. Hägg (eds) *POTNIA. Deities and Religion in the Aegean Bronze Age. Proceedings of the 8th International Aegean Conference / 8e Rencontre égéenne internationale, Göteborg University, 12–15 April 2000* (Aegaeum 22). Liège, Belgium and Austin, TX: Université de Liège and the Program in Aegean Scripts and Prehistory, University of Texas, pp. 89–98.
- Levi, D. (1961–1962) La tomba a tholos di Kamilari presso a Festòs. *Annuario della Scuola archeologica di Atene e delle Missioni italiane in Oriente* 39/40: 7–148.
- London, G. A. (2002) Women potters and craft specialization in a pre-market Cypriot economy. In D. Bolger and N. Serwint (eds). *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus* (ASOR Archaeological Reports 7, CAARI Monographs 3). Boston, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, pp. 265–280.
- Long, C. (1974) *The Ayia Triadha Sarcophagus: A Study of Late Minoan*

- and Mycenaean Funerary Practices and Beliefs (SIMA 41). Göteborg, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag.
- Lonsdale, S. (1995) A dancing floor for Ariadne (*Iliad* 18.590–92): Aspects of ritual movement in Homer and Minoan religion. In J. B. Carter and S. Morris (eds) *The Ages of Homer: A Tribute to Emily Townsend Vermeule*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, pp. 273–284.
- Marinatos, N. (1987) An offering of saffron to the Minoan goddess of nature. In T. Linders and H. G. Nordquist (eds) *Gifts to the Gods. Proceedings of the Uppsala Symposium 1985*. Uppsala, Sweden: University of Uppsala, pp. 123–132.
- Marinatos, N. (1994) The “export” significance of Minoan bull hunting and bull leaping scenes. *Egypt and the Levant* 4: 81–93.
- Marinatos, S. and Hirmer, M. (1960) *Crete and Mycenae*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Markoulaki, S. and Baxevani-Kouzioni, K. (1997) Une tombe à chambre du MR III A à Pangalochori, Rethymnon. In J. Driessen and A. Farnoux (eds) *La Crète Mycénienne. Actes de la Table Ronde internationale organisée par l'École française d'Athènes 26–28 mars 1991*. Athens, Greece: École française d'Athènes, pp. 293–295.
- McGeorge, P. J. P. (1987) Biosocial evolution in Bronze Age Crete. In L. Kastriaki, G. Orfanidou and N. Yannadakis (eds) *Εὐλαπίνη: Τόμος τιμητικός για τον Καθηγητή Νικόλαο Πλάτωνα*. Heraklion, Greece: Demos Herakleiou, pp. 407–416.
- McGeorge, P. J. P. (1988) Health and diet in Minoan times. In R. E. Jones and H. W. Catling (eds) *New Aspects of Archaeological Science in Greece. Proceedings of a Meeting Held at the British School at Athens, January 1987*. Athens, Greece: Annual of the British School at Athens Occasional Papers of the Fitch Laboratory 3, pp. 47–54.
- Meskel, L. (1995) Goddesses, Gimbutas, and the “new age” archaeology. *Antiquity* 69: 74–86.
- Musgrave, J. H., Neave, R. A. H., Prag, A. J. N. W., Sakellarakis, E. and Sakellarakis, J. A. (1994) The priest and priestess from Archanes-Anemospilia. *Annual of the British School at Athens* 89: 89–100.
- Niemeier, W. (1986) Zur Deutung des Thronraumes im Palast von Knossos. *Athenische Mitteilungen* 101: 63–95.
- Nixon, L. (1999) Women, children and weaving. In P. Betancourt, V. Karageorghis, R. Laffineur and W. D. Niemeier (eds) *MEAEATHMATA. Studies in Aegean Archaeology Presented to Malcolm H. Wiener as He Enters His 65th Year (Aegaeum 20)*. Liège, France and Austin, TX: Université de Liège and the University of Texas at

- Austin, III, pp. 561–567.
- Nordfeldt, A. C. (1987) Residential quarters and lustral basins. In R. Hägg and N. Marinatos (eds) *The Function of the Minoan Palaces. Proceedings of the Fourth International Symposium at the Swedish Institute in Athens, 10–16 June 1984* (Swedish Institute in Athens, Series in 4°, 35). Stockholm, Sweden: Swedish Institute in Athens, pp. 187–194.
- Nosch, M.-L. (2003) The women at work in the Linear B tablets. In L. Larsson and A. Strömberg (eds) *Gender, Cult, and Culture in the Ancient World from Mycenae to Byzantium: Proceedings of the Second Nordic Symposium on Gender and Women's History in Antiquity, Helsinki, 20–22 October 2000* (SIMA-166). Sävedalen, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, pp. 12–26.
- Nosch, M.-L. (2014) Voicing the loom: Women, weaving, and plotting. In D. Nakassis, J. Gulizio and S. A. James (eds) *KE-RA-ME-JA: Studies Presented to Cynthia W. Shelmerdine*. Philadelphia, PA: INSTAP Academic Press, pp. 91–101.
- Novaro, D. (2000) I modellini fittili dalla tomba di Kamilari: Il problema cronologico. In V. La Rosa, D. Palermo and L. Vagnetti (eds) *Επί πόντον πλαζόμενον: Simposio italiano di studi egei dedicato a Luigi Bernagò Brea e Giovanni Pugliese Caraelli, Roma, 18–20 febbraio 1998*. Rome: Scuola Archeologica Italiana di Atene, pp. 151–160.
- Palmer, R. (1989) Subsistence rations at Pylos and Knossos. *Minos* 24: 89–124.
- Palyvou, C. (2005) *Akrotiri Thera. An Architecture of Affluence 3,500 Years Old* (Prehistory Monographs 15). Philadelphia, PA: INSTAP Academic Press.
- Petrakou, V.Ch. (2001) Ακροτίρι Θήρας. *Ergon* 48: 72–79.
- Platon, N. (1967) Bathrooms and lustral basins in Minoan dwellings. In W. C. Brice (ed.) *Europa. Studien zur Geschichte und Epigraphik der Frühen Aegaeis. Festschrift für Ernst Grumach*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, pp. 236–245.
- Price, T. H. (1978) *Kourotrophoi: Cults and Representations of the Greek Nursing Deities*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Rehak, P. (1997) Aegean art before and after the LM I B Cretan destructions. In R. Laffineur and P. P. Betancourt (eds) *TECHNE. Craftsmen, Craftswomen and Craftsmanship in the Aegean Bronze Age / Artisanat et artisans en Égée à l'âge du Bronze. Proceedings of the 6th International Aegean Conference / 6e Rencontre égéenne internationale, Philadelphia, Temple University, 18–21 April 1996* (Aegaeum 16). Liège, Belgium and Austin, TX: Université de Liège and the Program in Aegean Prehistory and Scripts, University of Texas, pp. 51–67.

- Rehak, P. (1999) The monkey frieze from Xeste 3, room 4: Reconstruction and interpretation. In P. Betancourt, V. Karageorghis, R. Laffineur and W. D. Niemeier (eds) *MEΛETHMATA. Studies in Aegean Archaeology Presented to Malcolm H. Wiener as He Enters His 65th Year (Aegaeum 20)*. Liège, France and Austin, TX: Université de Liège and the University of Texas at Austin, III, pp. 705–709.
- Rehak, P. (2007) Children's work: Girls as acolytes in Aegean ritual and cult. In J. Rutter and E. D'Ambra (eds) *Constructions of Childhood in the Ancient World*. Princeton, NJ: American School of Classical Studies at Athens, pp. 205–225.
- Rethemiotakis, G. (1995/1997) Μινωική λάρνακα από το Κλήμα Μεσσαράς. *Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς* 134: 163–83.
- Richter, G. M. A. (1966) *The Furniture of the Greeks, Etruscans and Romans*. London: Phaidon.
- Riley, F. R. (1999) *The Role of the Traditional Mediterranean Diet in the Development of Minoan Crete. Archaeological, Nutritional and Biochemical Evidence (BAR-IS 810)*. Oxford, UK: Archaeopress.
- Rodenwaldt, G. (1912) *Tiryns II: Die Fresken des Palastes*. Athens, Greece: Eleutherodakis and Barth.
- Sakellarakis, Y. and Sakellarakis, E. (1997) *Archanes: Minoan Crete in a New Light*. Athens, Greece: Ammos.
- Seager, R. B. (1912) *Explorations in the Island of Mochlos*. Boston, MA and New York: American School of Classical Studies at Athens.
- Shaw, M. C. (1993) The Aegean Garden. *American Journal of Archaeology* 97: 661–685.
- Shaw, M. C. (1996) The bull-leaping fresco from below the ramp house at Mycenae: A study in iconography and artistic transmission. *Annual of the British School at Athens* 91: 167–190.
- Stehle, E. (1997) *Performance and Gender in Ancient Greece*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Strasser, T., Panagopoulou, E., Runnels, C., Murray, P., Thompson, N., Karkanas, P., McCoy, F. and Wegmann, K. (2010) Stone Age seafaring in the Mediterranean: Evidence for lower Paleolithic and Mesolithic inhabitation of Crete from the Plakias region. *Hesperia* 79(2): 145–190.
- Strömberg, A. (1992) *Male or Female? A Methodological Study of Grave Gifts as Sex-Indicators in Iron Age Burials from Athens (SIMA-PB 123)*. Jonsöder, Sweden: Paul Åström Förlag.
- Talalay, L. E. (1994) A feminist boomerang: The great goddess of Greek prehistory. *Gender and History* 6: 165–183.
- Trantalidou, C. (1990) Animals and human diet in the prehistoric

- Aegean. In D. A. Hardy, C. G. Doumas, G. A. Sakellarakis and P. M. Warren (eds) *Thera and the Aegean World III. Proceedings of the Third International Congress, Santorini, Greece, 3–9 September 1989*. London: The Thera Foundation, I, pp. 392–405.
- Tzachili, I. (2001) Circulation of textiles in the Late Bronze Age Aegean. In A. Michailidou, P. Kalogerakou and K. Voutsas (eds) *Manufacture and Measurement. Counting, Measuring and Recording Craft Items in Early Aegean Societies*, Research centre for Greek and Roman Antiquity, Meletemata 33. Athens, Greece: Research centre for Greek and Roman Antiquity, National Hellenic Research Foundation, pp. 176–193.
- Tzachili, I. (2007) Weaving at Akrotiri, Thera. Defining cloth-making activities as a social process in a Late Bronze Age Aegean town. In C. Gillis and M.-L. Nosch (eds) *Ancient Textiles: Production, Craft and Society. Proceedings of the First International Conference on Ancient Textiles, Held at Lund, Sweden, and Copenhagen, Denmark, on March 19–23, 2003*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow Books, pp. 190–196.
- Tzedakis, Y. and Martlew, H. (eds) (1999) *Minoans and Mycenaeans. Flavours of Their Times, National Archaeological Museum 12 July–27 November 1999*. Athens, Greece: Kapon Editions.
- Ventris, M. and Chadwick, J. (1973) *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*. Second edition. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Vitelli, K. D. (1995) Pots, potters, and the shaping of Greek Neolithic society. In W. K. Barnett and J. W. Hoopes (eds) *The Emergence of Pottery: Technology and Innovation in Ancient Studies*. Washington, DC and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, pp. 55–63.
- Wace, A. J. B. (1921–1923) Excavations at Mycenae. The tholos tombs. *Annual of the British School at Athens* 25: 282–402.
- Warren, P. (1972) *Myrtos: An Early Bronze Age Settlement in Crete*. London: British School of Archaeology at Athens.
- Warren, P. (1981) Minoan Crete and ecstatic religion. Preliminary Observations on the 1979 Excavations at Knossos and postscript on the 1980 excavations at Knossos. In R. Hägg and N. Marinatos (eds) *Sanctuaries and Cults in the Aegean Bronze Age. Proceedings of the First International Symposium at the Swedish Institute in Athens, 12–13 May 1980 (ActaAth, 4°, 27)*. Stockholm, Sweden: Svenska institutet i Athen, pp. 155–166.
- Warren, P. (1984) Circular platforms at Minoan Knossos. *Annual of the British School at Athens* 79: 319–323.
- Wrede, H. (1975) Lunulae im Halsschmuck. In *Wandlungen: Studien zur antiken und neueren Kunst Ernst Homann-Wedeking zur antiken und neueren Kunst gewidmet*. Munich, Germany: Institut für Klassische Archäologie der Universität München, pp. 243–254.

- Xanthoudides, S. (1922) Μινωικόν μέγαρον Νηρού. *Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς* 1922: 1–25.
- Xanthoudides, S. (1924) *The Vaulted Tombs of Mesará: An Account of Some Early cemeteries of Southern Crete*. London: University Press of Liverpool.
- Xenaki-Sakellariou, A. (1985) Οι θαλαμωτοί τάφοι των Μυκηνών. *Ανασκαφές Χρ. Τσούντα (1887–1898)*. Paris: Editions de Boccard.
- Younger, J. G. (1992) Bronze Age representations of Aegean jewelry. In R. Laffineur and J. Crowley (eds) *EIKON. Aegean Bronze Age Iconography: Shaping a Methodology. Proceedings of the 4th International Aegean Conference / 4e Rencontre égéenne internationale, University of Tasmania, Hobart, Australia, 6–9 April 1992 (Aegaeum 8)*. Liège, Belgium and Austin, TX: Université de Liège and the Program in Prehistory and Scripts, University of Texas, pp. 257–293.
- Younger, J. G. (1995) Bronze Age representations of Aegean bull-games, III. In R. Laffineur and W.-D. Niemeier (eds) *POLITEIA. Society and State in the Aegean Bronze Age. Proceedings of the 5th International Aegean Conference / 5e Rencontre égéenne internationale, University of Heidelberg, Archäologisches Institut, 10–13 April 1994 (Aegaeum 12)*. Liège, Belgium and Austin, TX: Université de Liège and the Program in Aegean Prehistory and Scripts, University of Texas, pp. 507–545.
- Younger, J. G. (2000) Linear A texts in phonetic transcription and commentary. Available at <http://people.ku.edu/~jyounger/LinearA/>, last updated 30 November 2014, last accessed 27 December 2014.
- Younger, J. G. (2004) Notes to the hieroglyphic signs. Available at <http://people.ku.edu/~jyounger/Hiero/SignNotes.html>, last updated 24 September 2013, last accessed 14 September 2014.
- Younger, J. G. (2005) *Sex in the Ancient World from A to Z*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Younger, J. G. (2009) “We are woman”: Girl, maiden, matron in Aegean art. In K. Kopaka (ed.) *FYLO. Engendering Prehistoric ‘Stratigraphies’ in the Aegean and Mediterranean. Proceedings of an International Conference University of Crete, Rethymno 2–5 June 2005 (Aegaeum 30)*. Liège, Belgium and Austin, TX: Université de Liège and the Program in Aegean Prehistory and Scripts, University of Texas, pp. 207–212.
- Younger, J. G. (forthcoming) Identifying Minoan myth. In F. Blakolmer and R. Laffineur (eds) *METAPHYSIS. 15th International Aegean Conference, 22–25 April 2014 Vienna at (Aegaeum 38)*. Liège, Belgium and Austin, TX: Université de Liège and the Program in

MATERNITY IN THE BRONZE AGE AEGEAN

Stephanie Lynn Budin

For a relationship that is, by definition, prolific, and in human societies inevitable, motherhood was not a popular subject in the Bronze Age Aegean. Although motherhood obviously existed, references to it in either text or art are rare, especially in comparison to neighbors such as Egypt to the south or Cyprus to the east. As such, more data might be derived from the osteological and archaeological evidence about the physical realia of birth and maternity, while the (lack of) iconographic and much later textual data serve to highlight the importance (or not) that the Minoan and Mycenaean societies ascribed to the mother-child bond.

Minoan Crete

Physical anthropology

Long-term research undertaken by P. J. P. McGeorge on the osteological remains from 16 sites in Crete, ranging from Early to Late Minoan, reveals the hazards of childbirth in the southern Aegean. The data indicate that peak female mortality occurred between the ages of 20 to 25—during prime childbearing years—while female life expectancy in general was only 28 years of age. This stands in stark contrast to male life expectancy, which was 35 years in the Early Minoan period, 31 in the LM.¹ The spread grew even worse in the Dark Ages: at the Early Iron Age site of Kavousi in eastern Crete, the average life expectancy of females dropped to only 19 years of age, even as male life expectancy remained in the low thirties.² Maternity was clearly a, if not the, primary cause of female death throughout Cretan prehistory.

The causes of maternity-induced death in women are numerous. The mother may die of complications during pregnancy, including incompatible positive/negative blood types and severe anemia (especially problematic in Mediterranean regions). Death during parturition is also a considerable threat. Should both mother and infant survive childbirth, multiple years of breastfeeding would have drained the mother of necessary calories and nutrients, leaving her at greater risk of illness. Such a hypothesis is borne out by McGeorge's study of the dental remains. Women who died in childbearing years had a much greater incidence of ante-mortem tooth loss—indicative of the high incidence of deficiency diseases—than did women who survived to old age (which in this instance would be the mid-forties).³ The same lack of proper nutrients led to both tooth loss and younger death.

The flip side of peripartum mortality for mothers is infant mortality, which was high on Bronze Age Crete. Excavations at the LM cemetery at Armenoi in northwestern Crete revealed that 22 percent of the sub-adult (under 15 years of age) remains were of children who died before their first birthday; 34 percent were beneath the age of 2 years; and 57 percent were under the age of 5 years. After the 5-year-old threshold, mortality stabilized until early adolescence, with a final peak in the early twenties for women, thirties for men.⁴ In comparison with the perinatal death rates for infants in early Greece, a 22 percent mortality rate of those under 1 year old is actually better than might be expected. Because death in the first month especially might be linked to the mother's health (rather than environmental factors), this may indicate that many pregnancies were relatively healthy, with death coming for both child and mother from environmental factors such as disease after parturition and during the nursing phase.

The data reveal a tragic irony in the relationship between mothers, infants, and nursing. On the one hand, Minoan women showed an unexpectedly high incidence of osteoporosis, especially considering how young they died on average (see also Prag, this volume). One possible explanation for this is prolonged lactation, whereby nursing for potentially several years depleted women of calcium to the point that their bones became brittle at a relatively young age.⁵ If this calcium depletion was exacerbated by the late onset of menarche (caused by malnutrition), then the problem increased exponentially, with young mothers pre-weakened by insufficient nutrition since childhood, being drained of resources by pregnancy then long-term nursing.⁶

On the other hand, long-term nursing is ideal for the infant. While

nursing, the child is protected from illness by the mother's antibodies and is generally assured the proper balance of nutrients and sufficient caloric intake. The spike in childhood mortality between ages 2 and 5 is most likely attributable to weaning practices. Taken off mother's milk, the children have a double potential for death: insufficient resistance to infection, especially from food-borne pathogens, and insufficient nutrient and caloric intake from the replacement food.

The physicality of maternity, then, consisted of a delicate balance between the nutritional needs of the mother and the nutritional and immunological needs of the child. It is perhaps no wonder that the mortality of both was so high.

Iconography

Considering the rather wide-spread assumption that Minoan religion was dominated by a mother goddess, it is actually surprising that the Minoans eschewed almost all forms of maternal iconography. Finding any evidence for motherhood on the island is nearly impossible.

The sole example of a domestic scene with mother and child comes from a LM IA tholos tomb in Kamilari (see [Figure 41.1](#)). Here, on a round floor a woman with large breasts kneels at a grinding board. Just behind her left elbow in a modeled doorway is a much smaller figure who is schematic but clearly anthropomorphic. The doorway suggests that the scene takes place either indoors or immediately outside of a residence. The smaller size of the person in the doorway indicates that s/he is a child. This is, to date, the only known domestic scene even remotely reminiscent of home life or parental relations in the Minoan repertoire, and thus our only potential scene of "daily motherhood."⁷



Figure 41.1 Heraklion Archaeological Museum 15072.

Far more common in the Minoan repertoire are depictions of children, either individual infants or older children among groups of people. There are just under twenty known images of children from Crete and its orbit, and about half of those are toddler-age or younger. All except the child on the Kamilari model are in prestige materials (bronze, ivory), and all except the Kamilari child and the little girl on the so-called Ivory Triad (see below) are shown singly. It would seem that infants and toddlers are not very social creatures.

By contrast, older children are portrayed in social interaction with others. The children on the frescoes at Akrotiri (see Younger, this volume) appear in groups, often with other, older children, but also with adults. In the glyptic, younger girls appear with larger females in acts of ritual and/or dance, a motif that also appears on a pair of Middle Minoan dishes from Phaistos. These female-based images might be considered in combination with the Ivory Triad, a Neopalatial sculpture discovered at Mycenae (see [Figure 41.2](#)). Although originally assumed to be a mother–daughter–baby brother grouping, it is now apparent that this triad consists of two adolescents with a baby girl.⁸ For girls at least, this is the standard Minoan

iconography: one or more younger girls grouped with older girls or women.

The evidence of the iconography suggests that motherhood was not a relationship of great significance to the Minoans. Small children, those too young to be socialized, were valued independently and individually, with their images rendered in prestige fabrics. Older children are shown in scenes of group socialization, but not necessarily with their mothers (or fathers, for that matter). The rearing process emphasized by the Minoans was one of age-group and/or community interaction, not the private and personal relationship of maternity. Although an important (and dangerous!) biological fact of life, motherhood does not appear to have been highly valued as a social relationship.



Figure 41.2 Athens, National Archaeological Museum #7711. (Image by Paul Butler, used with kind permission.)

Bronze Age Greece

Middle Helladic

Extensive research on the sub-adult (younger than 15 years of age) human remains from Middle Helladic Asine and Lerna in the Argolid indicates that pregnancy and early childhood were exceptionally perilous, notably in comparison with other, similar sites in the Mediterranean. Of the 103 sub-adults recovered from Asine, 60 percent died in the first month of life; of the 137 sub-adults studied from Lerna, 25 percent died in the first month, and 40 percent died in the first year.⁹ According to the work of Lawrence Angel, a full 48 percent of the population of Lerna died within the first five years of life.¹⁰ One might compare this to the statistics from Armenoi above, or from the Late Bronze Age sites of Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios and Episkopi-Bamboula in Cyprus, where the percentages of those dead before age 5 are 26 and 16 respectively.¹¹

The high perinatal mortality rate in Asine is significant for understanding the plight of mothers, as death within the first month stems less from environmental factors than from problems with incubation and parturition. Females in Middle Helladic Greece in general had lower life expectancies than males, a pattern that may in part be attributed to chronic malnutrition.¹² Such malnutrition then led to complications with childbearing and parturition. Most notable from an osteological perspective is the problem of pelvic flattening. If a developing female's diet is insufficient in childhood, the birth canal flattens, causing more difficult parturition in later life. The higher the pelvic ratio index, the more open the birth canal and the easier (hopefully) to give birth. In modern America, this index is 91.6, while skeletons studied from ancient Greece show an index of 84.8. By contrast, the ratio for women at MH Lerna was 80.6, and that of women in contemporary Asine 73.4.¹³ Thus women from Asine had a double burden when it came to parturition: not only does the flatter pelvis indicate life-long malnutrition with concomitant difficulties during pregnancy, but the act of parturition itself was rendered more difficult by the flatter birth canal, thus endangering both infant and mother. This in itself would account for many of the perinatal deaths at Asine.

A second factor in explaining the high infant (as well as female) mortality is the age of the mother. Based on his study of the remains from Lerna, Angel estimated that the average age for first pregnancy was approximately 19 years of age. While this is high, especially in contrast to what we see in Classical Greece (see Hong, this volume)

where girls might be married off as young as 13 years of age by the fourth century, 19 is still below the ideal age of 20 to 24 for beginning childbearing.¹⁴ The overall less than ideal health of these Middle Helladic women, combined with their young age, increased the probability of perinatal mortality, both for the child and the mother.

In those scenarios where the infant dies but the mother survives, the situation worsens. Because nursing has an appreciable contraceptive effect on the female body, the nursing mother is less likely to conceive soon after parturition. Her body has some chance to recover from parturition before once again engaging in reproduction, even if her inner resources are literally drained by lactation. The recently parturient female whose child has died has no such contraceptive factors, and thus she might become pregnant again well before her body has had a chance to recoup its losses. Starting out in a weakened state, the infant is less likely to come to term, less likely to survive parturition or the first month of life, and its death restarts this downward spiral of maternal exhaustion. Furthermore, because each act of parturition endangers the mother, the greater the number of pregnancies increases the chance of dying in childbirth. What we may have at Asine especially is just such a spiral, where a possibly socially inspired malnourishment of females vis-à-vis males¹⁵ resulted in ongoing physical problems for older females, leading to exceptionally high infant mortality.

Should both child and mother survive parturition, the dangers of early childhood were still not over. As noted above, while perinatal death was very common for infants at Asine, at Lerna the larger spike was after the first month but before the first birthday. Death at this age might be attributed to environmental factors, especially disease in less than ideally sanitary conditions. However, an additional matter, one related to mothering practices, is also evident when studying the teeth of the children who died in the post-neonatal period. In contrast to the Near Eastern and Cypriot practice of breastfeeding children for up to three years (see Feucht, Couto-Ferreira, and Budin "Cyprus," this volume), the evidence from Asine and Lerna indicates that children began to receive alternatives to mother's milk as early as 3 months of age, with complete weaning from mother's milk possibly as early as 4–6 months.¹⁶ This doubly endangers the infant. As infants have not yet developed their own immune systems, they are wholly dependent on mother's milk for antibodies to illness and infection. Should they be denied mother's milk very young in life, they are left defenseless to disease. This problem is exacerbated in unsanitary conditions, especially if the source of food replacing the mother's milk is itself disease-bearing. A final problem with early weaning, as noted above,

is that the infant may not receive sufficient calories or nutrients, thus leading either to death or (in females) a repeat of the cycle of sub-par health leading to problems with procreation. High rates of childhood dental hypoplasia (an insufficient covering of enamel on the tooth) appear in both Asine (39 percent) and Lerna (48 percent), indicating that children were often malnourished, a result of premature weaning. Thus a second spike in childhood mortality seems to be directly related to breastfeeding practices.

It is likely that Asine is a worst-case scenario as far as motherhood is concerned. Excavations at Aegina Kolonna in the Saronic Gulf brought to light 48 skeletons of sub-adults, of which 9 might be dated to the EHIII/MH period, and another 18 to the MH.¹⁷ Analysis of the bones revealed no signs of retarded skeletal growth caused by malnutrition of either the children themselves or mothers during pregnancy.¹⁸ Perinatal mortality was high, with death in the first month accounting for some 50 percent of the sub-adult remains in the MH.¹⁹ What children did survive the first months of life, though, could look forward to a healthier, more prosperous childhood, probably with greater maternal care and, most likely, longer nursing.

Late Helladic

The sources of information on motherhood in the Mycenaean Age are different from those of the earlier periods. Earlier excavation of prominent Mycenaean sites such as Mycenae means that there was less rigor when collecting or analyzing bones (although see Prag, this volume). Nevertheless, data from more recently excavated sites reveal changes in patterns of childhood death and how this might reflect on changes in the maternal experience in early Greece. To return to Aegina Kolonna, 9 of the 48 intramural burials date to LH. Although statistically small, these bones indicate that the rate of perinatal death was dropping over the course of the MH-LH, from 50 percent to 42 percent; the rate of post-neonatal (1- to 3-month-olds) death dropped slightly from 19 percent to 15 percent.²⁰ The reduction in perinatal death indicates an improvement in the birthing experience, where fewer infants died due to complications in pregnancy or parturition, indicating better overall health in the Aeginitan maternal population. This better health may have then transferred to better parenting, and thus the drop in post-neonatal mortality.

Information about the ideology of maternity—how the concept of motherhood was understood in the Mycenaean population, derives from man-made items (literally: men): the Linear B tablets, and the

iconography of woman with child in the terracotta repertoire.

Linear B

There are a few caveats to consider when applying Linear B data to maternity. Most important, the Linear B tablets are an exclusively élite phenomenon representing the concerns of the palatial centers, whereas the place where aspects of maternity and childcare would be of greatest concern—the home—is mostly absent from the palatial texts.²¹ As such, there is only so much we might expect to derive from the written sources. Nevertheless, some data in the texts give evidence for the Mycenaean ideology of women, family, and children. This is especially the case in terms of two groups of women—working women and cult functionaries. By gleaning evidence from the tablets on these groups of women, it becomes apparent that in at least certain social groups, women are far more strongly associated with children and childcare than are men.

Working moms: women and childcare

Children, small and otherwise, appear predominantly in texts dealing with workgroups in the palatial economies.²² The personnel texts from both Pylos and Knossos, for which we have the largest archives, are relentlessly consistent in their enumeration of textile workers, especially those from Pylos. From this archive, the personnel lists record a number of women, a number of girls, and finally a number of boys, followed by types of supervisors. Thus:

PY Aa 240: *a-ra-ka-te-ja* MUL 21 *ko-wa* 25 *ko-wo* 4 TA 1 [. . .

21 women spinners, 25 girls, 4 boys, 1 TA supervisor.

PY Aa 699: *ti-nwa-si-ja* MUL 9 *ko-wa* 4 *ko-wo* 3 DA 1 TA [. . .

From *ti-nwa-to* 9 women, 4 girls, 3 boys, 1 DA supervisor, 1 TA supervisor

PY Aa 792 *ki-ni-di-ja* MUL 21 *ko-wa* 25 *ko-wo* 10 DA 1 TA 1

From Knidos 21 women, 25 girls, 10 boys, 1 DA supervisor, 1 TA supervisor²³

It is clear that there are far more girls than boys in the lists, a fact not

attributable to birth rate. Furthermore, there is a close correlation between the number of adult women in the texts and the number of children. Based on this latter fact, scholars such as Jon-Christian Billigmeier, Pierre Carlier, and Cynthia Shelmerdine have argued that the girls and boys in question are the children of the women mentioned. Furthermore, whereas the girls learn a trade with their mothers and remain in the textile industry, boys only remain with their mothers until adolescence, when they are transferred to more masculine pursuits. Such a hypothesis is confirmed in other personnel statistics. Carlier notes that of the full personnel of the Aa series, there are a total of 450 girls to only 350 boys. However, in the Ad series, the male labor force, there are some 350 adult men and 100 boys. The 100 boys in the Ad series most likely represent those boys transferred from their mothers' care to the men's force, but who still are young enough to receive children's, not adult's, rations. Girls, then, remain in place, becoming women beside their mothers and eventually becoming mothers themselves. There is a two-part transition for the boys—they first leave their mothers, and later become men. Thus, from Carlier:

One can reasonably reconstruct the organization of age classes in the palatial industrial complex: young children of both sexes were raised and nourished by their mothers. At a relatively young age—11 or 12 years, perhaps—the boys were taken from their mothers and integrated into the all-male work teams, while the girls remained with their mothers.²⁴

The grouping of girls and boys with women workers (their mothers?) also appears at Knossos, but with a slight variation. Unlike up north, the children in the Knossos tablets are subdivided as being either older (*me-zo-e*) or younger (*me-wi-jo*).²⁵ Thus on a text from Knossos (Ak (1) 612) we read:

TA 1 DA 1 MUL 9

ko-wa me-zo 1 ko-wa me-u-jo 1

da-te-we-ja ko-wo me-zo 1

1 TA supervisor, 1 DA supervisor, 9 women

1 older girl, 1 younger girl

*da-te-we-ja 1 older boy.*²⁶

Likewise on tablet KN Ai (3) 824 we see:

Slaves of Amphiboitas, 32 women, 5 older girls, 15 younger girls

4 younger boys.²⁷

Here we continue to see the disparity between boys and girls, with a notable dearth of older boys listed with their mothers.

Texts from both the mainland and Crete show that in the palatial, industrial complexes, childcare fell to women, especially care of small children. Older boys at least were sent off to join the older males, while girls matured into women beside their mothers.

Mothers and daughters

One of the very few Linear B texts that appears to refer to mothers with their children is MY (from Mycenae) V 659, which reads:

wo-di-je-ja de-mi-ni-ja

ma-no a-re-ka-sa-da-ra -{ka}

ri-su-ra qo-ta-qe

e-ri-tu-pi-na te-o-do-ra-qe

o-to-wo-wi-je tu-ka-te-qe

a₂-ne-a tu-ka-te-qe

pi-ro-wo-na ki-ra-qe

pu-ka-ro ke-ti-de-qe

. . .

] i-ri [] 1 ke-ra-so ki-ra qe

Wordieia de-mi-ni-ja

ma-no and Alexandra

ri-su-ra and qo-ta

e-ri-tu-pi-na and Theodora

Orthwowije and daughter

Anea and daughter

Philowoina and little girl

pu-ka-ro and ke-ti-de

. . .

Keraso and little girl.²⁸

The term *tu-ka-te* (Gr. *qugáthr*) means daughter, and Yves Duhoux has argued that the term *ki-ra* should be taken as “little girl,” possibly even infant.²⁹ In this instance, then, we have a record of at least three women with their daughters, and two women with infants. Carlier has argued that a similar term in truncated form (*tu*) should be read as “daughter” in the Knossos Ap series as well.³⁰

Similar references to daughters (*tu-ka-te-re*), also from Mycenae, appear in texts Oe 106 and Oe 112. The “Oe” designations indicate that these texts pertain to resource allotments, in these instances allotments of wool. It is possible, then, if not likely that these references to daughters once again relate back to the textile industry.

Cultic privilege, hereditary status

In contrast to the numerous texts that document the palatial maternal workforce, only one Linear B tablet has come down to us that (a) actually uses the word “mother” (*ma-te*) (and, for that matter, “father” (*pa-te*)); and (b) indicates what the maternal relationship might have entailed other than sweat-shop work conditions. This text from Pylos is An 607 (see also Boëlle-Weber, this volume). Here we have a series of cult functionaries and bronze-smiths:

a

-ja

me-ta-pa, ke-ri-mi-ja, do-qe-ja, ki-ri-te-wi

do-qe-ja, do-e-ro, pa-te, ma-te-de, ku-te-re-u-pi

MUL 6 do-qe-ja do-e-ra, e-qe-ta-i, e-e-to,

te-re-te-we MUL 13

do-qe-ja, do-e-ro, pa-te, ma-te-de, di-wi-ja, do-e-ra,

MUL 3 do-qe-ja, do-e-ra, ma-te, pa-te-de, ka-ke-u,

MUL 1 do-qe-ja do-e-ra, ma-te, pa-te-de ka-ke-u,

MUL 3

vacant

KA

vacant

In *Me-ta-pa*, *ke-ri-mi-ja* chosen of (the goddess) *Do-qe-ja*

father slave of *do-qe-ja*, mother Cytherean

6 women, slaves of *Do-qe-ja*, sent to the *e-qe-ta* (“Followers” of the king)

for their training, 13 women

father slave of *Do-qe-ja*, mother slave of *Di-wi-ja*

3 women, mother slave of *Do-qe-ja*, father bronze-smith

1 woman, mother slave of *Do-qe-ja*, father bronze-smith

3 women

vacant

ka

*vacant*³¹

Billigmeier and Judy Turner have argued that the *ki-ri-ti-wi-ja* is a group of relatively wealthy, powerful women serving jointly in the cult of a deity, in this case the goddess Doqeja.³² The “slaves” in the text are likely to be not actual, servile slaves, but the *do-e-ro/ra te-o-jo*, the “slave (m/f) of the deity”: a sacerdotal title. In such a way, the women listed are of high status and involved in cultic practice. They are listed as descended from *both* parents, father and mother. In all cases, it is the parent who is a religious functionary who is listed first: the fathers in lines 2 and 5, the mothers in lines 6 and 7 where the fathers are listed as smiths. The position of *ki-ri-ti-wi-ja* appears to be hereditary, and the parent through whom the position derives is noted. Such derivation can come from either father or mother, showing patrilineality and matrilineality equally in effect.

It is clear that the Mycenaeans thought of childcare as women’s work. When any childcare is visible in the Linear B texts, especially of small children, the duty falls to women, women already engaged in

additional occupations. Men only take boys under their charge when those “boys” are old enough to join the men’s workforces, probably as assistants and apprentices (i.e., able to work, rather than requiring vigilant supervision and attention). Our only references to infants, those in the corpus from Mycenae, show those infants in the company of women. When moving into more privileged classes, however, it becomes apparent that women could indeed fill roles of high status, and these roles with their concomitant prerogatives could be passed on to their children, through the maternal line.

Iconography: Mycenaean kourotrophoi³³

Iconography is actually even less informative about maternity in Mycenaean Greece than were the Linear B tablets. This is not immediately evident, because, unlike the Minoans to the south, the Mycenaean did make representations of women with children, to wit, terracotta kourotrophoi. These figurines first began to appear in Greece in the LH IIB period (c.1450 BCE). At this time, mostly through Minoan influence,³⁴ terracotta figurines first appear as naturalistic versions of what will come to be known as the Late Helladic *phi*, *psi*, and *tau* figurines, all of which become especially popular in LH III. Kourotrophic examples have come to light primarily in Mycenae and Aigina, and individual examples have been found in Aidonia, Argos, Berbati, Dendra, Galatas/Troizenia, Palaioiopolis on Kythera, Nauplion, Nemea, Prosymna, Priphtiani, Thebes, Tiryns, Voula, and Zygouries. Less certain examples also derive from Eleusis, Eutresis, and Glyka Nera/Attica, with a doubtful example deriving from Korakou.³⁵ One unprovenanced example comes from Cyprus,³⁶ as does a second, Ashdoda (seated) style kourotrophos, now in Copenhagen.³⁷ An additional exported example came to light at Hazor in Israel.

The earliest known Mycenaean kourotrophos comes from a child’s burial in the Aidonia cemetery in Nemea (see [Figure 41.3](#)), dating to the LH IIB period.³⁸ The Aidonia figurine is relatively naturalistic. The female has a rounded head and prominent nose, with disk-like eyes highlighted with dark paint. The shoulders are sloping and rounded, and the right breast is an applied lump. The right arm curves down the body, while the left arm holds a large infant to the left breast in a nursing pose.

A second LH IIB (late) example of kourotrophic iconography was discovered in Tomb 3 of the MH–LH site of Troezen at Megali Magoula.³⁹ This fragmentary figurine is preserved from neck to knees, and shows a similar naturalistic style to that of the Aidonia cemetery.

A third LH IIB example comes from a tomb at Palaiopolis on the island of Kythera.⁴⁰ Unlike the Aidonia example, the child's legs are well rendered and split to spread around the female's body, and the child is held upright, not in a position of nursing.

The relatively naturalistic portrayal of the earliest known Mycenaean kourotrophoi suggests that the inspiration may have come from real life. In such a way, the Mycenaeans adopted the Minoan tradition of anthropomorphic terracottas, but included an aspect of daily life—childcare— not part of the Minoan repertoire.

By the LH IIIA period, however, a change seems to occur in this kourotrophic iconography. Examples of kourotrophoi wearing polos-style tiaras, the type associated with divinity, begin to appear, as do examples of seated kourotrophoi, an attribute also typically reserved for divinity in Aegean iconography.⁴¹ In short, beginning in the LH IIIA period (c.1400 BCE), kourotrophic iconography comes to represent not mortal women, but a goddess or goddesses.



Figure 41.3 Nemea Museum 489. (Image by Paul Butler, used with kind permission.)

This assessment is supported by the archaeology. The vast majority of kourotrophoi come from only two sites in Greece—a sanctuary (later dedicated to the goddess Aphaia) on the island of Aegina (18 examples), and Mycenae (29 examples).⁴² The examples from Mycenae *all* come from either settlement or funerary contexts, as is the case for all other terracotta kourotrophoi found elsewhere.⁴³ By contrast, *all* kourotrophoi on Aegina come from the sanctuary.⁴⁴ This would seem to indicate that the icon represents the or a deity revered at the Aegina sanctuary, perhaps some manifestation of a mother goddess, and that her image was possibly brought home by pilgrims to the Aegina sanctuary as mementos, which were then placed in domestic and funerary settings. As such, the kourotrophoi have more to do with the nature of a specific divinity in the Mycenaean pantheon than they do with mortal mothers.

Conclusions

In the end, it must be noted that maternity is both a biological and a socially constructed relationship. The biological aspects were harrowing in the Bronze Age Aegean, reflected in a high mortality rate for infants and birthing-age females. The sociological aspects are surprisingly subdued. Motherhood is never emphasized in either Minoan Crete or early Greece, either in the iconography or, when available, the texts. Instead, the Minoans seem to have focused on the socialization of children among a larger community of individuals, eschewing the familial. The scribes of the Linear B texts could not really be bothered with stay-at-home moms, and the iconography of maternity pertained more to a goddess than to any humans. In short, we must conclude that motherhood was not highly, or at least *publicly*, valued in the Bronze Age Aegean.

Notes

- 1 McGeorge 1988: 48.
- 2 Leslie Day, pers. comm.
- 3 McGeorge 1988: 48.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Iezzi 2009: 185.
- 6 McGeorge 1988: 53.
- 7 Rutter 2003: 40.
- 8 Budin 2011: 284–287; 2014: 111–114.
- 9 Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström 2005: 162.
- 10 Moyer 1989: 66.
- 11 Moyer 1989: 66.
- 12 Calnan 1992: 319ff.
- 13 Ingvarsson-Sundström 2008: 95.
- 14 Ingvarsson-Sundström 2008: 96.
- 15 Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström 2005: 97.
- 16 Nordquist and Ingvarsson-Sundström 2005: 98.
- 17 Kanz *et al.* 2010: 480.
- 18 Kanz *et al.* 2010: 482–483.
- 19 Ibid: 487.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Billigmeier and Turner 1981: 2, “Parentage of individuals is sometimes mentioned, but family life is not discussed; thus we learn nothing about women’s work in the home.”
- 22 Shelmerdine 2008: 140; Nosch 2003: 15–20.
- 23 All examples taken from Nosch 2003: 15.

- 24 Carlier 1983: 18. My translation from the French.
- 25 Nosch 2003: 16–18; Carlier 1983: 20.
- 26 Nosch 2003: 16.
- 27 Ibid: 18; Carlier 1983: 21.
- 28 Duhoux 2008: 292.
- 29 Ibid: 293.
- 30 Carlier 1999: 187–188.
- 31 Text and translation from Boëlle-Weber, this volume.
- 32 Billigmeier and Turner 1981: 8. See also Nosch 2003: 13–14. See also Boëlle-Weber, this volume.
- 33 On these, see especially, Budin 2011: [chapter 6](#).
- 34 French 1971: 105, 1981: 173.
- 35 Pilafidis-Williams 1998: Appendix III; French 1971: 185–187.
- 36 Nicolaou 1965: 48–50.
- 37 Karageorghis 1993: 14.
- 38 Demakopoulou 1996: 45.
- 39 Konsolaki-Giannopoulou 2003: 179 and 186.
- 40 Coldstream and Huxley 1973: 267.
- 41 Budin 2011: 312–314.
- 42 Pilafidis-Williams 1998: Appendix III.
- 43 Tzonou-Herbst 2002: 275.
- 44 Pilafidis-Williams 1998: Appendix III.

References

- Billigmeier, J. C. and Turner, J. A. (1981) The socio-economic roles of women in Mycenaean Greece: A brief survey of Linear B tablets. In H. Foley (ed.) *Reflections of Women in Antiquity*. London: Routledge, pp. 1–18.
- Budin, S. L. (2011) *Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity, and Gender in the Ancient World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Budin, S. L. (2014) Mother or sister? Finding adolescent girls in Minoan figural art. In S. Morrow and A. Kieburg (eds) *Mädchen im Altertum/Girls in Antiquity*. Münster, Germany: Waxmann, pp. 105–116.
- Calnan, K. A. (1992) *The Health Status of Bronze Age Greek Women*. PhD dissertation. University of Cincinnati.
- Carlier, P. (1983) La femme dans la société mycénienne d’après les archives en Lineaire B. In E. Levy (ed.) *La femme dans les sociétés Antiques*. Strasbourg, France: Université des Science Humaines de Strasbourg, pp. 9–32.

- Carlier, P. (1999) Les mentions de la parenté dans les textes mycéniens. In S. Deger-Jalkotzy, S. Hiller and O. Panagl (eds) *Florent Studia Mycenaea*. Vienna, Austria: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, pp. 185–193.
- Coldstream, J. N. and Huxley, G. L. (1973) *Kythera: Excavations and Studies Conducted by the University of Pennsylvania Museum and the British School at Athens*. Park Ridge, NJ: Noyes Press.
- Demakopoulou, K. (1996) *The Aidonia Treasure: Seals and Jewellery of the Aegean Late Bronze Age*. Athens, Greece: Ministry of Culture.
- Duhoux, Y. (2008) Mycenaean anthology. In Y. Duhoux and A. Morpurgo Davies (eds) *A Companion to Linear B: Mycenaean Texts and Their World*. Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 243–393.
- French, E. (1971) The development of the Mycenaean terra-cotta figurines. *BSA* 66: 102–187 and plates 13–29.
- French, E. (1981) Mycenaean figures and figurines, their typology and function. In R. Hägg and N. Marinatos (eds) *Sanctuaries and Cults in the Aegean Bronze Age*. Lund, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, pp. 173–178.
- Iezzi, C. (2009) Regional differences in the health status of the Mycenaean women of East Lokris. In L. A. Schepartz, S. C. Fox and C. Bourbou (eds) *New Directions in the Skeletal Biology of Greece*. Princeton, NJ: ASCSA, Hesperia Supplement 43, pp. 175–192.
- Ingvarsson-Sundström, A. (2008) *Asine III: Children Lost and Found: A bioarchaeological study of Middle Helladic children in Asine with a comparison to Lerna*. Stockholm, Sweden: Swedish Institute at Athens.
- Kanz, F., Grossschmidt, K. and Kiesslich, J. (2010) Subsistence and more in Middle Bronze Age Aegina Kolonna: An anthropology of newborn children. In A. Philippa-Touchais *et al.* (eds) *Mesohelladika*. Athens, Greece: BCH Supplément 52, pp. 481–487.
- Karageorghis, V. (1993) *The Coroplastic Art of Ancient Cyprus*. Volume 2. Nicosia, Cyprus: A. G. Leventis Foundation.
- Konsolaki-Giannopoulou, H. (2003) *Argosaronikos: Praktika tou Diethnous Synedrou Historias kai Archaialogias tou Argosarōnikou, Poros, 26–29 Iouniou 1998*. Athens, Greece: Demos Porou.
- McGeorge, P. J. P. (1988) Health and diet in Minoan times. In R. E. Jones and H. W. Catling (eds) *New Aspects of Archaeological Science in Greece*. Athens, Greece: British School at Athens, pp. 47–54.
- Moyer, C. J. (1989) Human skeletal remains. In I. Todd (ed.) *Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios II: ceramics, Objects, Tombs, Specialist Studies*. Göteborg, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, pp. 58–69.
- Nicolaou, K. (1965) Mycenaean terracotta figurines in the Cyprus

- Museum. *Opuscula Atheniensa* V: 47–57.
- Nordquist, G. and Ingvarsson-Sundström, A. (2005) Live hard, die young: Mortuary remains of Middle and Early Late Helladic children from the Argolid in social context. In A. Dakouri-Hild and S. Sherratt (eds) *Autochthon*. Oxford, UK: BAR International Series 1432, pp. 156–174.
- Nosch, M. L. (2003) The women at work in the Linear B tablets. In L. L. Lovén and A. Strömberg (eds) *Gender, Cult, and Culture in the Ancient World from Mycenae to Byzantium*. Sävvedalen, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, pp. 12–26.
- Pilafidis-Williams, K. (1998) *The Sanctuary of Aphaia on Aigina in the Bronze Age*. Munich, Germany: Hirmer, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.
- Rutter, J. B. (2003) Children in Aegean prehistory. In J. Neils and J. H. Oakley (eds) *Coming of Age in Ancient Greece: Images of Childhood from the Classical Past*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, pp. 31–57.
- Shelmerdine, C. (2008) Mycenaean society. In Y. Duhoux and A. Morpurgo Davies (eds) *A Companion to Linear B: Mycenaean Texts and Their World*. Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 115–158.
- Tzonou-Herbst, I. N. (2002) *A Contextual Analysis of Mycenaean Terracotta Figurines*. PhD dissertation. University of Cincinnati.

I-JE-RE-JA, KA-RA-WI-PO-RO, AND OTHERS . . .

Women in Mycenaean religion

Cécile Boëlle-Weber

The study of the place of women in Bronze Age Aegean society was long influenced by theories of matriarchy, developed principally by A. Evans¹ and G. Thompson,² in the wake of the works of Swiss author J. J. Bachofen.³ Nevertheless, no archaeological data allow us to confirm any such suppositions.

Two very different categories of evidence provide us with information on the place and role of women in Mycenaean religion: iconography and the tablets inscribed in Linear B from the palaces of Crete and the mainland, dating to Late Minoan II–III and Late Helladic III, respectively. In truth, the Mycenaean Era (c.1400–1250 BCE) of mainland Greece, Crete, and the Cycladic islands has not left us with any great literary texts comparable to those of later epochs of Greek history or even those of the contemporary Near East. As such, the historian must work with sources both lacunose and vague in order to derive information about women's role in Greek religion at the end of the Bronze Age. As an added hardship, these two sources are not complementary, and thus do not help in shedding light on each other.

The Linear B texts are the final surviving scraps of the accounting archives of the Mycenaean palaces, accidentally preserved by the conflagrations that destroyed these palaces at the end of the Late Bronze Age. They provide information on the organization and practice of those aspects of religion that involved the palatial administrations. Thus, we might find here, alongside mention of divine names that reveal a pantheon quite similar to that of the Classical era, some terms that have a bearing on the religious functions of women. Likewise, the iconography provides a rather

substantial corpus of depictions of females in contexts that appear to be religious, in media including figurines, glyptic (seals and sealing), as well as frescoes. However, one might question the religious import of these representations and the true nature of the females depicted: are they mortal women performing cultic activities, or are they divinities?

The historian must thus employ two categories of evidence dealing more or less directly with religion, but in two separate spheres that do not necessarily connect. This state of affairs led A. Brelich to comment back in 1967 that Mycenaean religious iconography is a picture book with no text, as the texts we have do not correspond to the images.⁴

The iconographic data

Having made these preliminary comments and caveats concerning the study of such ancient times, we might note first off that women are *copiously* present in scenes of Minoan and Mycenaean art which are generally considered to be religious in nature, notably on seal rings and frescoes. The key question, once again, is to know if these images pertain to women or goddesses. This question has been the subject of numerous studies and is still a matter of debate amongst historians of Mycenaean art.

M. Wedde, in his work on the study of Bronze Age Aegean glyptic, has established that the gestures of individuals in a scene cannot be taken as indicative of a distinction between mortal and divine. Rather, scenes with multiple individuals manifest a kind of pyramidal structure, whereby the characters lower in the scene must be understood as engaging in acts of adoration and supplication (and thus mortal). They face an individual who occupies a higher level of the scene and thus might be understood as having a higher status, not necessarily divine as the person might also be a priestess.⁵ Other scholars speak simply of a “power elite” or “power beings,” which allows one to side-step the question.⁶ In any event, there are approximately 128 seals and sealings which depict females who appear in scenes that might be deemed religious (see [Figure 42.1](#)).⁷

The figurines are also a rich source of female representations; often discovered in areas that are commonly identified as sanctuaries, they are generally identified as cult objects. But, once again, there remains the intractable question of whether we can determine if these represent goddesses or their worshippers (see [Figure 42.2](#)).

Concerning the frescoes, there too there are numerous representations of females, in contexts both sacred and mundane, such as the celebrated frescoes in Room 3a of Xeste 3 Akrotiri on the Cycladic island of Thera-Santorini (see Younger, this volume). Here we see young girls culling saffron while a blue monkey presents their offering to a large female flanked by a griffin.⁸ Women seem also to have played an active and equal role in Cretan Bull-leaping, an act a priori religious.⁹

The Haghia Triadha sarcophagus from Crete (see Younger, this volume) shows women playing an auxiliary role in a funerary ritual.¹⁰ They are involved in carrying vases during the procession, just as they do on the “Procession Fresco” discovered in the vestibule of the Palace of Pylos in Messenia,¹¹ as well as in palatial frescoes at Mycenae, Thebes, and Tiryns.



Figure 42.1 Gold signet ring from Phaistos with scene of nude goddess and worshipper. (Drawing by Paul C. Butler, used with kind permission.)

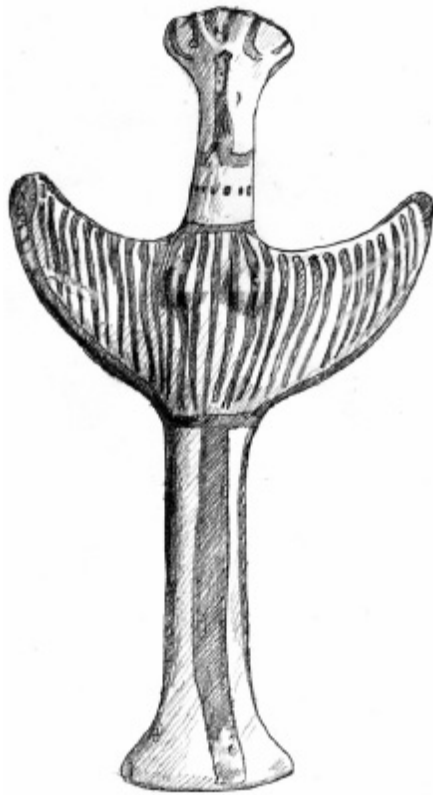


Figure 42.2 Mycenaean terracotta psi-style figurine from Zeli, Locris.
(Drawing by Paul C. Butler, used with kind permission.)

The important place occupied by females in the Minoan and Mycenaean iconography gave rise to the theory of a supposed Aegean matriarchy, where women held the dominant positions and, in line with the refined life depicted in the palatial frescoes, had an elevated status and were of prime importance in religious life.

Evidence from the Linear B texts

The texts offer us precious few clear data on the role of women in Mycenaean religion. In them one finds titles of female temple servants, but they are never mentioned in the context of their actual religious functions. They are land owners, recipients of food rations dispensed by the palatial administration, responsible for the collection of taxes, etc., but we never see them acting in a purely religious context.

Priestesses

The term *i-je-re-ja*, *lépeia*, “priestess” is mentioned several times in the texts from Knossos and Pylos.¹² At Knossos, one finds three references to an *a-ne-mo-i-je-re-ja*, *ἀνέμων lépeia*, in two texts in the Fp series, which pertain to the delivery of offerings of oil on behalf of the palace to different sanctuaries, deities, and religious officials. So, on tablet Fp(1)1, which records the offerings of oil for the month of *de-u-ki-jo* to various sanctuaries and deities, we see in line 10: *a-ne-mo-i-je-re-ja OLE 1, u-ta-no, ‘a-ne-mo-i-je-re-ja’ s1v3*. This is a rarity in the Linear B references to priests and priestesses, insofar as it is the sole example where the deity served is mentioned alongside the sacerdotal title. One might think of the cult of the winds, well attested in Classical antiquity and which, according to certain Homeric episodes, may have existed since Mycenaean times (*Iliad* XXIII: 192ff.—during the funeral rites of Patroklos, Achilles made a vow to the two winds, Boreas and Zephyros). This is a seductive hypothesis especially for Crete, amongst a people for whom the sea and its navigation played a significant role. One might also understand *ἀνέμων* in a figurative sense, closer to the Latin sense of the word *anima*, “the soul, breath of life,” and understand this “priestess of souls” as evidence for a cult of the dead which might correlate with iconographic representations such as those on the Haghia Triadha sarcophagus.

Generally, however, the deity served is not mentioned, either because the context was sufficiently clear for the palatial administrators to know which deity or priestess was concerned, or because this information was irrelevant for the accounting records, or the name of the “priestess” was simply a professional title allowing them to specify the individual in question.¹³

At Knossos, priestesses received offerings of oil which they may have then passed on to their respective divinities or kept for personal use. These offerings are the only data offered by the Linear B texts concerning the cultic activities of these officiants. From this, some scholars have suggested that Mycenaean priests and priestesses fulfilled the same roles as their Classical equivalents,¹⁴ and thus have imbued them with functions which the Linear B tablets in no way confirm in any instance.¹⁵

At Pylos, a priestess named *E-ri-ta* is mentioned several times in the land-holding documents for the sacred district of *Pa-ki-ja-ne*.¹⁶ She held two territories totaling approximately 9 ha. (based on the amount of grain that can be sown there—374.4 liters), and she held one of them in a kind of privileged tenure called *e-to-ni-jo*,¹⁷ which appears

to be related to the cult because *E-ri-ta* claims that she holds the lands “for the deity.” In this instance, this probably refers to *Po-ti-ni-ja*, the principal goddess of the *Pa-ki-ja-na* sanctuary, for whom *E-ri-ta* was apparently the sole priestess. In addition to these lands, *E-ri-ta* also possessed a parcel of land called in the texts *ke-ra* = γέρας (“gift of honor”), a portion of which—an *o-na-to*—she ceded to a female “slave of the deity” (*te-o-jo do-e-ra*, see below) named *U-wa-mi-ja*.¹⁸

The land-holding texts of *Pa-ki-ja-ne* also make mention three times of slaves belonging to the priestess, even though Mycenaean texts very rarely mention slaves belonging to women (and in each case where they do, it appears that the slave-owning women are cult functionaries). One might, then, suggest that tablet PY (Pylos) Ae (personnel listings) 303 makes reference to this same priestess to whom belonged some 14 slaves—“on account of the sacred gold”¹⁹—who may have fulfilled the same functions as those women listed on PY Tn (utensil listings) 316,²⁰ where the slaves are mentioned in context with gold vases distributed to various divinities.

A “Key-bearer”

Alongside the priestess, and amongst those considered to be the “Big Four of *Pa-ki-ja-ne*” based on the size of their land-holdings in this sacred district of Pylos, one finds another female with religious functions: the *ka-ra-wi-po-ro* (*κλαρίφορος = κλειδόφορος = κλειδοῦχος)²¹ *Ka-pi-ti-ja*. The title is mentioned exclusively but frequently in the Pylian texts where it designates a “Key-bearer.” She is thus without doubt keeper of the keys to the sanctuary or treasury: one finds reference to the “sacred gold”—*i-je-ro-jo ku-ru-so-jo*—in PY Ae 303 in relation to the priestess’s slaves,²² and the “temples’ bronze,” *ka-ko na-wi-jo* in PY Jn (bronze requisition) 829, possibly in this context using some of the “treasure” placed in her keeping.

The *ka-ra-wi-po-ro* of *Pa-ki-ja-ne* possessed, as is rare in the land-holding accounts, a double portion. On this account she is the most important land-holder in the district, especially as she did not cede back any of this territory, in contrast to the priestess who ceded back a portion of her *ke-ra* as an *o-na-to* to the “sacred slave” *U-wa-mi-ja*. She is, however, unlike the other dignitaries, obligated to *wo-ze-e* on one of these parcels of land (“to work,” most likely for the *damos* (political body of the people) who provided the lands in question). However, she did not accomplish this, and we do not know the end result.

She also possessed slaves, and on tablet PY Un 6 she, along with a priestess (*i-je-re-ja*) and deities such as Poseidon and the goddess *Pe-re*-*82, received allocations of thick textiles.²³ The Key-bearer likewise appears on tablet PY Vn (general lists) 48, line 7 as the recipient of 5 units of an indeterminate commodity in the company of deities and temple servants,²⁴ which clearly establishes her religious function.

If one considers the copious land-holdings attributed to her, the Key-bearer appears to be of higher status than the priestess; in truth, she possesses approximately 20 ha. of land (= 998.4 liters), that being three times as much as the *ra-wa-ke-ta* (*lawagetas* = “(military?) leader of the people/*laos*”), presumed to be the second-rank person in the kingdom after the *wa-na-ka* (*wanax* = King).²⁵ But, on the one hand, the priestess appears to have more slaves than the Key-bearer, and on the other, the “status” of their lands is different. The *ka-ra-wi-po-ro* has, in exchange for her holdings, an obligation to the *damos* (even if she does not fulfill it), while no such obligation pertains to the priestess. Likewise, the priestess seems to be able to retain an exceptionally advantageous parcel of the land—the *e-to-ni-jo* of the θεός—even if the *damos* contests it.

P. Carlier sees in these land-holding texts an evolution in the administration of land.²⁶ For him, in the earliest phase the rural communities (*da-mo*) relinquished some lands to a certain category of individual (the *te-re-ta*) in exchange for a number of services (expressed by the verb *te-re-ja-e*). Little by little, these obligations were ignored, and those responsible came to think of the lands as their own property. The people thus appointed other representatives—the *ko-to-no-o-ko*—who received small plots of land. But in the third phase of this evolution, greater numbers of the sanctuary officiants took on more of these lands while not fulfilling the obligations associated with them. Thus we have a long evolution marked by conflicts over the possession of these lands.

One might then suppose that the lands held by the Key-bearer were linked to such obligations immediately before the creation of the land-holding record, whereas in the case of the priestess with her own lands, the obligations (which had once existed) had since so fallen out of memory that the scribe did not find it necessary to mention them, or the priestess’s failure to fulfill them. These lands thus fell out of the control of the *damos* and became wholly under the control of the priestess (or at least mostly so, as they continued to note that these lands were granted *pa-ro da-mo* and that the *damos* was a significant party in the contestation of the *e-to-ni-jo*). By contrast, the lands of the Key-bearer were still (or until very recently) under the authority of the

The ki-ri-te-wi-ja

The term *ki-ri-te-wi-ja* may designate another category of women who had religious functions. It appears both at Knossos and at Pylos in the lists of offerings and in the census of religious personnel.

At Knossos, tablet Fp(2)363 records the delivery of fine oil from the palace to the sanctuary of *da-83*-ja* (“*da-83*-ja-de i-je-ro*”), an offering subdivided as “so much for the sanctuary,” “so much for the *ki-ri-te-wi-ja*,” and “so much for the *di-wo-pu-ka-ta*” (a hapax that designates another servant at the sanctuary). At Pylos, the term appears in tablet An 607 concerning the slaves of the goddess *Do-qe-ja*, and in the landholding tablets Eb 321 = Ep 704.4 concerning lands in the sacred district of *Pa-ki-ja-ne*, also pertaining to both the priestess and the Key-bearer.

The contexts in which these functionaries appear thus favor the common and most plausible interpretation that the term designates a woman or group of women who have religious functions. The word has been related to the noun κρίς of barley,²⁷ or to the verb κρίω, and thus it would appear that the women had a religious function pertaining to cereals, or possibly used unguents. These two hypotheses are not mutually exclusive, especially if one considers the role of barley in the sprinkling of (sacred) grains upon the heads of sacrificial victims before their sacrifice in the Classical period and the role of perfumes, either burnt or poured, in later Greek religion. Furthermore, in the Mycenaean texts we have attestations of offerings of perfumed unguents to the deities by the palaces. A third hypothesis sees these women as “chosen”—κρίται.

The word also appears in tablet KN E 777 from Knossos which records the distribution of monthly rations to the *ki-ri-te-wi-ja* of Knossos, Amnisos, and Phaistos (see also Shelmerdine, this volume). The huge quantities listed in this instance (LUNA 1 GRA 100) equal the rations of 500 people in each region, which casts doubt on the idea that they pertain to the sanctuary officials.²⁸ These women thus had some religious duties, but not exclusively.

The same problem emerges concerning the *o-ti-ri-ja-i* at Thebes in the tablets of the Fq series (allocations of offerings). Associated with the distribution of offerings, this category of female workers of the textile industry, rather than being servants, may simply have

collaborated in the production of one or other commodity for a sanctuary, as it is well attested elsewhere that the Mycenaean sanctuaries depended on such industries (animal husbandry at Knossos, textiles at Pylos and Knossos).

Slaves of the deities: the *te-o-jo do-e-ra*

At the end of this list of female sacerdotal titles one finds in the Linear B texts mention of sacred slaves. In some instances, the name of the deity to whom these women belong is mentioned; such is the case at Pylos where, in tablet An 607, slaves of the goddess *Do-qe-ja* appear. The mother of one of these slaves was herself a slave of the goddess *Di-wi-ja*.²⁹ It is thus possible that the status of hierodule was hereditary in the Mycenaean world as in the contemporary Near Eastern societies, even if it is perhaps a bit daring to make such a suggestion on the basis of a single Linear B text.

Nevertheless, one finds in the texts from Pylos slaves simply designated *te-o-jo do-e-ra* (θεοῦ δοῦλη), “slave of the deity,” and one might wonder what deity is intended.

Many solutions have been proposed and it appears that, amongst them, the first to be rejected is that of A. Tovar,³⁰ who, supposing that the Mycenaean royalty was of divine character, thought that the *te-o-jo* was a reference to the king. In this instance let us note that we have nothing in the texts that would suggest that the king of Pylos was deemed a god, and that elsewhere in the texts there exists a term that specifically expresses one’s association and dependence upon the king —*wa-na-ka-te-ro*—which applies to people whose legal status we admittedly do not yet understand very well, but who apparently enjoyed certain privileges.

Another interpretation of the designation was proposed by M. Lejeune, who saw in *te-o* “the name of the θεός par excellence, in whom we should very probably recognize Poseidon.”³¹ The first part of this proposition is very probable. To the second part, however, one might argue that even if Poseidon were the primary god of Pylos, the texts pertaining to the sacred slaves concern the sanctuary at *Pa-ki-ja-ne*, where the goddess *Po-ti-ni-ja* (Πότνια = “Mistress”) appears to have been the predominant deity. One must thus suppose that the “θεός par excellence” in this case is *Po-ti-ni-ja* and that the slaves were associated with her.

One might equally suppose that the scribe did not specify the deity,

because specification by a divine name was not necessary; either the formula itself was clear enough for the members of the palatial administration in the context in which it appeared, or the context simply did not require this kind of precision. The sacred slaves possessed land, a fact attributable to their position. This was the important thing for the administration and, outside of that, the scribes cared little to know that the slaves were attached to this or that divinity.

There were about 50 of these slaves—of whom 23 (female) appear in the land-holding series pertaining to *Pa-ki-ja-ne*—and thus we can say little about them. We know that they were able to possess land (which does not necessarily mean that they *owned* it), and that these lands sometimes had a particular status called *ka-ma*;32 this in itself differentiates them from slaves of the Classical period. Additionally, these lands were located in a very specific region: the sacred district of *Pa-ki-ja-ne*, where the land allotments appear to have been reserved for certain sacerdotal dignitaries or administrators.

Additionally, other references to sacred slaves, where the divinity served is specified, show that unions (marriages?) were permissible between sacred slaves, and also between sacred slaves and those designated as free (or at least not specifically designated a slave, even if this person depended to a certain measure on the palace and was thus perhaps not completely independent). Thus, Pylian tablet An 607 refers to women born of fathers who were slaves of the goddess *Do-qe-ja* and mothers who were slaves of *Di-wi-ja*, and others born of mothers who were slaves of *Do-qe-ja* and fathers who were bronze-smiths.

PY An 607

Hand 1 Provenance, archive room 8

.1

a-ja

me-ta-pa, ke-ri-mi-ja, do-qe-ja, ki-ri-te-wi

.2 do-qe-ja, do-e-ro, pa-te, ma-te-de, ku-te-re-u-pi

.3 MUL 6 do-qe-ja do-e-ra, e-qe-ta-i, e-e-to,

.4 te-re-te-we MUL 13

.5 do-qe-ja, do-e-ro, pa-te, ma-te-de, di-wi-ja, do-e-ra,

.6 MUL 3 do-qe-ja, do-e-ra, ma-te, pa-te-de, ka-ke-u,

.7 MUL 1 do-qe-ja do-e-ra, ma-te, pa-te-de ka-ke-u,

.8 MUL 3

.9.10 *vacant*

.11

ka

.12.13 *vacant*

.1 *Me-ta-pa* (toponym), *ke-ri-mi-ja* chosen (or “pertaining to barley,” or “perfumers”³³) of (the goddess) *Do-qe-ja*

.2 father slave of *do-qe-ja*, mother Cytherean

.3 6 women, slaves of *Do-qe-ja*, sent to the *e-qe-ta* (“Followers” of the king)

.4 for their training, 13 women

.5 father slave of *Do-qe-ja*, mother slave of *Di-wi-ja*

.6 3 women, mother slave of *Do-qe-ja*, father bronze-smith

.7 1 woman, mother slave of *Do-qe-ja*, father bronze-smith

.8 3 women

.9.10 *vacant*

.11 *ka*

.12 *vacant*.

In both instances, the status of sacred slave descended onto the children of these unions. We thus have, in the case of sacred slaves, a combination of privileges and servile obligations.

It is difficult to specify the position of sacred slaves in the hierarchy of the sanctuary at *Pa-ki-ja-ne*, and especially their place in regards to the slaves of the high dignitaries. It is nevertheless tempting to think that the *te-o-jo do-e-ro/-ra* had a status superior to that of the slaves of the cult functionaries, especially as they belonged directly to a deity and not to one of his/her human servitors. One might perhaps compare them to the hierodules of the contemporary Near Eastern civilizations: in Mesopotamia they were very important in the organization of the sanctuaries, where they fulfilled subaltern functions next to the priests and where they enjoyed considerable importance because of their title (see Gadotti, this volume).

The po-re-na of PY Tn 316

The term *po-re-na* may designate a category of persons who had a religious function or aspect. It appears in the long tablet from Pylos Tn 316, which records an offering of gold vases and human beings to various deities and sanctuaries. The term *po-re-na*, mentioned in the headings of both the recto and verso of the tablet, applies to males and females equally. One woman is sent to the goddess *Po-ti-ni-ja* in her sanctuary at *Pa-ki-ja-ne*, another to the goddess *Ma-na-sa* as well as to *Po-si-da-e-ja*. Two women are sent to the sanctuary of Poseidon (*po-si-da-i-jo*), another to the goddess *Pe-re*-*82, and another to *Di-u-ja* (a goddess whose name derives from that of Zeus but is different of Hera).³⁴

The word does not yet have a certain definition and it is difficult to choose amongst different hypotheses that all pertain to a religious context—that they are human victims (although their appearance *after* the vases rather casts this into doubt), or perhaps they are the carriers of the vases, destined to be consecrated to the deity (and thus possibly becoming *te-o-jo do-e-ra*). In any case, it very much appears to pertain to a “cult-related person.”³⁵

The Linear B texts, our only written source for the Mycenaean Aegean, only present us with two categories of women: workers for the palaces, or cult functionaries. Furthermore, even if they did constitute a notable portion of the priestly class, as the texts indicate, instances of their tending to high functions are almost non-existent. One must nevertheless always keep in mind that one of the limits presented by the Mycenaean texts—other than the difficulties in interpreting the syllabic writing system used by the scribes—is their truly lacunose nature, and the fact that these clay tablets only record a period covering the final year of the functioning of the palatial administration. Furthermore, when we avail ourselves of such “official” sources, we must keep in mind that some part of religious life surely escaped palatial control and thus was never mentioned in their archives.

The world of women which the Linear B tablets from the Cretan and Mainland palaces allow us a glimpse of, is thus, above all, a world of servitude and dependence, providing a sharp contrast to the world the Minoan and Mycenaean iconography would have us envision.

Notes

- 1 Evans 1921.
- 2 Thompson 1954.
- 3 Bachofen 1996.
- 4 Brelich 1968: 919–931.
- 5 Wedde 1995: 493–504.
- 6 Crowley 1995: 475–491.
- 7 On these representations, see the various volumes of *CMS*.
- 8 Doumas 1992.
- 9 Younger 1976: 125–136.
- 10 Long 1974: 36–72.
- 11 Lang 1965: pl. 119.
- 12 On this term, see Lejeune 1971: XX.
- 13 Lejeune 1971: XX.
- 14 Stella 1958: 40 sqq., 1965: 259 sqq.
- 15 Piccaluga 1968: 1046–1058.
- 16 Lejeune 1972: XLIII: §3.
- 17 Lejeune 1972: XLV.
- 18 PY Eb 41- = PY Ep 704.2. The *o-na-to* as recorded in the land-holding accounts is the most common category of land tenure. It designates a sub-unit of land belonging to a larger domain whose owner “sub-lets” out the *o-na-to* to another user. The donor of an *o-na-to* may be either an individual: or the *damos*. The term is generally taken as a designation of a “location” or a parcel of land for which the recipient has the usufruct.
- 19 PY Ae 303.a i-je-ro-jo
pu-ro: i-je-re-ja do-e-ra: e-ne-ka: ku-ru-so-jo MUL14.
- 20 On this long Pylia text, see Boëlle 2004: 29–36.
- 21 This Mycenaean term is similar to the Attik κλειδοῦκος “temple guardian”: the priestess κλειδοφόρος, and to the Doric κλακοφόρος, a title borne by a priest in Messenia.
- 22 PY Ae 303.a i-je-ro-jo pu-ro: i-je-re-ja do-e-ra: e-ne-ka: ku-ru-so-joMUL14.
- 23 Boëlle: 2004: 121–123. The “*82” of the name refers to a Linear B sign for which the phonetic value is not yet known.
- 24 Boëlle 2004: 53–54.
- 25 On these titles and the functions of the people who held them, see Carlier 1984.
- 26 Carlier 1985: 63–75.
- 27 Chadwick 1973: 167.
- 28 Godart 1969: 39–65.
- 29 Boëlle 2004: 113–114
- 30 Tovar 1961: 101–122.
- 31 Lejeune 1971: XIX: 76.
- 32 On the Mycenaean land-holding system and in particular the lands dependent on the sanctuaries, see most recently, Zurbach 2010: 21–34.
- 33 On the *ki-ri-te-wi-ja*, see above.
- 34 On this text, see Boëlle 2003: 186–188, 2004: 29–36.

Further reading

- Boëlle, C. (2001) *Po-ti-ni-ja*, unité ou pluralité? In R. Laffineur and R. Hagg (eds) *Potnia, Deities and Religion in the Aegean Bronze Age, Aegaeum* 22. Liège, Belgium and Austin, TX, pp. 403–409.
- Dyczek, P. (1992) The status of women in Aegean culture. Some considerations. In *Studia Aegea et Balcanica in honorem Lodovicae Press*. Warsaw, Poland: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, pp. 81–91.
- Hiller, S. (2011) Mycenaean religion and cult. In Y. Duhoux and A. Morpurgo Davies (eds) *A Companion to Linear B. Mycenaean Greek Texts and Their World Vol. 2*. Louvain la Neuve, Belgium: Peeters, ch. 14.
- Sacconi, A. (2001) Les repas sacrés dans les textes mycéniens. In R. Laffineur and R. Hagg (eds) *Potnia, Deities and Religion in the Aegean Bronze Age, Aegaeum* 22. Liège, Belgium and Austin, TX, pp. 467–470.

References

- Bachofen, J. (1996) *Le Droit Maternel. Recherche sur la Gynécocratie de l'Antiquité dans sa Nature Religieuse et Juridique*, trans. E. Barilier. Lausanne, Switzerland: L'âge d'homme.
- Boëlle, C. (2003) *Po-ti-ni-ja* à Pylos. *Ktéma* 28: 185–196.
- Boëlle, C. (2004) *Po-ti-ni-ja, l'Élément Féminin dans la Religion Mycénienne d'après les Archives en Linéaire B*. Paris: ADRA Nancy, De Boccard.
- Brelich, A. (1968) Religione micenea, osservazioni metodologiche. In *Atti et memorie del 1° congresso internazionale di micenologia, Roma 27 sett–3 ott 1967*. Rome: Dell'Ateneo, pp. 919–931.
- Carlier, P. (1984) *La royauté en Grèce avant Alexandre*, Strasbourg, AECR.
- Carlier, P. (1985) A propos des te-re-ta. In P. H. Ilievski and L. Crepajac (eds) *Tractata Mycenaea, proceedings of the 8th international colloquium on Mycenaean Studies*. Ohrid, Macedonia: Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, pp. 63–75.
- Chadwick, J. (1973) *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*, second edition. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Crowley, J. L. (1995) Images of power in the Bronze Age Aegean. In R. Laffineur and W. D. Niemeier (eds) *Politeia, Society and State in the*

- Aegean Bronze Age. Liège, France: Aegaeum 12, pp. 475–491.
- Doumas, C. (1992) *The Wall-Paintings of Thera*. Athens, Greece: The Thera Foundation.
- Evans, A. (1921) *The Palace of Minos at Knossos*, I. London: Macmillan.
- Godart, L. (1969) La série Fh de Cnossos. *SMEA* VIII: 39–65.
- Lang, M. L (1965) *The Palace of Nestor at Pyloso in Western Messenia* II. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Lejeune, M. (1971) *Mémoires de Philologie Mycénienne 2° série 1958–1963*, Incunabula Graeca XLII. No. XIX Textes mycéniens relatifs aux esclaves; no. XX Prêtres et prêtresses dans les documents mycéniens. Rome: Dell’Ateneo.
- Lejeune, M. (1972) *Mémoires de philologie mycénienne 3° série, 1964–1968*, Incunabula Graeca XLIII. No. XLIII Le récapitulatif du cadastre EP de Pylos; no. XLV Le damos dans la société mycénienne. Rome, ed. Dell’Ateneo.
- Long, C. R. (1974) *The Ayia Triada Sarcophagus: A Study of Late Minoan and Mycenaean Funerary Practices and Beliefs*. Göteborg, Sweden: SIMA XLI.
- Piccaluga, C. (1968) Myc. I-je-re-u, ossevizioni sul suo ruolo sacrale. In *Atti et memorie del 1° congresso internazionale di micenologia, Roma 27 sett- 3 ott 1967*. Rome: Dell’Ateneo, pp. 1046–1058.
- Spyropoulos, T. G. and Chadwick, J. (1975) *The Thebes Tablets II*. Salamanca, Spain: Universidad de Salamanca.
- Stella, L. A. (1958) La religione graeca nei testi micenei. *Numen* 1: 18–57.
- Stella, L. A. (1965) *La Civiltà Micenea nei Documenti Contemporanei*, Incunabula Graeca VI. Rome: Dell’Ateneo, p. 259 sq.
- Thompson, G. (1954) *Studies in Ancient Greek Society I: The Prehistoric Aegean*. Second edition. London: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Tovar, A. (1961) Talleres y oficios en el palacio de Pylos: te-o-jo do-e-ro -ra, domestico -a del rey. *Minos* VII: 101–122.
- Wedde, M. (1995) On hierarchical thinking in Aegean Bronze Age imagery. In R. Laffineur and W. D. Niemeier (eds) *Politeia, Society and State in the Aegean Bronze Age*. Heidelberg, Germany: Université de Liège, pp. 493–504.
- Younger, J. (1976) Representations of Aegean bull-leaping. *AJA* 80: 125–136.
- Zurbach, J. (2010) Les prérogatives foncières des temples mycéniens. In I. Boehm and S. Müller-celka (eds) *Espace Civil, Espace Religieux en Egée durant la Période Mycénienne. Actes des journées de Lyon 2006 et 2007*. Lyon, France: Travaux de la Maison de l’Orient 54, pp. 21–34.

WOMEN IN THE MYCENAEAN ECONOMY

Cynthia W. Shelmerdine

It is a truism that in many societies throughout history women have little visibility and little power. They motivate men but they do not act alongside them; they are property, not property holders; they can be found at home, not out in the world. Only the exceptions make an indelible mark in the historical record. Mycenaean society was as patriarchal as any, but women are not quite invisible. Our best source of evidence for their economic status is the Linear B tablets from various palatial centers. These provide valuable information about the status, occupations, and property holdings of certain groups and individuals, but they do not necessarily describe a representative cross-section of society, let alone female society. They are palatial records, and focus on those with whom the palatial administrators engaged in transactions of various kinds. Thus they are principally concerned with certain types of people: elite officials, menial work groups, individual craftsmen and craftswomen involved in palatial production, and holders of land or other property allocated by the center. This list excludes the silent majority of ordinary people who made up Mycenaean society, and who lived and died without provoking comment in the archival record. The population of the Mycenaean state of Pylos, for example, is estimated to have been about 50,000 people (Whitelaw 2001: 63–64), but only 4,100 are referred to in the tablets (Nakassis 2013: 16) and of these just 900 are women (Olsen 2014: 236). The Knossos and Pylos archives combined make reference to 5,000 men and 2,000 women (Olsen 2014: 49, 61); data from other sites do not change this proportion. Within these limitations, though, we can draw some useful conclusions about the women who do figure in the archives of Knossos, Pylos, and to a lesser extent Mycenae and Thebes.

The tablets allow us to measure power in terms of political office

and other supervisory positions, and by ownership of land and other property. (By this, I mean property that individuals own, or from which they derive personal benefit; Olsen 2014: 135 uses a broader definition that includes commodities handled in the course of their work, like the cloth handled by textile workers.) Men dominate both of these power categories. No woman holds a secular office in the central or local administration. Some women, however, serve as supervisors of other workers, and a few have substantial holdings of land or other property. We look first at these more important landowners and managers, and then at workers further down the economic ladder.

Landholders

At Knossos, the names of two orchard owners can be construed as female: *]ka-wi-ja* (Uf 79) and *pe-ri-je-ja* (Uf 1031). Their holdings are comparable to those of the men recorded in the same series. At Pylos, by contrast, most categories of landholding are restricted to men. No women are attested as owning land outright, but both women and men are leaseholders in the Eb/Ep and Eo/En land tenure records. (For the keybearer's exceptional *ka-ma* holding, see later in this chapter.) These tablets concern the territory of *pa-ki-ja-na*, probably to be rendered as Sphagianes. It is one of the nine districts (and district centers) in the Hither Province, and also a cult place (Killen 2008: 162–165; Lupack 2008: 44–85; Olsen 2014: 202–226). The leases are of two types: 'private' (*ki-ti-me-na*) land held from individuals, and 'communal' (*ke-ke-me-na*) land held from the *dāmos*, the local administrative body in charge of administering this land (Shelmerdine 2008: 134).

Many of the leaseholders, though not all, are religious personnel, as one would expect from a series of records concerned with a cult area. It is important to bear in mind, though, that the situation at Sphagianes may not apply statewide (Ventris and Chadwick 1973: 443). Most leaseholders are identified by title, and sometimes also by name. The women's titles are all religious and include all four known types of female cult officials: servant of the god, *ki-ri-te-wi-ja*, priestess, and keybearer (see Boelle-Weber, this volume). The only woman identified just by name is **35-ke-ja*, who holds a lease of communal land on Eb 871. The recipient of barley and figs on Fn 187.19 is probably the same woman, in the variant **34-ke-ja* (Nakassis 2013: 130, 414). Killen (2001) has shown that many of the Fn tablets, including Fn 187, list rations allocated to participants in religious festivals lasting one, three, or five days. Some of the recipients are

religious personnel, others secular workers (see below, under supervisors and middle-level workers). It is therefore plausible, though not certain, that *34-*ke-ja* is a religious figure like all the other female leaseholders.

The 22 male and 23 female servants of the god (*te-o-jo do-e-ro/ra*) attested in the land records hold comparable numbers of leases, of roughly comparable sizes. In fact, a few of the men's holdings are somewhat smaller than the rest. A few (3 male, 4 female) have leases of both types, but most (19 of each gender) hold just one or the other. The *ki-ri-te-wi-ja* hold a lease of communal land (Eb 321 = Ep 704.4, see later in this chapter). Much more important is Eritha, the priestess of Sphagianes and the only priestess attested in the land records. She holds both types of lease (Eo 224.8/En 609.18; Eb 339/Ep 704.3), and three of her slaves also hold leases (Eb 1176/Ep 539.8; Ep 539.7; Eo 224.6/En 609.16). Usually her title, '(the) priestess of Sphagianes' or just '(the) priestess' suffices to identify her, but on Ep 704 her name is given as well.

Ep 704

- .1 o-pe-to-re-u , qe-ja-me-no , e-ke , ke-ke-me-na , ko-to-na , to-so , pe-mo[] Gr̥a 2 T 5
- .2 u-wa-mi-ja , te-o-jo , do-e-ra , o-na-to , e-ke-qe , i-je-re-ja , ķe-ra , to-so pe-mo GRA T 1 v 3
- .3 e-ri-ta , i-je-re-ja , o-na-to , e-ke , ke-ke-me-na , ko-to-na , pa-ro , da-mo , to-so , pe-mo GRA T 4
- .4 ki-ri-te-wi-ja , o-na-to , e-ko-si , ke-ke-me-na , ko-to-na□ pa-ro , da-mo , ʔo-so , pe-mo GRA 1 T 9
- .5 e-ri-ta , i-je-re-ja , e-ke , e-u-ke-to-qe , e-to-ni-jo , e-ke-e , te-o , da-mo-de-mi , pa-si , ko-to-na-o ,
- .6 ke-ke-me-na-o , o-na-to , e-ke-e , to-so pe-mo GRA 3 T 9
- .7 ka-pa-ti-ja , ka-ra-wi-po-ro , e-ke , ke-ke-me-no , o-pe-ro-sa , du-wo-u-pi , wo-ze-e , o-u-wo-ze , [[]]
- .8 to-şo[pe-mo GRA]4

- .1 *o-pe-to-re-u* ?? holds a communal plot, so much seed, WHEAT 240 liters
- .2 Uwamia servant of the god, and she holds a lease as a gift of honor of the priestess, so much seed, WHEAT 14.4 liters

- .3 Eritha the priestess holds a lease of a communal plot from the *dāmos*, so much seed, WHEAT 38.4 liters
- .4 the *ki-ri-te-wi-ja* hold a lease of a communal plot from the *dāmos*, so much seed, WHEAT 182.4 liters
- .5 Eritha the priestess holds and claims to hold an *e-to-ni-jo* for the god, but the *dāmos* says
- .6 she holds a lease of communal plots, so much seed, WHEAT 374.4 liters
- .7 Karpathia the keybearer holds two communal (plots), being obligated to work with both she does not work
- .8 so much [seed WHEAT 998.]4 liters

Lines 5–6 reveal a dispute between the priestess and the civil authority. Eritha claims that a large leasehold (374.4 liters on Ep 704.6, 379.2 liters on Eb 297) is an *e-to-ni-jo* that she holds ‘for the god.’ The *dāmos* disagrees, and says the lease is of the ordinary communal type. The stakes are high, because it appears that *e-to-ni-jo* holdings are exempt from the usual obligations incumbent on leaseholders. We never find out how the dispute was resolved, but it shows us that the priestess of the chief cult place of the Pylian state claims a substantial plot of land, in addition to her regular holdings. Moreover, she can stand up against the secular authority to defend its privileged status. Another indication of her power is that, unlike other women, she can dispense as well as receive land. A lease held by a female servant of the god is reported to be a ‘*geras* (gift of honor) of the priestess’ (Eb 416/Ep 704.2).

Karpathia the keybearer also comes into conflict with the *dāmos* on Ep 704.7–8 (the corresponding entry on Eb 338 defines her also as at or from Sphagianes). On both tablets she is recorded as holding two communal (plots) which ‘being obligated to work she does not work.’ This entry diverges from the expected formula ‘lease of communal plots.’ In fact the reference to the obligation of working or not working applies otherwise to a different type of holding, *ka-ma* land (Ventris and Chadwick 1973: 255, 261, 448–449). The other holders of such plots are all men; Karpathia is exceptional in being the only woman to hold this type of land (Lejeune 1966: 260–261). The size of the plot is not preserved on either Eb 338 or Ep 704.8, but it can be restored as WHEAT 10 T 4 (998.4 liters; Lejeune 1966: 261); this is three times the size of the plot claimed as *e-to-ni-jo* by Eritha, and in line with the figures for other attested *ka-ma* plots. Eritha and

Karpathia are listed with the priest of Sphagianes, *we-te-re-u*, and a Follower identifiable as Amphimedes on Ed 317, where their combined Eb series holdings are totaled (Lejeune 1966; Ventris and Chadwick 1973: 452). They therefore stand out as two of the four preeminent figures in the land tenure records.

Supervisors

The land tenure records at Pylos, then, show two women with significant power: Eritha the priestess and Karpathia the keybearer, both of Sphagianes. Both appear in other Pylos tablets as well, and it is clear that their authority extends beyond land to the management of other property and of people. A Karpathia, generally assumed to be the keybearer, is mentioned by name on Un 443.3 as the donor of a large amount (192 liters) of barley (Nakassis 2013: 275). That she could command such resources is another sign of her economic standing. The title ‘keybearer’ itself implies a high degree of responsibility: like her Classical equivalent the κλειδοῦχος/κλαδοφόρος, she must control access to the resources of the sanctuary by controlling its keys. We see this function of the keybearer in the heading of Jn 829. The first five lines read:

Jn 829:

.1 jo-do-so-si , ko-re-te-re , du-ma-te-qe ,

.a-e-we-qe

.2 po-ro-ko-re-te-re-qe , ka-ra-wi-po-ro-qe , o-pi-su-ko-qe , o-pi-ka-pe-

.3 ka-ko , na-wi-jo , pa-ta-jo-i-qe , e-ke-si-qe , a₃-ka-sa-ma

.4 pi-*82 , ko-re-te AES M 2 po-ro-ko-re-te AES N 3

.5 me-ta-pa , ko-re-te AES M 2 po-ro-ko-re-te AES N 3[] *vacat*

.1 Thus the mayors and the *du-ma-te* will give

.2 and the vice-mayors and the keybearers and the fig supervisors and the supervisors of ?

.3 temple bronze as points for javelins and spears

.4 pi-*82 mayor BRONZE 1.9 kg vice-mayor BRONZE 726 g.

.5 me-ta-pa mayor BRONZE 1.9 kg vice-mayor BRONZE 726 g.[]

Assessments are given only for mayors and vice-mayors of the main districts of the Pylian state, but the implication is that each district had (at least) one of each type of official listed in the heading (Lindgren 1973: 72–73, however, believes the heading refers specifically to Karpathia).

A priestess and a keybearer appear together on the reverse of Un 6, as recipients (?) of cloth; the obverse lists offerings to Poseidon and the goddess *pe-re-**82. Each of these deities has a sanctuary at Sphagianes; they are listed on Tn 316, where Sphagianes is the only toponym, and a recent quasi-join confirms the worship of Poseidon there (Petrakis 2010):

Fr 343 [+] 1209:

.a

e-ti-we ,

pa-ki-ja[-si po-]se-da-o-ne re-ke-to-ro-te-ri-jo OLE[

at Sphagianes to Poseidon for the festival of the spreading
of the bed, red? OIL[

It is very plausible, then, that the keybearer and priestess in question are Karpathia and Eritha, and that the tablet refers to goods heading to Sphagianes. In that context it would be clear which priestess and keybearer were meant, but in any case, the prominence of these two individuals might allow them to be identified by their titles alone (three other priestesses are given both name and title in the Pylos Qa series: Qa 1289, Qa 1300 where the name is missing, Qa 1303 where the word ‘priestess’ is incomplete).

It is likely that Ae 110 and Ae 303 also refer to these two individuals; these are parallel texts by the same scribe (Hand 42).

Ae 303:

.a

i-je-ro-jo

pu-ro , i-je-re-ja , do-e-ra , e-ne-ka , ku-ru-so-jo MUL 14[

Pylos, slaves of (the) priestess, because of (the) sacred gold,
WOMAN 14

Ae 110:

pu-ro , ka-ra-wi-po-ro-jo , do-ē[

The situation Ae 303 refers to was no doubt clearer to the scribe than it is to us: are the slaves at Pylos to look after the gold, or is the gold a price that Pylos paid to the priestess for them? Because in a significant religious context the priestess is not named, she may well be Eritha, the only prominent priestess we know of (Duhoux 2008: 295–296). By the same token Ae 110 can be understood to refer to Karpathia: ‘Pylos, slaves? of (the) keybearer.’ Because of the break the gender of the slaves and any further explanation are lost. However, we can probably add these two Ae tablets to the evidence that Eritha and Karpathia manage property and slaves as well as land.

We also find supervisors of workers and work groups in palatial records from Knossos, Pylos, Mycenae, and Thebes. Anonymous supervisors (male, abbreviated *DA* and female, abbreviated *TA*) accompany menial work groups at Pylos, and a male supervisor (*DA*) appears with some of the work groups at Thebes as well (Chadwick 1988: 71–73; see below under low-level workers), but most such persons of authority are identified by name. Ln 1568, a textile tablet from Knossos, describes a ‘finishing’ workshop, where woven cloths receive final decoration before being delivered to the palace. The head of this workshop is identified in line 5 by the entry *pa-ṛo no-si-ro*, ‘at the place/hands of [the man] *no-si-ro*’; line 6 locates it at the place *da-wo*. On the lower edge of this tablet two supervisors are recorded in line b; the preposition *o-pi* with their names indicates that a commodity, in this case wool, is in their charge. One at least is a woman, Phoinikeia, and the other, *ma-tu-ṛe*, may be as well. Similar information appears on Ld 584:

Ld 584:

- .1 *po-]ki-ro-nu-ka* ‘*o-pi-qi-na*’ TELA² 4
- .2 *pa-]ro* , *e-ta-wo-ne-we* ‘*o-nu-ka*’ TELA² 5

lat. inf. *]to-sa* TELA 15

- .1 with multicolored ? in the charge of *qi-na* CLOTH 4
- .2 at Etawoneus’ CLOTH 5

lat. inf. *]so many* CLOTH 15

pa-]ro , *e-ta-wo-ne-we* identifies the man *Etawoneus* as head of a

finishing workshop, and *o-pi-qi-na* indicates a female supervisor named *qi-na*. Supervisors attested on other textile tablets include both men and women. Thus a typical Knossian textile finishing workshop had a man in overall charge, lower-level women workers, and intermediate-level supervisors of either gender.

A group of religious women at Knossos also have a supervisory role in controlling rations for workers. On E 777, a monthly allotment of wheat is recorded for women at Knossos, Amnisos, and Phaistos:

E 777

.1	ko-no-si-ja / ki-ri-te-wi-ja-i	LUNA 1	GRA 100[
.2	a-mi-ni-si-ja	LUNA 1	GRA 100 [
.3	pa-i-ti-ja	LUNA 1	GRA 100[

verso

.1	a-ze-ti-ri-ja	GRA 10[
.1	women of Knossos, to the <i>ki-ri-te-wi-ja-i</i>	MONTH 1 WHEAT 9600? liters
.2	women of Amnisos	MONTH 1 WHEAT 9600 liters
.3	women of Phaistos	MONTH 1 WHEAT 9600? liters

verso

.1	finishers	WHEAT 960? liters
----	-----------	-------------------

The dative ‘to the *ki-ri-te-wi-ja-i*’ in the first line should probably be understood in the other entries also. If so, a large amount of monthly rations is being assigned in the first instance to these cult officials (Boëlle-Weber, this volume). The smaller allocation on the reverse to women ‘finishers’ might suggest that the ultimate recipients on the obverse also are textile workers (Killen 2004: 166–167). The relevant Knossos personnel series (Ai, Ak, and Ap tablets) attest to the textile industry in all three places. On the scale of the rations for menial women in the Pylos Ab series (19.2 liters of wheat per month, see below under low-level workers), 9,600 liters would support 500 women. Thus the *ki-ri-te-wi-ja* oversee rations for a large population of workers, a high level of responsibility.

At Mycenae, the evidence for supervisors is very limited. The oil tablet Fo 101 lists allocations of unguent (OLE + WE) to women who are all probably textile workers (Killen 1981; see below under middle-level workers). The first woman listed, *a-ne-a₂*, receives three times the individual amount of v 1 (1.6 liters), and women described as *pi-we-ri-ši* receive six times that amount. The assumption is that three supervisors are listed here: *a-ne-a₂* and two *pi-we-ri-ši*. We cannot be sure, however, whether the women receive unguent for use in their work or as rations/compensation for it (Varias 2012: 159, with

references).

At Pylos also, both male and female supervisors are attested. The most important of the women is Kessandra, to whom the ‘Collector’ *a-ko-so-ta* allocates men on An 435. She also receives large amounts of wheat on the ration tablets Fg 368 and Fg 828 (480 liters each, along with 480 liters of figs on Fg 368); these are very likely intended to support the men assigned to her. An 435 lists at least 19 men; if the total were 20, the quantities would support the men for 20 days, calculated on a daily scale of 1.2 liters per person (Nakassis 2012: 279–282). A Kessandra receives textiles on Mb 1380 and Mn 1368.2, and is probably the same individual (Shelmerdine 2002: 314–315; Nakassis 2013: 141). With the exception of the priestess and keybearer on Un 6, Kessandra is the only woman at any site who seems to receive commodities that are neither rations nor for use in her work. Her receipt of textiles and her responsibility for men assigned to her by the palace through one of its most important officials, as well as her control of rations for them, make her the most important secular women known at any site.

On Pylos An 1281 men are assigned to the male supervisor Augeiateus and to the female supervisors *me-ta-ka-wa*, *mi-jo-qa*, and Amphiera at two seats of the deity (or deities) Potnia:

An 1281

- | | | |
|----|------------------------|-------|
| .1 | po-]ti-ni-ja , i-qe-ja | |
| .2 |]mo , o-pi-e-de-i | |
| .3 | a-ka , re-u-si-wo-qe | VIR 2 |

.4 au-ke-i-ja-te-we [[]]
 .5 o-na-se-u , ta-ni-ko-qe VIR 2
 .6 me-ta-ka-wa , p̄o-so-ro VIR 1
 .7 mi-jo-qa[]e-we-za-no VIR 1
 .8 a-p̄i-e-ra_L to-ze-u VIR 1
 .9]-a-ke-si , po-ti-ni-ja , re-si-wo VIR 1
 .10 au-ke-i-ja-te-we[]ro VIR 1
 .11 mi-jo-qa , ma-ra-si-jo [] VIR 1
 .12 me-ta-ka-wa , ti-ta-ra-[] VIR 1
 .13 a-pi-e-ra , ru-ko-ro VIR 1
 .14-15 vacant

.1 to Potnia of horses
 .2]-mo at the shrine
 .3 a-ka and re-u-si-wo MAN 2
 .4 to Augeiateus,
 .5 Onaseus and ta-ni-ko MAN 2
 .6 to me-ta-ka-wa, Psoles MAN 1
 .7 to mi-jo-qa[]e-we-za-no MAN 1
 .8 to Amphiera, to-ze-u MAN 1
 .9 at]a-ke-si to Potnia re-si-wo MAN 1
 .10 to Augeiateus,[]ro MAN 1
 .11 to mi-jo-qa, ma-ra-si-jo[] MAN 1
 .12 to me-ta-ka-wa, ti-ta-ra-[] MAN 1
 .13 to Amphiera, ru-ko-ro MAN 1

An 1281 is one of an interconnected group of tablets found in the Northeast Building. There are other personnel records in addition to An 1281; one of them, An 1282, assigns men to work on parts of chariots. Ub 1315 is an inventory of leather goods, Ub 1316 and Ub 1317 concern deerskins owing from the previous year, and Ub 1318, by the same scribe as Ub 1316 and Ub 1317, allocates animal hides to workers to make leather products; one of the recipients is the supervisor Augeiateus from An 1281 (see below under skilled workers). The context is clearly industrial, and these texts identify the Northeast Building as an administrative headquarters for work on leather and chariots, if not the place where this work was actually done (Bendall 2003). Three of the supervisors' names from An 1281 recur on the ration tablet Fn 50.13:

- .1 a-ki-to-jo , qa-si-re-wi-ja HORD[*qs*
 .2 ke-ko-jo , qa-si-re-wi-ja HORD [*qs*
 .3 a-ta-no-ro , qa-si-re-wi-ja HORD T[*qs*
 .4 me-za-ne HORD V 2 a₃-ki-a₂-ri-jo V 2[
 .5 me-ri-du-te HORD V 3 mi-ka-ta HORD V 3
 .6 di-pte-ra-po-ro HORD V 2 e-to-wo-ko V 2
 .7 a-to-po-qo HORD V 2 po-ro-du-ma-te HORD V 2
 .8 o-pi-te-u-ke-e-we HORD V 2 i-za-a-to-mo-i HORD V 3
 .9 ze-u-ke-u-si HORD V 4
 .10 v.[]vacat
 .11 au[-ke-i-]ja-te-wo , do-e-ro-i HORD T 1
- .12 mi-jo[-qa] do-e-ro-i HORD V 3
 .13 a-pi-e-ra_{LJ} do-e-ro-i HORD V 3
 .14]-wo[]ne[do-e-ro-]i HORD T 3
 .15-.18 vacant
- .1 for the workgroup of *a-ki-to* BARLEY[*qs*
 .2 for the workgroup of *ke-ko* BARLEY [*qs*
 .3 for the workgroup of *a-ta-no* BARLEY T[*qs*
 .4 for the *me-za-ne* BARLEY 3.2 liters, for the shoreman 3.2 liters[
 .5 for the *me-ri-du-<ma>* BARLEY 4.8 liters, for the *mi-ka-ta* BARLEY
 4.8 liters
 .6 for the leather-bearer? BARLEY 3.2 liters, for the armorer BARLEY 3.2 liters
 .7 for the baker BARLEY 3.2 liters, for the vice-mayor BARLEY 3.2 liters
 .8 for the manager? BARLEY 3.2 liters, for the *i-za-a-to-mo-i* BARLEY 4.8 liters
 .9 for the yoke-men BARLEY 6.4 liters
 .10
 .11 for the slaves of Augeiateus BARLEY 9.6 liters
 .12 for the slaves of *mi-jo[-qa]* BARLEY 4.8 liters
 .13 for the slaves of Amphiera BARLEY 4.8 liters
 .14 for the slaves of ?? BARLEY 28.8 liters

Here barley rations are allocated to their slaves, who may be the same workers listed on An 1281. If Killen is right that many of the Fn tablets concern religious festivals (see also above under land holders), here too they appear “in the context of religious, rather than secular, ‘industrial’ activity” (Killen 2001: 435). Other recipients on the same tablet include work groups (*qa-si-re-wi-ja*) as well as cult personnel; one of the work groups and slaves of *mi-jo-qa* recur on Fn 837.11,12. Amphiera and *mi-jo-qa* are usually assumed to be priestesses on the grounds that priestesses are the only women known to have slaves (Olivier 1960: 134–135; Killen 2001: 438). In fact, however, few priestesses are attested at any site (Boëlle-Weber, this volume), and if Ae 303 refers to Eritha, she is the only priestess with slaves. Absent the title, we should therefore assume that Amphiera, *me-ta-ka-wa*, and *mi-jo-qa* are simply supervisors of men working in a religious context,

and not necessarily priestesses, any more than their colleague Augeiateus must be a priest.

Two more women in the Fn series can also be identified with some confidence as supervisors. Aipygeneia (*a3-pu-ke-ne-ja*) receives rations of olives and barley for a five-day festival on Fn 79.1 (Chadwick 1976: 118–119; Killen 2001: 439–440), calculated at a standard daily ration of 1.6 liters of barley per person. The 64 liters going to Aipygeneia could be a mark of high status (Killen 2001: 440 n. 22) but are probably intended to support eight people for whom she is responsible (Nakassis 2013: 223 n. 127). Similarly, Amphitheia on Fn 187.1 receives 192 liters of figs and presumably barley (the figure is missing but the two commodities are allocated in equal amounts) for a three-day festival (Killen 2001: 440). This would be a very large quantity for one individual, but reasonable if it constituted rations for a number of people under her supervision.

Middle-level workers

Almost all the labor recorded by palatial scribes is segregated by gender, and the range of women's occupations is quite restricted compared to that of their male counterparts. No female workers stray into the male territory of bronze working, perfume manufacture, or military duties. Supervisors of both genders are attested (see above under supervisors), and a few men and women work together producing leather goods at Pylos (see later in this chapter). For the most part, though, men and women work in separate groups, and they also perform different tasks. Olsen (2014: 61) finds only 5 of 200 known occupational titles that can refer to both genders: 'priest/priestess,' 'slave,' 'slave of a deity,' 'stitcher,' and 'weaver.' To this list we must add two more: the title 'wage-earners' refers to women on PY Aa 777, etc. and to men on PY An 199, while the title 'finishers, decorators' is applied to female textile workers and at Pylos to male bronze workers.

Most working women are in the textile industry; many belong to anonymous groups of low-status workers, fully dependent on the palace (see below under low-level workers), but some are more independent and the scribes record their names. Occasionally this distinction is blurred. Some textile workers are named on the Knossos cloth record Ln 1568 (see above under supervisors); they probably belong to the work group of 'women of *da-wo*' that appears anonymously on Ak 780 and Lc 526 (Killen 1988: 324, with references). Ak 780 is one of the tablets recording anonymous groups

of menial women (see below on low-level workers), and Lc 526 gives a production target for it. In the particular context of the finishing workshop on Ln 1568, however, it is necessary to identify the cloth made by specific group members. Similarly, two named women receive wool on Of 27 from Thebes, but more common in this series are anonymous work groups (see below under low-level workers).

Both men and women textile workers receive distributions of wool at Mycenae in the Oe series from the House of the Oil Merchant; some are identified by name, others by occupation (Varias 2012: 156–159). Fo 101 from the same building concerns four groups of women textile workers. Women in the first two groups are identified individually by name, those in the third and fourth collectively by occupational title. It is interesting that six of the women’s names recur on the contemporary tablet Vn 659, found in the nearby West House. This is probably a list of bedding allocated to pairs of women (for a different view see Duhoux 2008: 289–294). On this reading the women must be housed here as part of their working arrangements (Varias 2012: 159), perhaps because they are at Mycenae on a temporary assignment (see also below on mothers, wives, and daughters).

At Pylos, too, named women workers can be identified. Bedding is allocated to men and women on Vn 851. Their occupations are not given, but the text resembles Vn 659 from Mycenae. On Vn 34, pairs of men and women are listed; the man’s name is in the genitive, indicating possession of some kind—logically the women could be wives, daughters, or simply subordinate workers. Some of the men appear on other tablets, where some are identified as both bronzesmiths and military officials (Nakassis 2013: 143–144). Only one of the women is otherwise attested: Wordieia appears together with her husband/superior Mestianor on Ub 1318:

Ub 1318:

- .1 au-ke-i-ja-te-we , ka-tu-re-wi-ja-i di-pte-ra 4 [•-•-•-•]di-pte-ra 2
au-ke-i-ja-te-we , o-ka , di-pte-ra[
- .2 au-ke-i-ja-te-we o-pi-de-so-mo_{LL} , ka-tu-ro₃ , di-pte-ra 4 ka-ne-ja_{LL} wo-ro-ma-ta 4
- .3 me-ti-ja-no , to-pa , ru-de-a₂ , di-pte-ra 1 a-re-se-si , e-ru-ta-ra , di-pte-ra 3
wo-di-je-ja , pe-di-ra 2
- .4 we-e-wi-ja , di-pte-ra , 10 wi-ri-no , we-ru-ma-ta , ti-ri-si , ze-u-ke-si 1
- .5 wi-ri-no , pe-di-ro , e-ma-ta 4 e-ra-pe-ja , e-pi-u-ru-te-we , E 2
- .6 a-pe-i-ja , u-po , ka-ro , we-[]-ja 1 u-po , we-e-wi-ja , e-ra-pe-ja E 1

- .7 mu-te-we , we-re-ne-ja , ku[]pe-re 1 mu-te-we , di-pte-ra , a₃-za ,
pe-di-ro-i 1
.8-.9 vacant
- .1 to Augeiateus for saddle-bags 4 hides, . . . 2 hides, to Augeiateus for straps?
xx hides
.2 to Augeiateus, as bindings of pack-saddles 4 hides, 4 wicker containers?
.3 to Mestianor as ?? 1 hide, for ?? 3 red hides, to Wordieia 2 sandals
.4 10 pig hides, 1 tanned hide as wrappers? for three pairs
.5 4 tanned hides as laces? of sandals, 2 deer hides as ??
.6 to Ampheia 1 pig hide with fringe underneath, 1 deer hide with pig hide
underneath
.7 to Myrteus 1 sheep hide ??, to Myrteus 1 goat hide for sandals

This is one of the tablets from the industrial context of the Northeast Building (see above under supervisors); it records allocations of animal hides to men and women, and the products to be made from them. Most scholars therefore regard the recipients as craftsmen and craftswomen who are to make these goods (Ventris and Chadwick 1973: 489–493; in line 3, ‘sandals to Wordieia’ is thought to be an error for ‘hides for sandals to Wordieia’). It is worth noting that for once the division of labor is not gendered (as suggested by Bernabé and Luján 2008: 222), since both Wordieia and the man Myrteus are to make sandals. Hiller (1989: 49–51) and Olsen (2014: 150–153) take a different view, that the paired men and women of Vn 34 are elite officials and their wives, and that Mestianor, Wordieia, and the others on Ub 1318 are receiving finished leather goods for their personal use. Both the text and the context are against this hypothesis, however. It is difficult to regard these recipients as anything but craft workers. We should probably understand the other pairs on Vn 34 in the same way (Nakassis 2013: 143–144). If so, the women of Vn 34 and Ampheia on Ub 1318 do not make up a category of elite wives, of “high social status but little economic autonomy,” as argued by Olsen (2014: 150–153, 154). They are craftswomen, who share work duties with men, though still remaining subordinate to them.

There is a further possibility that some middle-level women in the textile industry may have worked part-time for the palace as *corvée* laborers, that is, conscripted for a particular project for little or no pay. PY Ae 629 and 634 record female workers apparently of a different kind than those discussed above. The tablets were written by a different scribe and found in the Megaron, not the Archives Rooms 7–8, and on Ae 634 some of the women are described as ‘owing’ (the abbreviation *o.* for *o-pe-ro*), a term used of *corvée* workers elsewhere at Pylos (Uchitel 1984; Killen 2006: 94, 96–97). Olsen (2014: 187–189) argues that some of the women on the Knossos Ak tablets were likewise *corvée* workers, but the evidence for their fully dependent

status is stronger.

Low-level workers

At the bottom of the socio-economic scale are supervised groups of unnamed women, compensated monthly by the palace with rations of wheat and figs. At Pylos the personnel series Aa, when complete, probably recorded 750 such women (Chadwick 1988: 76), along with their children (see below on mothers, wives, and daughters). These tablets fall into two sets written by different scribes, Hand 1 for the Hither and Hand 4 for the Further Province. The women are described either by occupation, by ethnicity, or by an adjective derived from the name of a man who controls that group; *DA* and *TA* are abbreviations for a male and female supervisor (Chadwick 1988: 71–73; see above under supervisors):

Aa 89

ą-ra-ka-te-ja MUL 21 ko-wa 25 ko-wo 4 TA 1

spinning women 21, girls 25, boys 4, one female supervisor

Aa 792

ki-ni-di-ja MUL 21 ko-ṽą 12 ko-wo 10 DA 1 TA 1

WOMEN of Knidos 21, GIRL 12, BOY 10, 1 male supervisor, 1 female supervisor

From the occupational terms, it is clear that most were involved in the textile industry (see Burke, this volume), but three other titles describe domestic occupations: ‘flour-grinders’ (*me-re-ti-ri-ja*, Aa 62, Aa 764), ‘attendants’ (*a-pi-qo-ro*, Aa 804), and ‘bath-pourers’ (*re-wo-to-ro-ko-wo*, Aa 783). These and most of the textile production duties are “labor intensive, repetitive and time-consuming tasks” (Olsen 2014: 109).

Two sets of tablets correspond to the Aa series: rations for the workers in the Hither Province are recorded on the Ab tablets, and the Ad series lists their older sons (see below on mothers, wives, and daughters):

Ab 189

.A

GRA 6 T 7 TA DA

.B pu-ro ki-ni-di-ja MUL 20 ko-wa 10 ko-wo 10 NI 6 T 7

at Pylos, WOMEN of Knidos 20, GIRL 10, BOY 10, FIG 643.2 liters,
WHEAT 643.2 liters, female supervisor, male supervisor

Ad 683

pu-ro ki-ni-di-ja-o ko-wo VIR 5 ko-wo 4

at Pylos, sons of the women of Knidos, MAN 5, BOY 4

The women receive rations of 19.2 liters each of wheat and figs per month, and their accompanying children half that amount. There is no gender discrimination in this regard. Male workers on Au 658 from Mycenae also receive 19.2 liters of wheat, and low-level male work groups at Knossos and Pylos get an equivalent amount of barley per person (36 liters per month; KN Am 819, PY Fn 7).

The ethnic adjectives that identify some of the women clearly mark them as outsiders. With just one or two exceptions, the toponyms from which the ethnics derive are outside the area controlled by Pylos: some of the women come from Knidos, Miletus, Kythera, and Lemnos, and others probably from Khios, Lydia, and the area of Halikarnassos. Another group is identified simply as ‘captives’ (*ra-wi-ja-ja*, Aa 807), so it follows that the foreigners identified by ethnics were not captured, but perhaps acquired by trade (Chadwick 1988: 92). They are effectively slaves, and we may extend this designation to the rest of the women in the series, since they are all treated uniformly. The anonymity of these workers, their menial occupations, and their dependence on the palace for their livelihood all support this conclusion (Chadwick 1988: 92; Olsen 2014: 111–113). Most of the women are based at Pylos itself, including the captives and 10 of the 14 workgroups identified by ethnics. Here the demand for work would doubtless have been greatest, and the concentration of outsiders at the center is a logical precaution. The other groups identified by ethnics are also at major towns, two at the Further Province capital Leuktron (Aa 60, Ad 326), and one each at a district center: *ro-u-so* (Aa 798 / Ab 382) in the Hither Province, and *pu-ro ra-u-ra-ti-jo* (Aa 61 / Ad 664; elsewhere written variously as *pu-ro ra-wa-ra-ti-jo* or simply *ra-wa-ra-ti-ja/ra-wa-ra-ta2*) in the Further Province.

Comparable supervised work groups of low-status women appear at Knossos, mostly in the Ai and Ak series; the latter alone, when complete, is likely to have recorded more than 1,000 such workers (Killen 1984: 52 with n. 10). As at Pylos, the women are in many

cases listed with their children (see below on mothers, wives, and daughters) and sometimes with supervisors; they are again identified by occupation, ethnicity, or by the ‘Collector’ who controls them, not by name. Some women are defined as ‘last year’s’ or ‘this year’s,’ ‘old’ or ‘new’; these terms must refer to how recently they joined the work group.

Ak(2) 627

- .1 *da* *22-to , / *a-no-zo-jo TA 1* ‘*DA 1*’ *ṃuL[]9 pe di 2*
- .2 *ko-wa* / *me-zo-e 7 ko-wa* / *ṃe-wi-jo-e 10*
- .3 *ko-wo* / *me-zo-e 2 ko-wo* / *ṃe-wi-jō-e 10*
- .1 at *da* *22-to of (the man) *a-no-zo 1* female supervisor, 1 male supervisor, 9? women, 2 last year’s women in training
- .2 7 older girls, 10 younger girls
- .3 2 older boys, 10 younger boys

Production targets of various textiles survive for some of the groups of women (Lc series), and allocations of wool (Od series). (Ln 1568 is an exceptional case where names are given for women probably belonging to the group on Ak 780 / Lc 526; see above under supervisors and middle-level workers.) That the palace supplied them with rations is clear from a few tablets, including the Ai(2) set, though the evidence is less complete than at Pylos. Here, however, all the occupations referred to are in the textile industry, and though a number of groups are identified by ethnics, all of these relate to places in Crete. Furthermore, these workers are not concentrated mainly at the center, as at Pylos. Some of the tablets listing women against a controller explicitly call them ‘slaves’ (*do-e-ra*, Ai 824, Ai 1036, Ap 628) and on Ai 1037 a reference to a slave woman includes the verb ‘bought’ (*qi-ri-ja-to*), a word also used to describe the purchase of male slaves (KN B 822, B 988; Olivier 1987). The equivalent women designated by occupation and ethnicity, doing similar work and recorded in the same way, also seem to be of fully dependent status, though not attached in the same way to individual owners.

At Thebes, women textile workers (*o-ti-ri-ja-i*, cf. PY Aa 313) are among the recipients of barley on several Fq tablets. In the Of series, wool is allocated to anonymous work groups (and two individual women, see above under middle-level workers). Though the matching

personnel records are lacking, the presence of a male supervisor (abbreviated *DA*), and the identification of the women by occupations in the textile industry or by the ‘Collector’ in control of them, suggest they are comparable to the low-level workers from Knossos and Pylos.

Mothers, wives, and daughters

Family matters receive little attention in the tablets, as one would expect from documents focused on palatial business (Hiller 1989; Carlier 1999). The theonym ‘Divine Mother’ appears on PY Fr 1202, but in reference to humans the words ‘mother’ and ‘father’ occur only on PY An 607 (see also Budin, this section). Children are referred to much more frequently than parents. Sometimes the word ‘son’ or ‘daughter’ makes the relationship explicit (on the various ways of spelling ‘son,’ see Duhoux 2007); sometimes the words ‘boy’ and ‘girl’ carry this meaning. Matronymics are not attested; patronymics are rare (one or two examples at Knossos and Mycenae, more at Pylos), and tend to mark men of high rank (Carlier 1999: 191–193; García Ramón 2011: 229; Nakassis 2013 *passim*). For instance, on PY An 654.8–9 we find Alektryon, son of Eteokles, and his brother *ne-qe-u* appears on Aq 64.15, both with the patronymic adjective of their father’s name. Alektryon is one of the elite officials known as ‘Followers,’ and *ne-qe-u* has substantial land holdings, so the two men are clearly of high standing. A father’s name in the genitive can function the same way. Three entries on KN V 1523 probably list men as ‘X son of Y,’ and we also have a few examples from Pylos (Duhoux 2007: 96, 97). In all these cases the identity of the son, and perhaps his status, is bound up with his father’s identity. Never in the extant archives are women thus identified.

Other references to sons, and all references of similar type to daughters, omit the individual’s name and give only the name of the parent, who is always of the same gender as the individual being identified. A number of references to unnamed men as ‘son of X’ have come to light at Thebes in the Fq series and a few Gp tablets (Duhoux 2007, 2008: 357; a less attractive interpretation is proposed by the original editors, Aravantinos *et al.* 2001). The meaning of the Fq series is disputed, but at Mycenae there are a few clear examples of purely work-related references to anonymous children. Thus on MY Oe 106, wool is allocated to ‘the daughter of [the woman] *o-te-ra*,’ and on Oe 121 to ‘the son of [the man] *pa-se-r-*.’ These children are old enough to work, but their own names do not matter; they are identified by the parent who is a known member of the work force.

More common in the palatial archives are cases of men accompanied by their sons, and women by their sons and daughters. The sons are evidently working with their fathers. At Knossos, for example, rations for a work group of 18 men and 8 boys are recorded on Am 819; it is likely that these are fathers and sons. At Pylos the names of a bronzesmith (Jn 725.8) and a work group head (Jn 431.6) are both followed by ‘and son.’ Similarly, among the pairs of named men listed on the personnel record Au 102 at Mycenae is an entry for a man ‘and son’ (unless the word *i-jo* here is the name *Ion*, Duhoux 2007: 96). At first glance, V 659 from the same site appears to be a comparable document. Most of the entries lists pairs of named women, but there are two references to a woman ‘and daughter,’ presumably family members working together. However, two more entries list a woman ‘and *ki-ra*.’ This last word is understood as the word for a baby or little girl, /*gillā*/ (cf. Classical νεόγυλος). If so, these two women have with them children who are too young to be part of the work force, but who still must be noted for the purpose of issuing rations or, in this case, bedding.

The dependent textile women at Knossos and Pylos also have with them ‘boys’ and ‘girls’ who are presumably their children; the abbreviation *tu* on some Ap tablets is probably short for *tu-ka-te*, ‘daughter.’ These women at least clearly have the primary responsibility of caring for younger children of both sexes. How young the children began working is unclear, but based on Near Eastern comparanda a child might begin contributing as early as age 5 or 6 (Nosch 2003: 16–17, with references). Whether still younger children are with their mothers in the workplace has been debated (against, Nixon 1999: 562–563; in favor, Nosch 2003: 17). The reference to very young girls on Mycenae V 659 suggests that the palatial system does accommodate this obligation, and that support for working women extends even to their youngest children.

These children who stay with their working mothers learn the same trade and take their place as contributing members of the work force. The Knossos tablets in fact go into detail about the age and training of children. As discussed above, boys and girls are specified as being ‘younger’ or ‘older.’ None of the ‘younger’ children at Knossos are in training, and they too may be below working age. Some of the women and children are said to be ‘in training’ (*di-da-ka-re* literally ‘at the teacher’s’) or ‘having completed training’ (*de-di-ku-ja*, perhaps an error for *de-di<-da>-ku-ja*). This reference is presumed to refer to their training for work in the textile industry, but since much of that work is done by women it is notable that some boys as well as girls are ‘in training.’ All these subdivisions must have a bearing on how

productive the workers can be, and how big an allotment of rations they are entitled to receive. At some point, the older boys must leave their mothers and join male work groups; Am 819, mentioned above, is one of the few examples.

The Pylos Aa and Ab series make no such distinctions between older and younger children, but the Ad series lists older sons of the women. Some are still called 'boys,' and others are identified by the 'man' ideogram as adults. Where the corresponding Aa/Ab and Ad tablets are preserved, we find 447 women with 251 daughters and 179 sons (Aa/Ab), and 82 older sons and 217 adults (Ad). The number of daughters still with their mothers (251) is very close to the total number of sons ($179 + 82 = 261$), but the older boys have left their mothers' workgroups and are recorded separately, while the girls stay with their mothers and young brothers (Chadwick 1988: 67). As they grow, they presumably join their mothers working in the textile industry. We know little about the occupations of older and grown sons, but those on Ad 697 are identified as rowers. Ad 684 provides a rare reference to the fathers of these young men; they too are said to be rowers.

Palatial interests therefore take into account a woman's responsibility for child care. Rarely, however, do we find a clear instance of husband and wife listed together, with or without children. The co-workers Mestianor and Wordieia at Pylos (see above) may be married, and a few texts from Knossos seem to record families. Am 827 is the clearest instance: it lists the man Smintheus, the woman *a-wa-ti-ka-ra*, and one boy. Ag 88 would seem to be another: the man *pe-re-ko* is listed with one woman, two girls and one boy. But it is possible that these are simply his subordinates, for Ag 87 lists a man with two women, one girl and one boy, and Ag 90 lists just a man and a boy. Much as we would like to retrieve hard demographic and social data from these tablets, the purpose of these series is to keep track of personnel in order to calculate work strengths and ration needs.

Conclusion

The textual evidence, then, shows that Mycenaean women are valued for their family roles, especially the raising and training of children, but also that they are not limited to that sphere. Both religious and secular women play diverse roles in the state economy. As will be clear from the preceding discussion, unlike Olsen (2014: 252–257) I do not see great distinctions between the situation of women at Pylos and Knossos. The real imbalance is in the nature of the evidence

preserved. Pylos provides a detailed dossier of land tenure records for one district known to include a religious area; Knossos does not. Thus our evidence for both female cult officials and of land holders generally is largely limited to Pylos. With such uneven coverage, it is hard to know if the orchard owners at Knossos or the religious leaseholders at Pylos are typical or exceptional women. At both sites, however, we find female workers at all levels, from menial laborers to supervisors, but no women in the higher levels of the central administration. The same is true at Thebes and Mycenae; the evidence from all the palatial sites is consistent in this regard. The largest category of women attested is the low-level workers, the dependent women who perform menial tasks but also keep the palatial textile industries in business. At Knossos, where the evidence for this industry is more extensive, we see more gradations, from low-level workers in training to middle-level workers to female supervisors. The women with greatest economic authority are three supervisors at Pylos. The priestess Eritha has slaves as well as land leases, and is at least on the same footing as *we-te-re-u*, the priest of Sphagianes. The keybearer Karpathia too holds land and slaves, and also controls barley and access to bronze. The secular woman Kessandra supervises men and controls their rations, and she also receives cloth for her own use.

With land holders and supervisors, we hit the glass ceiling of the Mycenaean economy. If any women held positions of greater authority, we would surely be aware of them. Neither do we find in the tablets middle-class women who live and work apart from the central administration of the state. People appear in the written record only when they intersect with palatial business, and the ways in which women do so is limited compared to the variety of interactions open to men. Within the contexts where women do appear, however, it is somewhat surprising in such a male-dominated society to find a few signs of gender parity, if not equality. Low-level men and women workers receive the same amount of rations. Though the range of jobs open to women is limited, they share a few job titles with men, including the evidently skilled occupation 'finisher.' Ub 1318 from the Northeast Building at Pylos shows men and women working together to produce leather goods. Moreover, it is notable that some female supervisors have authority over men, not just over other women.

As on so many subjects, the Linear B tablets provide only limited glimpses into the topic of women in the Mycenaean economy. The cumulative picture, however, is both fuller and more nuanced than one might have expected. Mycenaean women play not one but multiple economic roles. They function both inside and outside the family, they are involved in the work place at various levels, and they

hold various degrees of power and of responsibility over personnel, goods, and land. It is good to find that women are not completely invisible in this male-dominated society, and that they play meaningful roles within it.

References

- Aravantinos, V. L., Godart, L. and Sacconi, A. (2001) *Thèbes. Fouilles de la Cadmée I: Les tablettes en Linéaire B de la Odos Pelopidou. Édition et commentaire*. Rome and Pisa, Italy: Istituti editoriali e poligrafici internazionali.
- Bendall, L. M. (2003) A reconsideration of the northeastern building at Pylos: Evidence for a Mycenaean redistributive center. *American Journal of Archaeology* 107: 181–231.
- Bernabé, A. and Luján, E. R. (2008) Mycenaean technology. In Y. Duhoux and A. Morpurgo Davies (eds) *A Companion to Linear B: Mycenaean Greek Texts and Their World 1*. Louvain, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 201–233.
- Carlier, P. (1999) Les mentions de la parenté dans les textes mycéniens. In S. Deger-Jalkotzy, S. Hiller and O. Panagl (eds) *Florent Studia Mycenaea. Akten des X. Internationalen Mykenologischen Colloquiums in Salzburg vom 1–5 Mai 1995*. Vienna, Austria: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, pp. 185–193.
- Chadwick, J. (1976) *The Mycenaean World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Chadwick, J. (1988) The women of Pylos. In J.-P. Olivier and T. G. Palaima (eds) *Texts, Tablets and Scribes. Studies in Mycenaean Epigraphy and Economy offered to Emmett L. Bennett, Jr.* Minos suppl. 10. Salamanca, Spain: University of Salamanca, pp. 43–95.
- Duhoux, Y. (2007) Le nom du “fils” en linéaire B. In F. Lang, C. Reinholdt and J. Weilhartner (eds) *ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΣ ΑΡΙΣΤΕΙΟΣ: Archäologische Forschungen zwischen Nil und Istros. Festschrift für Stefan Hiller zum 65. Geburtstag*. Vienna, Austria: Phoibos, pp. 95–103.
- Duhoux, Y. (2008) Mycenaean anthology. In Y. Duhoux and A. Morpurgo Davies (eds) *A Companion to Linear B: Mycenaean Greek Texts and Their World 1*. Louvain, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 243–393.
- García Ramón, J. L. (2011) Mycenaean onomastics. In Y. Duhoux and A. Morpurgo Davies (eds) *A Companion to Linear B: Mycenaean Greek Texts and Their World 2*. Louvain, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 213–251.
- Hiller, S. (1989) Familienbeziehungen in mykenischen Texten. In T. G.

- Palaima, C. W. Shelmerdine and P. H. Iliovski (eds) *Studia Mycenaea* (1988). *Živa Antika* Monographies 7. Skopje, Macedonia: Društvo za antički studii na SRM, Seminar na klasična filologija, Filozofski fakultet, pp. 40–65.
- Killen, J. T. (1981) Some puzzles in a Mycenae personnel record. *Živa Antika* 31: 37–45.
- Killen, J. T. (1984) The textile industries at Pylos and Knossos. In C. W. Shelmerdine and T. G. Palaima (eds) *Pylos Comes Alive: Industry + Administration in a Mycenaean Kingdom*. New York: Archaeological Institute of America, pp. 49–63.
- Killen, J. T. (1988) Notes on the Knossos tablets. In J. T. Killen, J. L. Melena and J.-P. Olivier (eds) *Studies in Mycenaean and Classical Greek Presented to John Chadwick*. *Minos* 20–22. Salamanca, Spain: University of Salamanca, pp. 319–331.
- Killen, J.T. (2001) Religion at Pylos: The evidence of the Fn Tablets. In R. Laffineur and R. Hägg (eds) *POTNIA: Deities and Religion in the Aegean Bronze Age*. *Aegaeum* 22. Liège and Austin: Université de Liège and University of Texas at Austin, pp. 435–443.
- Killen, J. T. (2004) Wheat, barley, flour, olives and figs on Linear B tablets. In P. Halstead and J. C. Barrett (eds) *Food, Cuisine and Society in Prehistoric Greece*. Oxford, UK: Sheffield Studies in Aegean Archaeology 5, pp. 155–173.
- Killen, J. T. (2006) The subjects of the *Wanax*: Aspects of Mycenaean social structure. In S. Deger-Jalkotzy and I. S. Lemos (eds) *Ancient Greece: From the Mycenaean Palaces to the Age of Homer*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University, pp. 87–99.
- Killen, J. T. (2008) Mycenaean economy. In Y. Duhoux and A. Morpurgo Davies (eds) *A Companion to Linear B: Mycenaean Greek Texts and Their World 1*. Louvain, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 159–200.
- Lejeune, M. (1966) Le récapitulatif du cadastre Ep du Pylos. In L. R. Palmer and J. Chadwick (eds) *Proceedings of the Cambridge Colloquium on Mycenaean Studies*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 260–264.
- Lindgren, M. (1973) *The People of Pylos. Prosopographical and Methodological Studies in the Pylos Archives II: The Use of Personal Designations and Their Interpretation*. Uppsala, Sweden: University of Uppsala.
- Lupack, S. (2008) *The Role of the Religious Sector in the Economy of Late Bronze Age Greece*. BAR-IS 1858. Oxford: Archaeopress.
- Nakassis, D. (2012) Labor mobilization in Mycenaean Pylos. In P. Carlier, C. De Lamberterie, M. Egetmeyer, N. Guilleux, F. Rougemont and J. Zurbach (eds) *Études Mycéniennes 2010. Actes du*

- XIIIe Colloque International sur les Textes Égéens. Rome and Pisa, Italy: Fabrizio Serra, pp. 269–283.
- Nakassis, D. (2013) *Individuals and Society in Mycenaean Pylos*. Mnemosyne supplements. History and Archaeology of Classical Antiquity 358. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill.
- Nixon, L. (1999) Women, children, and weaving. In P. P. Betancourt, V. Karageorghis, R. Laffineur and W.-D. Niemeier (eds) *MELETEMATATA. Studies in Aegean Archaeology Presented to Malcolm H. Wiener as He Enters His 65th Year*. Liège, Belgium and Austin, TX: Université de Liège, Histoire de l'art et archéologie de la Grèce antique and University of Texas at Austin, Program in Aegean Scripts and Prehistory, pp. 561–567.
- Nosch, M.-L. (2003) The women at work in the Linear B Tablets. In L. L. Lovén and A. Strömberg (eds) *Gender, Cult, and Culture in the Ancient World from Mycenae to Byzantium. Proceedings of the Second Nordic Symposium on Gender and Women's History in Antiquity*. Sävadalen: Paul Åströms Förlag, pp. 12–26.
- Olivier, J.-P. (1960) *À Propos d'une 'Liste' de Desservants de Sanctuaire dans les Documents en Linéaire B de Pylos*. Brussels, Belgium: Presses Universitaires.
- Olivier, J.-P. (1987) Des extraits de contrats de vente d'esclaves dans les tablettes de Knossos. In J. T. Killen, J. L. Melena and J.-P. Olivier (eds) *Studies in Mycenaean and Classical Greek Presented to John Chadwick*. Minos 20–22. Salamanca, Spain: University of Salamanca, pp. 479–498.
- Olsen, B. A. (2014) *Women in Mycenaean Greece: The Linear B Tablets from Pylos and Knossos*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Petrakis, V. (2010) Localising Pylian religion: Thoughts on the geographic references in the Fr Tablets provoked by a new quasi-join. *Pasiphae* 4: 199–215.
- Shelmerdine C. W. (2002) The Southwestern Department at Pylos. In J. Bennet and J. Driessen (eds), *A-NA-QO-TA: Studies Presented to J.T. Killen*. Minos 33–34 [1998–1999]. Salamanca: Universidad de Salamanca 1998–1999, pp. 309–337.
- Shelmerdine, C. W. (2008) Mycenaean society. In Y. Duhoux and A. Morpurgo Davies (eds) *A Companion to Linear B: Mycenaean Greek Texts and Their World 1*. Louvain, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 115–158.
- Uchitel, A. (1984) Women at work. Pylos and Knossos, Lagash and Ur. *Historia* 33(3): 257–282.
- Varias, C. (2012) The textile industry in the Argolid in the Late Bronze Age from the written sources. In M.-L. Nosch and R. Laffineur (eds) *KOSMOS: Jewelry, Adornment and Textiles in the Aegean Bronze Age*.

- Liège, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 155–161.
- Ventris, M. and Chadwick, J. (1973) *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*, 2nd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Whitelaw, T. (2001) Reading between the tablets: Assessing Mycenaean palatial involvement in ceramic production and consumption. In S. Voutsaki and J. T. Killen (eds) *Economy and Politics in the Mycenaean Palace States. Proceedings of a Conference held on 1–3 July 1999 in the Faculty of Classics*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Philological Society, pp. 51–79.

BEYOND PENELOPE

Women and the role of textiles in Early Greece

Brendan Burke

After remarking that M. Finley unlocked the Homeric world of Odysseus (e.g., Finley 1957), B. Olsen asks in her recent book, *Women in Mycenaean Greece* (2014), “what might the Mycenaean world of a real-life Penelope look like?” (1) Olsen’s interest reaches far beyond the most elite Mycenaean women, queens such as Penelope, Helen, or Clytaemnestra, and investigates a diverse labor force of real working women in various levels of dependency on the Mycenaean palaces of mainland Greece and the Aegean during the Late Bronze Age (c.1400–1200 BC). Most of these nameless working women toiled away primarily spinning, dyeing, and weaving in and around palace centers to make cloth which powered the premonetary Greek economy of the Late Bronze Age Aegean. The Linear B texts record the many stages of textile production, from the acquisition of raw materials to the final distribution and consumption of the finished cloth, demonstrating a key role for female labor (e.g., Chadwick 1988; Barber 1991, 1997; Killen *passim*; Nosch *passim*).

Beginnings of cloth production

One universal we see on Crete and mainland Greece during the entirety of the Bronze Age is the prominence of cloth production and the vital role of women in the manufacturing process. The ability to manipulate fibers into wearable garments predates by thousands of years nearly every other known craft or technology. Textiles were produced before free-standing architecture, the development of metallurgy, and agriculture (Adovasio 1983; Adovasio *et al.* 1996). Cloth production in the Aegean can be traced back to the early fourth millennium at Middle Neolithic Knossos, based on the large numbers

of spindle whorls, loom weights, shuttles, and other equipment (Evans 1968: 272, 1994; Carington Smith 1975: 182–184; Burke 2010: 20–24). Archaeologists have recently started to understand textiles as a vital component of Aegean economies and have recognized that much of this important craft was done by women. Changes in cloth production technologies, which can be mapped archaeologically, provide a picture of increasingly complex social, cultural, and economic interactions and communities of practice for women workers.

The earliest textile technology was the production of string or cord (Hardy 2008). While technologically simple, string production led to developments in looping and weaving, which would have enabled the production of nets, bags, and light clothing, useful in hunting, fishing, and gathering. Paleolithic string is rare, indirect evidence in the form of pierced amulets, beads, and weights demonstrate suspension. One of the earliest examples known is from Repolusthohle in Austria of a pierced wolf incisor dating to nearly 300,000 years ago. While it is impossible to know with certainty who was doing the textile production in prehistory, some of the earliest evidence for woven cloth is indicated by clay impressions of well-made textiles found in the Czech Republic dating to 26,000 years ago. A hat from Nahal Hemar (Israel) preserves a patterned design with a stone button and it is one of the earliest pieces of clothing known, dating to 6500 BC (Nesbitt 1995: 75). Analysis indicates that plant fibers, most probably linen, were the first fibers exploited for textiles (Schick 1988; Barber 1991: 11–15; Nesbitt 1995). A piece of flax or hemp string associated with a pierced bronze plate has been identified from LM III tombs at Kalyvia on Crete (Militello 2012).

In the Aegean, on Crete, textile production has a long history, beginning with Neolithic Knossos (Evans 1968, 1994; Carrington Smith 1975; Burke 2010: 20–24). During the Prepalatial period (c.3000–2000 BC) on Crete we first find archaeological indicators of overseas contact, and this coincides with evidence for cloth production on the island beyond household needs. By the Early Minoan period, larger communities like the EM II site of Myrtos Fournou Koriphi emerge. Scholars at first looked for origins of the Minoan palace in Early Bronze Age centers like Myrtos, because of the specialized areas for economic, political, and ritual purposes that were found (Warren 1968, 1972: 267; Branigan 1970: 47–48). After further investigation, it was determined that these sites did not have a connection to Minoan palaces; at sites like Myrtos, there are no signs of complexity beyond that of a large nuclear family, or a hamlet, comprised of perhaps several separate households (Whitelaw 1983).

More recently Whitelaw (2004) states that even though the ceramics were specialized and exchange relations were extensive, there is no evidence for centralized production and distribution, including textile manufacture (Whitelaw 2004: 236). Cloth production seems to have been dispersed throughout the community without any discernable division of labor during the Early Minoan period.

By the second millennium BC, contact and exchange between the Near East and the Aegean increases, and Aegean palaces arise to facilitate these interactions soon after 2000 BC. Non-native materials, such as ivory, copper, ostrich eggs, and gold are found with greater frequency throughout the Greek world. The increasingly complex textile industry coincides with this increase in imported material and the emergent palatial systems. Although it is admittedly difficult to prove, the absence of many valuable raw materials in the Aegean, except for plant and animal fibers suggests that cloth, produced mostly by female workers, fueled the economies of the early palaces during the Middle and Late Bronze Ages (Burke 1997, 2010).

Fibers

Textiles in the Aegean world were made from both plant and animal fibers, and the basic element for woven cloth was spun threads or yarns. Although rarely found in the Aegean, some examples of preserved textiles and thread are known, but even when a fiber is no longer preserved, a cast (a pseudomorph, usually found with metal) still allows for structural and manufacturing analysis of the threads. A great deal can be learned from the analysis of these early yarns. Thread counts and their diameters are also key components of fiber analysis. By using the naked eye or by viewing threads under a microscope, we can determine processing methods, different technologies of cloth manufacture and fiber identification. The most common fibers were linen and wool.

The cultivation of flax is one of the most labor-intensive chores in agriculture. Developed from wild varieties of flax widely distributed across Western Europe, the Mediterranean, the Caucasus, and southwest Asia, domesticated flax (*Linum usitatissimum*) grows well in certain parts of Greece. Fortunately, with proper timing the harvest of flax can yield several benefits: ripe seeds for linseed oil, stalks with fibers still pliable enough for fine linen cloth, and processing debris which can be used for fuel, fodder, and fertilizer (Salmon-Minotte and Franck 2005). To make linen, the process can take nearly two weeks: flax stalks are left to rot (retted), either in standing water or spread

out to collect dew and decompose on a flat surface. Pectins that bind fibers to other parts of the plant are dissolved by enzyme action from bacteria or fungi. The next stage for the fibers is scutching, when the line fibers from the retted straw are removed, producing short (tow) and long fibers. The scutched tow will yield shives, woody matter which can be used for fertilizer, or it can be further processed for spinning and twining coarse fibers into rope. After the stalks are left to dry, they are then beaten and combed to break the pith away from the usable fibers in the center and to make the fibers parallel. At this stage in the processing the raw linen, or rove, is ready for spinning, which can be either dry or wet spun (Salmon-Minotte and Franck 2005).

Wool from sheep begins much later than linen. Sheep were first domesticated in the Near East at about 9000 BC about the same time as flax (Hiendleder *et al.* 2002; Halstead *passim*), but for thousands of years sheep were short-haired with coarse fibers unsuitable for spinning and weaving. They were primarily raised for their meat (Ryder 1969, 1983; Halstead 1981; Sherratt 1983; Barber 1991: 20–30). Eventually, short-haired sheep were selectively bred for their woolly fibers, giving rise to the extensive wool-based economies in the eastern Mediterranean. The earliest preserved wool dates to the fourth millennium BC from Upper Egypt, but animal figurines decorated with woolly backs are found in Mesopotamia along with texts that show sheep were of concern to economic centers (Waetzoldt 1972, 2007; Barber 1991: 25; Bier 1995). A clay figurine from Sarab, Iran, now in the Oriental Institute in Chicago, dates to 5000 BC and shows what appear to be tufts of wool, providing an early appearance for early sheep raised for wool (Burke 2010, fig. 9). Paleozoologists studying the age and sex ratios of sheep bones have been able to distinguish between sheep used primarily for meat and those used primarily for wool. Sheep bones appear more robust over time, because a heavier musculature develops from carrying a weightier coat of wool (Payne 1973; McCorriston 1997: 521). Although female sheep generally yield better wool than males, the highest quality wool comes from young neutered males, called wethers. Fleecier sheep purposefully bred for use in textile production mark a shift in agricultural patterns that had significant social ramifications for men and women: the transition to exploiting wool, a fiber more efficiently produced than linen, initiated the development of large textile workshops and an attached labor class, heavily composed of women.

Tools of production

Archaeologists are fortunate to have several kinds of tools associated

with the various phases of cloth production. The first major phase is making thread. In the Mycenaean world, the fibers of raw wool or linen were most often pulled and twisted, and then hooked around a small notch at the top of the spindle. A weighted whorl was affixed to the bottom of a long, slender wooden spindle (in Egypt it was attached at the top). The whorl was usually a small round piece of fired clay with a suspension hole in the center. The whorl was spun manually so that the thread wound itself around the spindle. The direction of the spin (clockwise or counter-clockwise) is preserved in the direction of twist in the thread, which can be either in the S-direction (meaning counter-clockwise spin) or in the Z-direction (clockwise spin). Most Mediterranean textiles seem to be Z-spun (Barber 1991: 66; Möller-Wiering 2006b). The size and shape of spindle whorls varies depending on the type and strength of the thread. Detailed study of whorls from the Bronze Age Aegean and recent replication experiments provide information on the varieties of textiles produced (e.g., Balfanz 1995; Crewe 1998; Mårtensson *et al.* 2005–2006; Möller-Wiering 2006a, 2006b; Rahmstorf 2008).



Figure 44.1 Name vase of the Penelope Painter: Drawing of side A, showing Penelope at her loom, with Telemachos in attendance. From Furtwängler-Reichhold, *Griechische Vasenmalerei: Auswahl hervorragender Vasenbilder*, Tafeln 141–150. München: Bruckmann, 1921. pl. 142, 1921 (print); 1993 (rescan). (Chiusi 1831 <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/image?img=Perseus>

After spinning, thread is knitted into a heading band to start the woven textile and then attached to a standing wooden warp-weighted loom. While giving a vivid picture of forlorn Penelope for fifth-century audiences, the Penelope skyphos from Chiusi, for example, well illustrates the warp-weighted loom which would not be too unlike Mycenaean looms (Crowfoot 1936; Barber 1991; [Figure 44.1](#)). We see the standing wooden-framed loom and the half-finished textile at the top. Warp threads hang down and are attached to two rows of clay loom weights. A sketch of such a standing loom is found as early as the Middle Minoan period, on a clay sealing on an administrative document from Hagia Triada (Crete) (Brice 1961, table 1: L70, 75, 75'; Herakleion Museum no. 73; Barber 1991, fig. 3.12). The suspended clay loom weights, which gave tension to the warp threads, are often all that survive of the looms and are the primary archaeological source of evidence for the production of cloth. The weights could be attached in a variety of ways: they could be tied directly to warp threads, attached to a cord that was fastened to the warp, or tied to a thin bar that had warp threads connected to it. Large deposits of loom weights have been found around Knossos, for example the Minoan Unexplored Mansion (Burke 2010: 52–53), the South House (Burke 2003), and the Loom Weight Basement (Evans 1921: 253). Based on deposits such as these of surviving clay loom weights, we can say that in the second millennium BC, textile production occupied the work day of most women in early Greece.

Other craft residues related to different methods of production and different types of textile are known. These include weft bobbins, needles, heddles, distaffs, dye vats, fiber-wetting bowls, and, for specialized textiles such as bands and belts, decks of pierced tablets for specialized weaving. Felted textiles, made by applying heat and pressure to unspun wool (wool fibers have naturally occurring scales that make felting possible), also likely existed but there is little evidence for their manufacture from Mycenaean sites. Preserved felt is known from Phrygian Anatolia dating to the Iron Age.

Little cloth is preserved from the Aegean, unlike Egypt and the Near East. What we have are some linen fragments preserved on bronze blades from Grave Circle A at Mycenae, and fragments of densely woven linen and other plant-derived fibers (perhaps nettle) from Chania and Mochlos on Crete. The preserved piecing also shows evidence for plaiting, an elaborate form of braiding, in the growing body of preserved textile fragments (Möller-Wiering 2006a; Moulherat

and Spantidaki 2009). The Middle Bronze Age site of Akrotiri (c.1630 BC), along with other Bronze Age centers, show well-preserved wall paintings which illustrate a wide range of textiles (Chapin 2008; see also Younger, this volume) along with a very good amount of textile tools to document their production (Tzachili 1990, 2007).

Texts and textiles

At least 2,000 women are recorded, by name, title, or as members of a group, on the Linear B tablets from Pylos and Knossos, providing more insight into the lives of these women from the Greek past than any other text from Classical Greece (Olsen 2014: 2; Nakassis 2013 for Pylos; see also Shelmerdine, this volume). A key point in Olsen's research is that work in the Mycenaean world is structured along gender lines. Only five occupational terms can be both male and female, and three of these are not specific 'occupations' (priest/priestess, generic slaves, 'slaves of the gods') (Olsen 2014: 61). The remaining two, 'stitchers' and 'weavers,' are related to cloth production. All of the remaining 200 other occupational terms are either specifically male (e.g., bronze workers) or female (e.g., flour grinders or spinners). Clearly, gender mattered to Mycenaean labor organization, and cloth production seems to have been the primary sphere of female workers.

A refined study of the personnel records from Pylos and Knossos reveal differing gender systems for each palace center. One possible explanation for the differences is that the origins of the structuring systems for women from the kingdom of Pylos in southwestern Messenia is thought to be wholly Greek, built upon Middle Helladic traditions of mainland Greece. In contrast, women recorded at Knossos have traditionally been thought of as part of a culture that is a hybrid of earlier, local Minoan (Cretan) culture co-mingled with the newly arrived Mycenaean Greeks (Olsen 2014). The differences should not be too surprising since we readily recognize and accept that women in Classical Athens differed significantly from women in ancient Sparta, for one example. We should not expect the same system to be evident at Pylos as at Knossos, Thebes, or Mycenae.

Linear B records are our best source of evidence for an understanding of the role of textiles and the position of women in Mycenaean society (Billigmeier and Turner. 1981; Chadwick 1988; Olsen 2014). The tablets must be viewed as primarily temporary accounts written in a kind of scribal shorthand to record transactions of concern to the palatial centers. Nearly 3,400 clay tablets and

fragments of tablets written in Linear B (Mycenaean Greek) are reported from Knossos (Killen and Olivier 1989) and 1,100 from Pylos (Bennett and Olivier 1973, 1976); Thebes has approximately 400 tablets, many of them recently discovered (Aravantinos *et al.* 2002, 2005); and there is a smaller number of tablets reported from the centers at Tiryns and Mycenae (Melena and Olivier 1991) as well as at Chania (Hallager *et al.* 1992) and most recently at Agios Vassileios near Sparta. These early Greek records provide information on the raw materials used in the cloth industry and they describe the phases of production by a specialized labor force under the administration of the Mycenaean palaces. Less explicit in the tablets are references to the final use and consumption of textiles in Mycenaean society. And while the tablets tell us a great deal about the Mycenaean economy, female labor, and cloth production, it is also acknowledged that our understanding of Mycenaean economy and society is by no means complete (Morris 1986; Bennet 1988).

The largest number of Linear B tablets was found at Knossos. At some point early in the Late Bronze Age, c.1400 BC, the Minoan palace at Knossos becomes the major Mycenaean center on the island of Crete. Greek speakers begin to administer much of the island and adapt their Indo-European language, an early form of Greek, to the Minoan script, Linear A. There is also an incorporation of Minoan vocabulary terms into Mycenaean Greek (Renfrew 1998, 1999). The majority of the Linear B texts deal in some way with the organization of labor with regard to cloth production. We see several different ideograms for textiles, and it is thought that the different signs refer to different types of cloth, some heavier than others based on the amounts of wool used. The records show that Knossos controlled over 100,000 sheep throughout the island, with a roster of shepherds, wool workers, spinners, weavers, dyers, and other craftspeople as part of this wide ranging industry. From personnel records and other tablets we know that there were specialists involved in the textile industry. Occupational terms provide information on the successive manufacturing stages of Mycenaean textile production and the associated work force. One tablet will serve as an example:

KN Ap 694

.1]-ja , ko-u-re-ja MUL .1[

.2] ka-ra-we MUL 1[

.3] a-ze-ti-ri-ja MUL 1[

.4] *vacat* [

In the first line, a certain number (now lost) of women (MUL) made a special type of cloth, *pawea koura*. The second line may refer to ‘old’ women. The third group of women, *a-ze-ti-ri-ja*, are probably a type of decorator, and would have worked in the later phases of cloth production. In other tablets we may hear of amounts of raw material allotted to female workers, with the implication that they are expected to produce a certain amount of finished cloth for the palace.

From the tablets, we see various occupational titles, including weaving specialists indicated by *i-te-ja(o)* and one *i-te-we*, both related to Greek ἰστός, ‘a standing loom’ (Bernabé and Luján 2008: 219). Others are specifically female, including *a-ze-ti-ri-ja*, (cf. KN Ap 694, Ln 1568, and M(1) 683), and its alternative forms *a-ke-ti-ri-ja* / *a-ke-ti-ra2* (Olsen 2014: 144–146). It was first suggested that this term referred to ἀκέστρια, ‘seamstress’ (Ventrìs and Chadwick 1973). Lejeune (1971: 105), however, followed an alternative suggestion and interpreted the term in relation to later Greek ἀσκεῖν, ‘to work with skill.’ Based on this interpretation, Lejeune suggests that the women listed as such were apprentices of the wool industry. Killen (1979: 165–167) favors the verb ἀσκεῖν, but interprets it as ‘to decorate or dress’ particularly since the *a-ke-ti-ri-ja* are closely associated with *o-nu-ke*, which is thought to be an added element to a textile. The most accepted interpretation of this fairly commonly textile worker is ‘decorator/finisher.’ There are the *pe-ki-ti-ra2* (‘wool pluckers’), thought to be preparers of wool, perhaps carders and combers, related to Greek πέκειν, ‘to comb’ (Lindgren 1973: 114–115; Barber 1991: 262, 283; Olsen 2014: 72–74). The *ri-ne-ja* are certainly female flax workers since Linear B *ri-no* corresponds to Greek λίνον, ‘flax’ (Lindgren 1973: 138; Chadwick 1988: 83; Olsen 2014: 79–82). The *a-ra-ka-te-ja* (related to the Greek word, ἡλακάτη, ‘distaff,’ or, more likely, ‘spindle’) may refer to ‘spinning’ women, who receive allotments of wool and flax and presumably spin it into usable thread (Olsen 2014: 74). Thread is subject to both tension and torsion; Barber estimates that it takes 7 to 8 hours to spin enough thread to weave on a loom for approximately 1 hour (Barber 1997: 515). The bulk of the time required to produce textiles was spent spinning rather than weaving.

The organization of Mycenaean labor, particularly with reference to female workers in the textile industry, is also understood from the Ak and Ap series from Knossos. These documents refer to work groups made up of women and children. The tablets show the productive potential of the different work groups for calculated targets recorded in another series (Ap series) and they provide the basic information for allocating monthly rations provided by the palace (Killen 1972,

1988; Gregersen 1997; Olsen 2014, [chapter 5](#)). Concluding the manufacturing stages were the delivery, receipt, and decoration of finished textiles listed in yet more series of tablets (the Ld, Le, and Od series). Small allotments of wool were made to various specialists who edged and finished cloth. Other smaller groups of the D series (e.g. Dv, Dw, and Dx) are too fragmentary to be assigned to more specific classes of workers, but they also refer in some way to workers within the wool industry.

Olsen does a remarkable job of isolating tiers of status with reference to specific tablets (Olsen 2014: 187–197), but for the most part many of the women listed in the work groups at Knossos were likely fully dependent on the palace and fed year round (Killen 1984: 52). They lived some distance from Knossos, in central and western Crete, based on correspondences for laborers in the different parts of Crete.

In addition to the tools of spinning, weaving, and related activities, and to the Linear B texts, visual representations of garments, in wall paintings and in three-dimensional sculpture, attest to the qualities and varieties of Bronze Age Aegean cloth (e.g., Chapin 2008). Representations of complex garments are found, for example on the Ivory Triad from Mycenae in the National Museum in Athens (NMA inv. No. 7711; Figures 44.2a and 44.2b). A child crawls on the knees of two flounce-skirted women who are wearing an intricate shawl. The context of remarkable garments is primarily palatial and ritual settings, reflecting elite women, and these garments are likely not representative of the types of textiles that played a major role in the Bronze Age economy.

We might also consider one final source of evidence, although problematic: later Greek literature, especially the poems of Homer, makes frequent reference to textiles. Although the view likely would be challenged, I believe the Homeric tradition preserves, however faintly, remnants of Bronze Age economic relations and social structure. Of course, there is great distance in time and space between the Homeric epics and the Mycenaean palaces and therefore, literary evidence must be used cautiously.

From this brief presentation of only a very few female textile workers and specialists recorded in the tablets, including reference to a funeral shroud maker like Penelope in the *Odyssey*, it is clear that the production of cloth during the Bronze Age in the Aegean was more than a playful diversion for elite women in Minoan and Mycenaean palaces.



Figure 44.2a Ivory Triad from Mycenae (front view). (Drawing by Paul C. Butler. Used with permission.)



Figure 44.2b Ivory Triad from Mycenae (back view). (Drawing by Paul C. Butler. Used with permission.)

References

- Adovasio, J. (1983) Notes on the textile and basketry impressions from Jarmo. In L. S. Braidwood, R. J. Braidwood, B. Howe, C. Reed and P. J. Watson (eds) *Prehistoric Archaeology along the Zagros Flanks*. Chicago, IL: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, pp. 425–426.
- Adovasio, J. M., Soffer, O. and Klíma, B. (1996) Upper Paleolithic fibre technology from Pavlov I, Czech Republic. *Antiquity* 70: 526–534.
- Aravantinos, V. L., Godart, L. and Sacconi, A. (2002) *Corpus des documents d'archives en linéaire B de Thèbes (1–433)*. Pisa, Italy and Rome: Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali.
- Aravantinos, V. L., Godart, L. and Sacconi, A. (2005) *Les textes de Thèbes (1–433): Translittération et tableaux des scribes*. Pisa, Italy and Rome: Istituti editoriali e poligrafici internazionali.
- Balfanz, K. (1995) Bronzezeitliche Spinnwirtel aus Troia. *Studia Troica* V: 117–144.

- Barber, E. (1991) *Prehistoric Textiles*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Barber, E. (1997) Minoan women and the challenges of weaving for home, trade, and shrine. *TEXNH*: 515–519.
- Bennet, J. (1988) Outside in the distance: Problems in understanding the economic geography of Mycenaean palatial territories. In J.-P. Olivier and T. Palaima (eds) *Texts, Tablets, and Scribes: Studies in Mycenaean Epigraphy and Economy Offered to Emmett L. Bennett Jr.* (*Minos* Suppl. 10). Salamanca, Spain: Universidad de Salamanca, pp. 19–42.
- Bennett, E. and Olivier, J.-P. (eds) (1973) *The Pylos Tablets Transcribed*, Vol. I. Rome: Edizioni dell'Ateneo.
- Bennett, E. and Olivier, J.-P. (1976) *The Pylos Tablets Transcribed*, Vol. II. Rome: Edizioni dell'Ateneo.
- Bernabé, A. and Luján, E. (2008) Mycenaean technology. In Y. Duhoux and A. Morpurgo Davies (eds) *A Companion to Linear B: Mycenaean Greek Texts and Their World*. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 201–233.
- Bier, C. (1995) Textile arts in Ancient Western Asia. New York: CANE: 1567–1588.
- Billigmeier, J. and Turner, J. (1981) The socio-economic roles of women in Mycenaean Greece: A brief survey from the evidence of the Linear B tablets. In H. Foley (ed.) *Reflections of Women in Antiquity*. New York: Gordon & Breach Science Publishers, pp. 1–15.
- Branigan, K. (1970) *The Foundations of Palatial Crete*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Brice, W. (ed.) (1961) *Inscriptions in the Minoan Linear Script of Class A*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Burke, B. (1997) The organization of textile production in Bronze Age Crete. *TEXNH*: 413–424.
- Burke, B. (2003) The spherical loom weights. In *Knossos: The South House* (BSA Supplement 34). London: P. Mountjoy, pp. 195–197.
- Burke, B. (2010) *From Minos to Midas: Ancient Cloth Production in the Aegean and in Anatolia*. Ancient Textiles Series 7. Oxford, UK and Oakville, ON: Oxbow.
- Carington Smith, J. (1975) *Weaving, Spinning and Textile Production in Greece: The Neolithic to Bronze Age*. PhD dissertation. University of Tasmania.
- Chadwick, J. (1988) The women of Pylos. In J.-P. Olivier and T. Palaima (eds) *Texts, Tablets and Scribes* (*Minos* Supplement 10). Salamanca, Spain: Universidad de Salamanca, pp. 43–96.
- Chapin, A. (2008) The lady of the landscape: An investigation of Aegean costuming and the Xeste 3 frescoes. In C. Colburn and M.

- Heyn (eds) *Reading a Dynamic Canvas: Adornment in the Ancient Mediterranean World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 48–83.
- Crewe, L. (1998) *Spindle Whorls: A Study of Form, Function and Decoration in Prehistoric Bronze Age Cyprus*. Jonsered, Sweden: Paul Åströms.
- Crowfoot, G. (1936) Of the warp-weighted loom. *BSA* 37: 36–47.
- Evans, A. (1921) *Palace of Minos at Knossos I. 2*. London: Macmillan.
- Evans, J. D. (1968) Knossos Neolithic, Part II. *BSA* 63: 239–276.
- Evans, J. D. (1994) The early millennia: Continuity and change in a farming settlement. In D. Evely, H. Hughes-Brock and N. Momigliano (eds) *Knossos: A Labyrinth of History*. Athens, Greece: The British School of Archaeology at Athens, pp. 1–20.
- Finley, M. (1957) The Mycenaean tablets and economic history. *Economic History Review* 10: 128–141.
- Gregersen, M.-L. (1997) Pylian craftsmen: Payment in kind/rations or land? *TEXNH*: 397–405.
- Hallager, E., Vlasaki, M. and Hallager, B. (1992) New Linear B tablets from Khania. *Kadmos* 31(1): 61–87.
- Halstead, P. (1981) Counting sheep in Neolithic and Bronze Age Greece. In I. Hodder, G. Isaac and N. Hammond (eds) *Pattern of the Past: Studies in Honour of David Clarke*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 307–339.
- Halstead, P. (1991) Lost sheep? On the Linear B evidence for breeding flocks at Knossos and Pylos. *Minos* 22: 343–365.
- Halstead, P. (1992a) Agriculture in the Bronze Age: Towards a model of palatial economy. In B. Wells (ed.) *Agriculture in Ancient Greece: Proceedings of the Seventh International Symposium at the Swedish Institute at Athens, 16–17 May 1990*. Göteborg, Sweden: P. Åströms, pp. 105–117.
- Halstead, P. (1992b) The Mycenaean palatial economy: Making the most of the gaps in the evidence. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Prehistoric Society* 38: 57–86.
- Halstead, P. (1999a) Texts, bones and herders: Approaches to animal husbandry in Late Bronze Age Greece. In J. Bennet and J. Driessen (eds) *A-NA-QO-TA: Studies Presented to J. T. Killen (Minos 33–34)*. Salamanca, Spain: Universidad de Salamanca, pp. 149–190.
- Halstead, P. (1999b) Missing sheep: On the meaning and wider significance of O on the Knossos sheep records. *BSA* 94: 145–166.
- Halstead, P. (2001) Mycenaean wheat, flax and sheep. In S. Voutsaki and J. Killen (eds) *Economy and Politics in the Mycenaean Palace States (PCPS Supplement 27)*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University

- Press, pp. 38–50.
- Hardy, K. (2008) Prehistoric string theory: How twisted fibres helped to shape the world. *Antiquity* 82: 271–280.
- Hiendleder, S., Kaupe, B., Wassmuth, R. and Janke, A. (2002) Molecular analysis of wild and domestic sheep questions current nomenclature and provides evidence for domestication from two different subspecies. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B. Biological Sciences* 269: 893–904.
- Killen, J. (1964) The wool industry of Crete in the Late Bronze Age. *BSA* 59: 1–15.
- Killen, J. (1972) Two notes on the Knossos Ak tablets. In M. S. Ruipérez (ed.) *Acta Mycenaea. Proceedings of the Fifth International Colloquium on Mycenaean Studies, Salamanca, 30 March–3 April, 1970*. Salamanca, Spain: Universidad de Salamanca, pp. 425–440.
- Killen, J. (1977) The Knossos texts and the geography of Mycenaean Crete. In J. Bintliff (ed.) *Mycenaean Geography*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 40–47.
- Killen, J. (1979) The Knossos Ld (1) tablets. In E. Risch and H. Mühlestein (eds) *Colloquium Mycenaeanum. Actes du sixième Colloque International sur les textes mycéniens et égéens à Chaumont sur Neuchâtel du 7 au 13 Septembre 1975*. Neuchâtel, Switzerland: Université de Neuchâtel, Recueil de travaux publiés par la Faculté des Lettres, Vol. 36, pp. 151–181.
- Killen, J. (1981) Some puzzles in a Mycenae personnel record. *ZivaAnt* 31: 37–45.
- Killen, J. (1984) The textile industry at Pylos and Knossos. In C. Shelmerdine and T. Palaima (eds) *Pylos Comes Alive*. New York: Fordham University, pp. 49–64.
- Killen, J. (1985) The Linear B tablets and the Mycenaean economy. In A. Morpurgo Davies and Y. Duhoux (eds) *Linear B: A 1984 Survey*. Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 241–305.
- Killen, J. (1988) Epigraphy and interpretation of Knossos woman and cloth records. In J.-P. Olivier and T. Palaima (eds) *Texts, Tablets and Scribes (Minos Supplement 10)*. Salamanca, Spain: Universidad de Salamanca, pp. 167–183.
- Killen, J. (1995) Some further thoughts on collectors. *Politeia*, pp. 213–226.
- Killen, J. (2001) Some thoughts on TA-RA-SI-JA. In S. Voutsaki and J. Killen (eds) *Economy and Politics in the Mycenaean Palace States*. Cambridge, UK: PCPS Supplement 27, pp. 161–180.
- Killen, J. (2007) Cloth production in Late Bronze Age Greece: The documentary evidence. In C. Gillis and M.-L. Nosch (eds) *Ancient*

- Textiles: Production, Craft, Society*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 50–58.
- Killen, J. (2008) Mycenaean economy. In Y. Duhoux and A. Morpurgo Davies (eds) *A Companion to Linear B: Mycenaean Greek Texts and Their World*. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 159–200.
- Killen, J. and Olivier, J.-P. (eds) (1989) *The Knossos Tablets*, fifth edition. *Minos Supplement* 11, Salamanca, Spain: Universidad de Salamanca.
- Lejeune, M. (1971) Les sifflantes fortes du Mycénien. In M. Lejeune (ed.) *Mémoires de Philologie Mycénienne (Deuxième Série 1958–1963)*. Rome: Edizioni dell’Arteano, pp. 97–139.
- Lindgren, M. (1973) *The People of Pylos: The Use of Personal Designations and their Interpretation II*. Stockholm, Sweden: Uppsala University.
- Mårtensson, L., Andersson, E., Nosch, M.-L. and Batzer, A. (2005–2006) *Technical Report, Experimental Archaeology, Part, (2005–2006) Tools and Textiles – Texts and Contexts Research Program*. The Danish National Research Foundation’s centre for Textile Research University of Copenhagen. <http://ctr.hum.ku.dk>.
- McCorriston, J. (1997) The Fiber Revolution: Textile Extensification, Alienation, and Social Stratification in Ancient Mesopotamia. *CurrAnthr* 38(4): 517–549.
- Melena, J. L. and Olivier, J.-P. (1991) TITHEMY: The tablets and nodules in Linear B from Tiryns, Thebes and Mycenae: A revised transliteration. Salamanca, Spain: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca; Vizcaya, Spain: Servicio Editorial, Universidad del País Vasco.
- Militello, P. (2012) New evidence for textile activity in Phaistos and Ayia Triada. In M. Andrianachis, P. Varzalithou and I. Tzachili (eds) *APXAIΟΛΟΓΙΚΟ ΕΡΓΟ ΚΡΗΤΗΣ 2*, *Praktikà tes B Kritiki Synantisi*, Rethymno 2010. Rethymno, Crete: Panepisthimio Kritis, pp. 203–216.
- Möller-Wiering, S. (2006a) *Tools and Textiles – Texts and Contexts. Bronze Age Textiles Found in Crete*. The Danish National Research Foundation’s centre for Textile Research, University of Copenhagen. <http://ctr.hum.ku.dk/tools/>.
- Möller-Wiering, S. (2006b) *Tools and Textiles – Texts and Contexts. Examination of Spinning and Weaving Samples*. The Danish National Research Foundation’s centre for Textile Research, University of Copenhagen. <http://ctr.hum.ku.dk/tools/>.
- Morris, H. (1986) *An Economic Model of the Late Mycenaean Kingdom of Pylos*. PhD dissertation. University of Minnesota.
- Moulherat, C. and Spantidaki, Y. (2009) Cloth from Kastelli, Chania.

- Nakassis, D. (2013) *Individuals and Society in Mycenaean Pylos*. Leiden: Brill.
- Nesbitt, M. (1995) Plants and people in ancient Anatolia. *Biblical Archaeologist* 58(2): 68–81.
- Nosch, M.-L. (2000) *The Organization of the Mycenaean Textile Industry*. PhD dissertation. University of Salzburg.
- Nosch, M.-L. (2003) The women at work in the Linear B tablets. In A. Strömberg and L. Larsson Lovén (eds) *Gender, Cult, and Culture in the Ancient World from Mycenae to Byzantium* (SIMA Pocket-book 166). Göteborg, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, pp. 12–26.
- Olsen, B. (2014) *Women in Mycenaean Greece: The Linear B Tablets from Pylos and Knossos*. London: Routledge.
- Payne, S. (1973) Kill-off patterns in sheep and goats: The mandibles from Aşvan Kale. *Anatolian Studies* 23: 281–303.
- Rahmstorf, L. (2008) *Tiryns Forschungen und Berichte XVI: Kleinfunde aus Tiryns: Terrakotta, Stein, Bein und Glas/Fayence vornehmlich aus der Spätbronzezeit*. Wiesbaden, Germany: Reichert.
- Renfrew, C. (1998) Word of Minos: The Minoan contribution to Mycenaean Greek and the linguistic geography of the Bronze Age Aegean. *CAJ* 8(2): 239–264.
- Renfrew, C. (1999) The loom of language and the Versailles effect. In P. Betancourt, V. Karageorghis, R. Laffineur and W. Niemeier (eds) *Meletemata: Studies in Aegean Archaeology Presented to M. H. Wiener as he enters his 65th Year (Aegaeum 20)*. Liège, Belgium: Université de Liège, Histoire de L'Art et Archéologie de la Grèce Antique, pp. 711–720.
- Ryder, M. (1969) Changes in the fleece of sheep following domestication. In P. Ucko and G. Dimbleby (eds) *The Domestication and Exploitation of Plants and Animals*. London: Duckworth, pp. 495–521.
- Ryder, M. (1983) *Sheep and Man*. London: Duckworth.
- Salmon-Minotte, J. and Franck, R. R. (2005) Flax. In R. R. Franck *Bast and Other Plant Fibres*. Cambridge, UK: Woodhead, pp. 94–175.
- Schick, T. (1988) Cordage, basketry, and fabrics. *Atiquot* 18: 31–43.
- Sherratt, A. (1983) The secondary products revolution of animals in the Old World. *World Archaeology* 15: 90–104.
- Tzachili, I. (1990) All important yet elusive: Looking for evidence of cloth-making at Akrotiri. In D. Hardy, C. Doumas, J. Sakellarakis and P. Warren (eds) *Thera and the Aegean World III*. London: The Thera Foundation, pp. 380–389.
- Tzachili, I. (2007) Weaving at Akrotiri, Thera: Defining cloth-making

- activities as social process in a Late Bronze Age Aegean town. In C. Gillis and M.-L. Nosch (eds) *Ancient Textiles: Production, Craft, Society*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 190–196.
- Ventris, M. and Chadwick, J. (1973) *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Waetzoldt, H. (1972) *Untersuchungen zur Neusumerischen Textilindustrie*. Rome: Studi Economici e Tecnologici 1.
- Waetzoldt, H. (2007) The use of wool for the production of strings, ropes, braided mats, and similar fabrics. In C. Gillis and M.-L. Nosch (eds) *Ancient Textiles: Production, Craft, Society*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 112–121.
- Warren, P. (1968) A textile town 4,500 years ago? *Illustrated London News* 252: 25–27.
- Warren, P. (1972) *Myrtos. An Early Bronze Age Settlement in Crete*. Oxford, UK: BSA Supplement 7.
- Whitelaw, T. (1983) The settlement at Fournou Korifi Myrtos and aspects of early Minoan social organization. In O. Krzyszkowska and L. Nixon (eds) *Minoan Society: Proceedings of the Cambridge Colloquium 1981*. Bristol, UK: Bristol Classical Press, pp. 323–345.
- Whitelaw, T. (2004) Alternative pathways to complexity in the Southern Aegean. In J. Barrett and P. Halstead (eds) *Emergence of Civilisation Revisited*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 232–256.

THE BIOARCHAEOLOGY OF WOMEN IN GREEK ANTIQUITY

Sherry C. Fox

What we know about how women lived in Greek antiquity is primarily from what has been preserved in both ancient texts and art. Although we are fortunate to have this rich evidence, a more comprehensive understanding of women in ancient Greece can be gained from inclusion of the study of their skeletal remains from archaeological contexts. This chapter, while not a comprehensive overview, aims to demonstrate how women lived in Greek antiquity by the contextual examination of their human skeletal remains. The burial practices, including cremation burials and the longstanding practice of secondary burials in the Aegean, have placed limitations on some aspects of bioarchaeological analyses. Due, in part, to these burial practices in conjunction with environmental conditions that are not conducive to bone preservation, human skeletal remains are often commingled, incomplete, and poorly preserved from the region (Angel 1945; Fox 2005; Harper and Fox 2009). Fortunately, a great deal of recent research in Greek bioarchaeology is adding to the picture of how women lived in the past. It should be noted that although there were similarities in the lifeways of women between various regions, regional differences in culture certainly existed in the past in the geographical area of modern Greece and, as such, the conclusions that are drawn are not to be considered pan-Hellenic in nature.

Similarly, cultures change over time and the activities and occupations of women undoubtedly varied diachronically as well. Included within this chapter is an examination of the demographic parameters of sex, age-at-death, and stature, as well as evidence for dental and skeletal disease, congenital disorders, diet, trauma, violence, and cultural modifications of the bodies of women in Greek antiquity. Additionally, as well as illuminating possible genetic relationships, skeletal and dental nonmetric markers may also help

better to define habitual or occupational activities in which women were engaged in ancient Greece. Thus, the results of bioarchaeological analyses of human skeletal material from Greece will be presented to contribute to our understanding of the ways of life for women in Greek antiquity.

Introduction

Since the 1960s with the feminist movement, women's studies have gained momentum, and from that time studies of women in antiquity have also risen, but the results of studies of ancient women themselves are not always included in broader publications on the subject. Publications on women in antiquity from the eastern Mediterranean have also been lacking a bioarchaeological approach (cf. Bolger and Serwint's 2002 publication, *Engendering Aphrodite*, on women in ancient Cyprus). However, the trend is changing with Maria Liston's recent (2012) contribution, "Reading the bones: Interpreting the skeletal evidence for women's lives in Ancient Greece." Similarly, the editors of this volume should be commended for inclusion of a number of chapters emphasizing the bioarchaeology of women (cf. Lorentz, etc.) aiming to contribute to the multidisciplinary approach to the subject. There is much work remaining to be undertaken, however, especially research designed to incorporate various theoretical approaches. By focusing upon different biological indicators from archaeological contexts, we may begin to elucidate better how women lived in ancient Greece.

Sex

At approximately six weeks in utero, the sex chromosomes switch on and the human embryo begins developing as a female (XX) or a male (XY). Biological sex and gender may differ among various cultures (cf. Walker and Cook 1998 for a discussion of the terms), but for the purposes of this chapter, the terms "female" and "woman" will be conflated. Studies in the 1980s began to address gender on a continuum rather than as a dichotomous term. What is certain is that gender must be approached within the cultural context of the ancient society.

Our parameters for determining the sex of a skeleton employ terminology that is also gendered. Female skeletons are described as "gracile" when compared to "robust" male skeletons, and the term "pedomorphic" is also used to describe certain morphologies of

females that are considered retention of “childlike” morphologies. Additionally, female skeletal morphology is often defined in terms of the absence of certain male-like characteristics. Prior to puberty, it is difficult to determine the sex of infants and children from the human skeleton as the skeletal morphologies of boys and girls are so similar. Although humans display much less sexual dimorphism than many other primates, and there is great overlap between male and female morphologies; females tend to be smaller than males, with less pronounced muscle markings, and with pelvic morphologies that can accommodate childbirth. In general, more men are identified from archaeological contexts than women (cf. Weiss 1972). Although the sex ratios vary by age throughout a lifetime, slightly more males are born each year than females. During the first year of life, more males die than females and the ratio remains close to 1:1 for many years. In pre-industrial societies, males outlive females, but in industrialized societies, females far outlive males. In a recent study by Beltrán-Sánchez *et al.* (2015), lifestyle differences such as more men smoking have contributed to greater heart disease and smoking-related deaths, thus conferring an advantage in longevity to women. By comparing a large series of sexed skeletal collections with pre-industrial peoples, Weiss (1972) discusses the sex bias in the archaeological record. Weiss (1972) found that approximately 12 percent more males than females have been identified utilizing standard morphometric skeletal analyses and demographic reconstructions should reflect this bias.

Weiss’s prediction has been unconsciously fulfilled by the present author with almost identical results at both the Eastern Necropolis site of Hellenistic and Roman Paphos (12.8 percent more males than females were identified) when compared with Ancient Corinth in Greece (12.2 percent more males than females were identified, Fox 2005). Of the minimum number of 94 individuals that were studied from Hellenistic and Roman Corinth, sex determinations were made on 41 of the 59 adults studied. In this subsample of 59 adults, sex could be determined for 23 males (56.1 percent) and 18 females (43.9 percent) with 18 adults of indeterminate sex (Fox 2005). Additionally, sex could be determined for only 9 of the 16 single inhumation burials included in the study at Ancient Corinth due to poor preservation. For additional information about the sex of individuals from Neolithic contexts in Greece, see for example, Cavanagh and Mee (1998); and for Bronze Age contexts in Greece, see for example, Lagia *et al.* (2007).

Reproduction and age-at-death

Being born

More theoretically based research is developing in the bioarchaeology of Greece. Triantaphyllou's (2016) article on identity and age-at-death in Greece is an example of this welcome trend, which she presented at the *Embodied Identities* conference she helped organize in Cyprus in 2012. With regard to age-at-death, the most dangerous time in life is at the time of birth, with two-thirds of infant deaths in Greece occurring within the first month of life (Trichopoulos and Papaevangelou 1974). In 1931, infant mortality exceeded 13 percent in urban Greece and could have been higher in the countryside (Trichopoulos and Papaevangelou 1974). Results of infant mortality were similar at Ancient Corinth at 15 percent. Fourteen individuals from a sample of 94 individuals from Hellenistic-Roman period contexts from Ancient Corinth succumbed during "infancy" (Fox 2005), which is defined by Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994) from late fetal to 3 years of age. To date, evidence for female infanticide is lacking from research on human remains in the Aegean, despite Greece possessing the largest ancient infant cemetery in the world at the site of Kylindra on the island of Astypalia (Hillson 2009), as well as large numbers of infants (at times numbering into the hundreds) recovered from wells dating to the Hellenistic period at Messene (Bourbou and Themelis 2010) and also from the Hellenistic period (165–150 BC based upon ceramic evidence from the well by Rotroff 1999) at the Athenian Agora (Liston and Rotroff 2013; cf. Fox 2012). Rather than the hypothesis that the well burials represented the accumulation of unwanted female newborn infants, the well burials may more likely represent the result of stillbirths and natural deaths due to prematurity, infection, and congenital birth defects such as cleft palate (Liston and Rotroff 2013).

Giving birth

Another risky time of life for women specifically is during pregnancy and childbirth (see Budin, "Aegean," this volume). Infection following delivery is also a serious complication with consequences for female mortality. No other mammal regularly experiences such difficulty with childbirth as humans, but the constraint of birthing large-brained babies and being bipedal is great. Although the sample is extremely small, the ratio of deaths in the 21- to 30-year age range at Ancient Corinth is three compared to only one male from the same age range (Fox 2005). This trend of female deaths is noteworthy, despite the extremely small sample at Ancient Corinth, as these deaths coincide with childbearing years in women.

In the past, researchers had evaluated "scars of parturition," or

pitting on areas of the pelvis where various ligaments attach, and correlated these morphologies with childbirth. At the site of Bronze Age Lerna, Angel (1971) attempted to count the number of children to whom women had given birth based upon remodeling of the “scars of parturition” for women demonstrating them. However, as many researchers have discovered (Cox 1998; cf. Ubelaker and De La Paz 2012 for a summary of the research on the subject), this simply cannot be done. Some nulliparous females demonstrate “scars of parturition” as do some males. Additionally, some women who have given birth do not demonstrate “scars of parturition,” and the pitting is further subject to remodeling. “Scars of parturition” should be documented, but their etiologies should be interpreted with caution.

Nursing

The nutritional demands for women breastfeeding exceed those during pregnancy. Based upon stable isotope analyses of infants and young children at the Hellenistic site of the Greek colony of Apollonia Pontica on the Black Sea coast of Bulgaria, Kwok and Keenleyside (2015), were able to estimate the age of weaning, and as such, estimates of the length of time women breastfed their infants can be inferred. Kwok and Keenleyside’s (2015) results provide an average onset of weaning at six months to one year of age and completion of weaning between two and four years of age. Similarly, utilizing the results of stable isotope analyses, Prowse *et al.* (2007) found earlier weaning ages among children recovered from Roman contexts at Isola Sacra in Italy (one to two years of age) whereas the results from Dakhleh Oasis in Egypt (Dupras and Tocheri 2007; Wheeler *et al.* 2011) were comparable to those found at Apollonia Pontica (three to four years of age; Kwok and Keenleyside 2015). At Late Roman Stymphalos in the Greek Peloponnese, Garvie-Lok *et al.* (2009) found from stable nitrogen analysis of rib samples of an 18- to 30-month-old infant had not been completely weaned at the time of the infant’s death. Bourbou *et al.* (2013) conducted a large isotopic study of samples from subadults from Byzantine contexts in Greece to estimate the average age at weaning. Their findings are similar to the results from Roman Greece, with infants being weaned by four years of age. Bourbou *et al.* (2013) suggest that women breastfed their infants longer in Byzantine Greece than in Western Europe. Greater variation in breastfeeding patterns seem to be found in Medieval Greece (Bourbou *et al.* 2013). With amenorrhea often accompanying breastfeeding, the interbirth interval is often dependent upon the length of time infants are breastfed. As a result, it could be suggested

that women were giving birth at longer intervals (children were spaced in age to some degree within a family) at the Greek colony of Apollonia Pontica, as they were at Roman and Byzantine sites in Greece, such as Late Roman Stymphalos, when compared to their Roman counterparts at Isola Sacra in Italy.

Class and status

Although poverty was rife in antiquity, as upwards of 90 percent of people were at or below subsistence levels in the Roman Empire (Friesen 2008), wealthy women were not unknown in ancient Greece. The remains of high-status females have been recovered among the remains of purported high-status males from the “royal” tombs most likely dating to the fourth century BC at both Amphipolis and Vergina (Antikas and Wynn-Antikas 2015; Bartsiokas *et al.* 2015). The extremes can be exemplified by recovery of female (and male) slaves from Pydna (Triantaphyllou and Bessios 2005) from a four-phased mass grave, dating to the fourth century BC, in which the human skeletal remains were granted minimal ceremony upon death with a number of individuals recovered in neck-irons and shackles. By contrast, Liston and Papadopoulos (2004) studied the cremated human skeletal remains of a pregnant woman with a late-term fetus recovered from a Geometric context within the Athenian Agora, who by all indications was wealthy. The risks of death during pregnancy can and did cross socioeconomic lines.

Stature

At birth, boys may be slightly larger than girls, in weight, length, and brain size, but in stature, young girls will, on average, surpass their male counterparts prior to puberty. By the time growth is completed, males have generally surpassed their female counterparts in stature. Sexual dimorphism, or the difference in shape and size between males and females, is greater during times of plenty. During times of stress, however, such as malnutrition associated with poverty, sexual dimorphism diminishes. Thus, during times of stress, statures of males and females more closely approximate one another. Some historians directly correlate stature with wealth and socioeconomic prosperity, and although a useful indicator, stature is more complex with multiple variables involved in the achievement of adult stature, such as environmental stressors and individual health and disease, among others.

The mean stature of females at Hellenistic-Roman Corinth is 148.29 cm (ranging from 144.76 cm to 154.67 cm) from a sample of 5 females with at least one complete or reconstructible long bone (Fox 2005). The mean stature of males from the same site is 165.76 cm (ranging from 157.49 cm to 172.69 cm) from a sample of only 4 males. Males are on average 10.5 percent larger than females at the site from this period. This could be due in part to a female outlier of very short stature coupled with a small sample size. The regression formulae derived from Greek males developed by Eliakas *et al.* (1966) was utilized for reconstructing statures at Ancient Corinth (Fox 2005). The most commonly utilized formulae for reconstructing living stature were derived by Trotter and Gleser (1952, 1958) from white American military war dead. (For an overview of the physical evidence for human stature in ancient Greece, see Angel 1944, 1946, 1971, 1973; Bisel and Angel 1985.) Bisel and Angel (1985: 203, table 4) estimate the mean stature for each period as follows ([Table 45.1](#), measurements in cm) to which the current author added the percent of sexual dimorphism in stature (the average percentage males are taller than females) from each period:

It is important to note that stature does vary according to region and period, and that there are examples of extraordinary individuals and groups who literally stand out from the general population. In his influential early studies of human skeletal remains, Angel suggested a stature range of 148 cm to 175 cm for adult Greek males, combining the available data at the time from the Neolithic through Byzantine periods Angel (1944, 1946). Based upon [Table 45.1](#), it appears that the greatest reconstructed living statures in ancient Greece are found among the Middle Bronze Age elites from “royal” contexts. For example, the “princes” interred in the Shaft Graves at Mycenae were considerably taller than the norm for Middle Bronze Age stature (166.1 cm), with adult males ranging “from just over 160 to over 180” cm (Angel 1973: 393). Similarly, women from the Middle Bronze Age “royal” tombs have an average height of 160.1 cm, greater than the mean stature for women from any other time period in ancient Greece. The role of diet and environmental living conditions must have contributed, in part, to the greater stature afforded to those of elite women from Middle Bronze Age Greece (Hedges and Richards 1999a, 1999b). The height of a recently discovered Early Geometric burial of an adult male at Corinth has been calculated as 173 cm, well above the average (166.7 cm) for Early Iron Age Greece (Pfaff 2007: 511). Even taller individuals are reported from the Early Iron Age cemetery at Torone in Chalkidike, where the stature of one adult female was estimated to have been 159.21 cm, while that of two

males has been calculated as 173.1 and 178.8 cm (Musgrave 2005: 252). The lowest levels of sexual dimorphism in stature from [Table 45.1](#) are noted in the Late Neolithic, followed by the Roman period, although the greatest sexual dimorphism in stature is detected among Greeks from Hellenistic contexts. This would indicate that the general way of life was good during the Hellenistic period in Greece and the results from Fox (2005) would mimic those of Bisel and Angel's (1985) in that sexual dimorphism in adult stature was estimated to have been 10.5 percent, indicating that males were on average 10.5 percent taller than females from Hellenistic-Roman period contexts.

Table 45.1 Reconstructed mean living statures of females and males in Ancient Greece..

<i>Period</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>% Sexual dimorphism in stature</i>
Early Neolithic	155.5	169.6	8.3
Late Neolithic	154.3	161.3	4.3
Early Bronze Age	152.9	166.3	8.1
Middle Bronze Age "Common"	153.5	166.1	7.6
Middle Bronze Age "Royal"	160.1	172.8	7.4
Late Bronze Age Mycenaean	154.5	166.8	7.4
Early Iron Age Greece	155.1	166.7	7.0
Classical	156.2	170.5	8.4
Hellenistic	156.4	171.9	9.0
Roman	158.0	169.6	6.8

(After Bisel and Angel 1985: 203, table 4.)

Diet

Stable isotopes of carbon and nitrogen have been successfully utilized to help reconstruct the diets of ancient Greeks. The Aegean is one of the most studied areas in the world for dietary reconstruction utilizing this approach. Status differences have already been mentioned from stable isotope analyses (Hedges and Richards 1999a, 1999b), whereby males and females of high status from Grave Circle contexts at Bronze Age Mycenae were found to have consumed high-trophic-level fish, such as tuna, when compared with contemporary individuals from non-elite contexts including shaft graves. Papathanasiou *et al.* (2015) have compiled a number of archaeodietary studies from ancient Greece. Following the Mesolithic, the vast majority of individuals from Greek sites, regardless of their proximity to the sea, appear to have a diet comprised primarily from C₃ grains (such as wheat, barley, and rye). It is not until after Late Antiquity that greater variation is

observed among the diets of Greeks (cf. Garvie-Lok 2001 for the Ottoman period in Greece), likely indicating higher population mobility and the possibility that foodstuffs were also being traded more readily. An agricultural lifestyle can be inferred for most ancient Greeks from these results. Not surprisingly, dietary differences also existed between males and females at Bronze Age Pylos, mirroring the dental study mentioned below (Schepartz *et al.* 2011; Schepartz and Papathanasiou 2015), whereby males had isotopic signatures indicative of higher meat protein consumption than females from the shaft graves, and females from the tholos tombs had significantly greater protein consumption from meat resources than females from the shaft graves. Thus, status differences were not only present in the burial context, but in the bones of women themselves. Prevedorou (2015) has also detected dietary differences between males and females at Late Neolithic-Early Bronze Age Tsepi. Prevedorou (2015) has found that women were not regularly consuming high-trophic-level fish as were at least three men among her sample from the site. She posits that these dietary differences could have been occupationally related and that these men may have been fishermen, a role perhaps not often partaken by women in the past.

Disease

A number of diseases manifest themselves in the human skeleton, and as such, paleopathological study can elucidate disease in antiquity. Some of these diseases are infectious, while others may be congenital in nature, such as the block neck or cervical vertebrae known as Klippel-Feil Syndrome, as evident in an adult from Alepotrypa Cave according to Papathanasiou (2005). Klippel-Feil Syndrome may present itself more frequently in women than men, but unfortunately, the sex of this individual from Alepotrypa Cave is unknown due to the commingled nature of the burial context (Papathanasiou, personal communication). Diseases may result from an excess of a trace element as in lead poisoning, or a deficiency, such as a dietary lack of vitamin C producing scurvy. Scurvy was likely a problem in ancient Greece and as Garvie-Lok *et al.* (2009) have suggested, scurvy affected infants at Late Roman Styμφalos. As the onset of the disease was so early in these infants, their mothers may have been deficient as well. Sources for vitamin C in ancient Greece would have been more limited in the past prior to the introduction of foodstuffs rich in the vitamin, such as citrus and potatoes. Other common dietary deficiencies in Greece would have included vitamin B12 deficiency from the lack of red meat in the diet resulting in pernicious anemia, as well as folic

acid deficiency (cf. porotic hyperostosis linked with these two dietary deficiencies in Walker *et al.* 2009; cf. Fox forthcoming).

Broad bean “poisoning” or favism is known in Greece and is found more commonly among males and has a genetic basis. Another disease that women tend not to contract as frequently as men in the eastern Mediterranean is a zoonosis or a disease spread from animals to humans known as brucellosis, primarily from *Brucella melitensis* contracted from diseased goats. However, there is no sex predilection for the disease, but women tend not to contract brucellosis as readily as men, as women in Greek culture have not traditionally held the occupations that would put women in contact with the diseased animals, such as goat herding, butchery, and veterinary medicine. Brucellosis (*Brucella melitensis*) can still be contracted in the region from consumption of dairy products from infected goats, including feta cheese. Additionally, a possible example was identified skeletally in a vertebra of a male recovered from a Middle Bronze Age tomb in Cyprus at Mesoyi (Herscher and Fox 1994) where milking bowls were also found within the same burial context as that of the adult male skeleton in question. A different zoonotic strain of brucellosis, spread from cattle to humans, was identified at the site of Apollonia in Albania (Mutolo *et al.* 2012).

There are diseases that appear more readily among women when compared to men, including rheumatoid arthritis (cf. Drosos and Moutsopoulos 1995). There are some indications that a “Mediterranean diet” rich among other foodstuffs in olive oil, fish, pulses, and produce may help ease the symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis (Sköldstam *et al.* 2003) and perhaps delay the symptoms of the disease. Although there are women who exhibit this disease today in Greece, rheumatoid arthritis is relatively unknown in the prehistoric archaeological record.

Dental disease

Dental disease may be assessed more readily among many contexts in the Aegean as teeth are often better preserved than bones. Schepartz *et al.* (2009) found that the health of adult females, especially from chamber tomb contexts, was comparatively much worse than that of males at Bronze Age Pylos. The human skeletal remains range in date from the Middle Helladic to the Late Helladic IIIC contexts and are derived from tumuli, tholos tombs, and chamber tombs. Carious lesions, antemortem tooth loss, and porotic hyperostosis (perhaps related to pernicious anemia or vitamin B12 deficiency, folic acid

deficiency, or a hemolytic anemia, among other causes) were found to be significantly higher among the remains of females when compared to males (Schepartz *et al.* 2009). Dietary differences between women and men may have played a significant role in the differences between the prevalence of carious lesions, antemortem tooth loss, and porotic hyperstosis between the sexes at the site (Schepartz and Papathanasiou 2015).

Occupational stress markers

Occasionally, bioarchaeologists are able to suggest possible occupations based upon the presence of certain nonmetric traits known as occupational stress markers (cf. Capasso *et al.* 1999). For example, a statistically significant correlation was found between squatting facts on the anterior distal tibia, (extension of the tibio-talar articulation) and septal apertures (cf. Mays 2008 on apertures of the coronoid-olecranon septa of distal humeri perhaps resulting from hyperextension of the humero-ulnar joint) among individuals recovered from Hellenistic-Roman period graves from the Eastern Necropolis of Nea Paphos, Cyprus (Fox Leonard 1997; Fox 2010; Fox forthcoming) when compared to women from Ancient Corinth. Since septal apertures are found predominantly among women, it appears that women at Nea Paphos were engaged in a habitual activity that involved squatting. By comparison, women do not appear to have been involved in this habitual activity at Ancient Corinth as not only was the prevalence for squatting facets much lower at Ancient Corinth, the correlation was not found among women there. There are a number of activities in which women could have been engaged at Nea Paphos that would have involved habitual squatting, that among others could include grinding grain on a quern on the ground, or perhaps weaving on a horizontal, ground loom. Weaving is believed to have been an occupation in which women were engaged in the Aegean and in Cyprus (see Burke and Smith, this volume). The author (Fox 2010; Fox forthcoming) suggests that as ground looms may have been more common in Cyprus than in Greece, a squatting posture would have been likely necessary to weave. Thus, it could have been a difference in loom types that accounted for the squatting facets, as vertical looms predominated in ancient Greece where women were weaving most likely in a seated position, not squatting. Once again, this is just one possibility for the difference in the presence of this occupational marker among individuals, in particular, among women from the two sites.

Another indication of the textile industry in Greece is reported by

Liston (2012) from dental modification of anterior teeth noted in a woman from an Early Iron Age context from Epirus. Liston (2012) links the observed morphology with using the teeth as a third-hand in spinning thread. Spinning was also the domain of women in ancient Greece. This morphology has been noted elsewhere in the eastern Mediterranean, for example, among women during the Venetian period in Cyprus (cf. Harper 2005; see Lorentz, this volume).

Lastly, auditory exostoses (bony growth within the auditory canal of the temporal bone) are not noted among women from the Hellenistic-Roman site of Ancient Corinth, Greece whereby only one man (among a sample of 94 individuals) presented with this nonmetric trait. Thought to be associated with cold water stress (cf. Capasso *et al.* 1999), by comparison, a female and 2 individuals of indeterminate sex exhibited auditory exostoses (among a sample of 275 individuals) from contemporary Nea Paphos (Fox Leonard 1997). Sponge divers and pearl divers among other occupations have been linked with auditory exostoses. Unfortunately, the sample size is too small to make any generalizations about differences in the presence of auditory exostoses between the sexes in the eastern Mediterranean.

Trauma and violence

Postmenopausal women are more prone to fracture as there is a greater prevalence for bone loss resulting in osteopenia and osteoporosis among older women. Additionally, balance issues may be at play among the elderly, making them more likely to fall. Colles fractures or distal forearm fractures of the radius and ulna from falls onto outstretched hands are not uncommon among the elderly exhibiting osteoporosis. However, at the site of Lerna in the Peloponnese, Angel (1971) also found parry fractures of the forearm (one woman and two men) and hand fractures of the fifth metacarpal (one woman and one man) likely as a result of interpersonal violence. These types of fractures can occur as the result of warding off a blow, and as such, interpersonal violence was also directed toward at least one woman at the site. At Neolithic Alepotrypa Cave, Papathanasiou (2005) reports a high number of cranial fractures (13 percent) from interpersonal violence. Both males and females exhibit cranial trauma from the site. Grmek (1989: 59) similarly reports, “As might be expected, skull injuries, especially the more serious ones, occur more often in men than women and statistically tend to be situated on the left- rather than the right-hand side.” Angel (1971) reports that four men and four women exhibit cranial trauma at the site of Lerna. Grmek (1989: 59) singles out “the skeleton 59 *Ler.*, that of a slight

woman hurt on the right side, purposely to stress the existence of atypical cases,” as “The localization on the left side is more frequent because, then as now, usually the right hand wielded the weapons.” Grmek (1989) also stated that certain long bone fractures were more common among men than women as “males were more exposed to the danger of fractures not only as warriors and fighters but also by the nature of their activities outside the home.” Grmek (1989) suggests that the prevalence of all fractures of males when compared to females in ancient Greece was approximately 1:4.

Headshaping

One of the most studied forms of cultural modification of the human skeleton would include headshaping, a treatment of the head in infancy that permanently alters the shape of the head (see also Lorenz, this volume). Headshaping is found among cultures around the globe and from various time periods, the impetus for which may include denoting differences in gender, status, religion, or ethnicity, among others. Despite evidence for its presence in ancient Greece, among virtually all of the adults (11 of 13) recovered from the Neolithic site of Tharrounia on the island of Euboea, as reported by Lorentz (2009), much work in this area remains to be undertaken in Greece. It is uncertain if the antero-posterior form of headshaping identified at Tharrounia with occipital flattening was produced intentionally or if it was an unintentional product, perhaps from the practice of placing infants in cradleboards (Lorentz 2009). It does appear that males and females both exhibit this type of flattening at the site. Angel reports a single instance of headshaping of a female from Roman date from the Athenian Agora (Angel 1946). This woman could have come from outside Greece, as headshaping is not reported among others from either this site or from other Roman contexts within Greece. Headshaping of a circumferential form has been found among two women recovered from Early Byzantine graves at the site of Maroneia in Thrace (Tritsaroli 2006, 2010). Tritsaroli (2006, 2010) suggests that these women similarly came from outside Greece. Tritsaroli points out the similarities of this form of headshaping with the Hunnic practice noted to the north of Greece. Not only did these women apparently travel, but they were incorporated into the community at Maroneia in northern Greece as they were recovered after death from within the cemetery at the site.

Conclusions

A more complete picture of how women lived in Greek antiquity can be appreciated from inclusion of the study of their human skeletal remains from archaeological contexts. At times, the ancient textual evidence is at odds with the bioarchaeological analyses. To date, for example, female infanticide cannot be corroborated from the study of the human remains of infants from various contexts in ancient Greece. Recent bioarchaeological research in Greece is helping to illuminate the lives of women in the ancient Aegean through the study of burial customs, dietary reconstruction, paleopathological analyses of disease and trauma, and skeletal evidence for occupational stress markers and cultural modifications of the body. While the vast majority of people in Greek antiquity were likely at or below the poverty level, both ends of the socioeconomic spectrum were displayed from female slaves having been recovered at Pydna (Triantaphyllou and Bessios 2005) to women from the Middle Bronze “royal” tombs at Mycenae and the sixth century BC “royal” tombs at Amphipolis and Vergina. Adult statures in Greece are higher among the elites from the Middle Bronze Age Grave Circles at Mycenae. It is clear that diet and disease are inextricably linked as Schepartz *et al.* (2009) and Schepartz and Papathanasiou (2015) have demonstrated from Pylos. Pregnancy and childbirth can be risky periods for women, as depicted by the cremated remains of a wealthy woman from the Athenian Agora (Liston and Papadopoulos 2004). Stable isotope analysis of infant remains may indicate the length of time women were breastfeeding their babies as indicated by studies from Garvie-Lok *et al.* (2009) at Late Roman Stymphalos, and Kwok and Keenleyside (2015) at the Greek colony of Apollonia Pontica on the Black Sea in Bulgaria, both relatively longer than Prowse *et al.* 2005 identified at Isola Sacra in Italy. Thus, the interbirth interval, or the spacing between children in a family may have been greater as well in Greece when compared to Isola Sacra.

Growth and development are affected among other factors by diet as demonstrated by the differences in adult stature of women over time. Women may have been consuming less red meat at different times and locations in the region, and less fish, such as tuna, as well, based upon archaeodietary studies. Other indicators, or occupational stress markers, may indicate that women were involved in the textile industry as detected by their dentition in Epirus (Liston 2012) and they may have been squatting as indicated by squatting facets on the tibiae of women as found at Nea Paphos, Cyprus (Fox forthcoming) as a result of a habitual resting position or an occupation such as weaving using a ground loom. Finally, headshaping among two women recovered from a Middle Byzantine cemetery at Maroneia in

Thrace, indicate that these women likely came from the north and married into the community as evidenced from their placement into the community cemetery (Tritsaroli 2006, 2010). So much remains to be learned about how women lived in ancient Greece. Future bioarchaeological research will undoubtedly incorporate theoretically based research designs to help reveal more about how women lived in Greek antiquity.

References

- Angel, J. L. (1944) A racial analysis of the ancient Greeks. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 2: 329–376.
- Angel, J. L. (1945) Skeletal material from Attica. *Hesperia* 14: 279–363.
- Angel, J. L. (1946) The social biology of Greek culture growth. *American Anthropologist* 48(4): 493–533.
- Angel, J. L. (1971) *Lerna II: The People*. Princeton, NJ: American School of Classical Studies at Athens.
- Angel, J. L. (1973) Human skeletons from grave circles a Mycenae. In G. E. Mylonas (ed.) *Grave Circle B at Mycenae*. Athens, Greece: Archaeological Society of Athens, pp. 379–397.
- Antikas, T. and Wynn-Antikas, L. (2015) New finds from the cremains in Tomb II at Aegae point to Philip II and a Scythian princess. *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology*. doi: 10.1002/oa.2459.
- Bartsiokas, A., Arsuaga, J.-L., Santos, E., Algaba, M. and Gómez-Olivencia, A. (2015) The lameness of King Philip II and Royal Tomb I at Vergina, Macedonia. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112(32): 9844–9848. Published online 20 July 2015: doi:10.1073/pnas.1510906112PNAS.
- Beltrán-Sánchez, H., Finch, C. E. and Crimmins, E. M. (2015) Twentieth century surge of excess adult male mortality. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 112(29): 8993–8999.
- Bisel, S. and Angel, J. L. (1985) Health and nutrition in Mycenaean Greece: A study of human skeletal remains. In N. C. Wilkie and W. D. E. Coulson (eds) *Contributions to Aegean Archaeology. Studies in Honor of William A. McDonald*. Minneapolis, MN: center for Ancient Studies, University of Minnesota, Publications in Ancient Studies 1, pp. 197–209.
- Bolger, D. and Serwint, N. (2002) *Engendering Aphrodite: Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus*. CAARI Monograph 3. ASOR Archaeological Reports. Boston, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research.

- Bourbou, C. and Themelis, P. (2010) Child burials at Ancient Messene. In A.-M. Guimier-Sorbets and Y. Morizot (eds) *L'Enfant et la Mort dans l'Antiquité I*. Paris: De Boccard, pp. 111–128.
- Bourbou, C., Fuller, B. T. and Garvie-Lok, S. J. (2013) Nursing mothers and feeding bottles: Reconstructing breastfeeding and weaning patterns in Greek Byzantine populations (6th–15th centuries AD) using carbon and nitrogen stable isotope ratios. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 40: 3903–3913.
- Buikstra, J. E. and Ubelaker, D. (1994) *Standards for Data Collection from Human Skeletal Remains*. Fayetteville, AR: Arkansas Archeological Survey Research Series No. 44.
- Capasso, L., Kennedy, K. A. R. and Wilczak, C. A. (1999) *Atlas of Occupational Markers on Human Remains*. Teramo, Italy: Edigrafital.
- Cavanagh W. and Mee, C. (1998) *A Private Place: Death in Prehistoric Greece*. Jonsered, Sweden: Paul Åströms Förlag, Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology, 125.
- Cox, M. J. (1998) *An Evaluation of the Significance of Scars of Parturition from the Christ Church Spitalfields Sample*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University College London.
- Drosos, A. A. and Moutsopoulos, H. M. (1995) Rheumoid arthritis in Greece: Clinical, serological and genetic considerations. *Journal of Clinical and Experimental Rheumatology* Supplement 12: S7–12.
- Dupras, T. L. and Tocheri, M. W. (2007) Reconstructing infant weaning histories at Roman period Kellis, Egypt using stable isotope analysis of dentition. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 134: 63–74.
- Eliakas, C., Eliakas, E. and Iordanidis, P. (1966) Détermination de la taille d'après la mensuration des os longs. *Annales de Médecine Légale* 46: 403–421.
- Fox, S. C. (2005) Health in Hellenistic and Roman times: The case studies of Paphos, Cyprus and Corinth, Greece. In H. King (ed.) *Health in Antiquity*. London: Routledge, pp. 59–82.
- Fox, S. C. (2010) *To Squat or Not? The Utility of Non-Metric Analyses: A Case Study from the Eastern Mediterranean*. Paper presented at the International Congress on Archaeological Sciences in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East. May 1, 2010, Paphos, Cyprus.
- Fox, S. C. (2012) Children in Graeco-Roman Greece. In M.-D. Nenna (ed.) *L'Enfant et la Mort dans l'Antiquité II*. Alexandria, Egypt: centre d'Etudes Alexandrines, pp. 409–427.
- Fox, S. C. (forthcoming) The utility of skeletal nonmetric analyses: A case study from the eastern Mediterranean. In K. Lorentz (ed.) *Proceedings of the International Congress on Archaeological Sciences in*

- the Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East. Nicosia: Cyprus Institute.
- Fox Leonard, S. C. (1997) *Comparative Health from Paleopathological Analysis of the Human Skeletal Remains Dating to the Hellenistic and Roman Periods from Paphos, Cyprus, and Corinth, Greece*. Unpublished dissertation. University of Arizona.
- Friesen, S. (2008) Injustice or God's will: Early Christian's explanations of poverty. In S. R. Holman (ed.) *Wealth and Poverty in Early Church and Society*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, pp. 17–36.
- Garvie-Lok, S. J. (2001) *Loaves and Fishes: A Stable Isotope Reconstruction of Diet in Medieval Greece*. Unpublished dissertation. University of Calgary, Canada.
- Garvie-Lok, S., Pennycook, C. and Stark, R. (2009) *Scurvy in a Late Roman Greek Child: Multiple Lines of Evidence*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists, Chicago, IL.
- Grmek, M. D. (1989) *Diseases in the Ancient Greek World*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Harper, N. (2005) *Specialized Dental Wear from Venetian period Cyprus*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology. April 2005. Salt Lake City, UT.
- Harper, N. and Fox, S. C. (2009) Recent research in Cypriot bioarchaeology. *Bioarchaeology of the Near East* 2: 1–38.
- Hedges, R. E. M. and Richards, M. P. (1999a) Grave Circle B Mycenae. In Y. Tzedakis and H. Martlew (eds) *Minoans and Mycenaeans: Flavours of Their Time*. Athens, Greece: Greek Ministry of Culture, National Archaeological Museum, Kapon Publisher, pp. 223–224.
- Hedges, R. E. M. and Richards, M. P. (1999b) Grave Circle A Mycenae. In Y. Tzedakis and H. Martlew (eds) *Minoans and Mycenaeans: Flavours of Their Times*. Athens, Greece: Greek Ministry of Culture, National Archaeological Museum, Kapon Publisher, pp. 227–228.
- Herscher, E. and Fox, S. C. (1994) A Middle Bronze tomb from western Cyprus. *Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus*, pp. 69–80.
- Hillson, S. (2009) The world's largest infant cemetery and its potential for studying growth and development. In L. A. Schepartz, S. C. Fox and C. Bourbou (eds) *New Directions in the Skeletal Biology of Greece, Occasional Wiener Laboratory Series. Hesperia Supplement* 43, pp. 137–154.
- Kwok, C. and Keenleyside, A. (2015) Baby bones, food, and health: Isotopic evidence for infant feeding practices in the Greek colony of

- Apollonia Pontica (5th–2nd centuries B.C.). In A. Papathanasiou, M. Richards and S. C. Fox (eds) *Archaeodiet in the Greek World. Occasional Wiener Laboratory Series. Hesperia Supplement*.
- Lagia, A., Petroutsas, E. and Manolis, S. K. (2007). Health and diet during the MBA in the Peloponnese. In C. Mee (ed.) *Cooking up the Past*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 313–328.
- Liston, M. A. (2012) Reading the bones: Interpreting the skeletal evidence for women's lives in Ancient Greece. In S. L. James and S. Dillon (eds) *A Companion to Women in the Ancient Mediterranean. Blackwells' Companions to the Ancient World*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 125–140.
- Liston, M. A. and Papadopoulos, J. (2004) The rich Athenian lady was pregnant: The anthropology of a Geometric tomb reconsidered. *Hesperia* 73(1): 7–38.
- Liston, M. A. and Rotroff, S. (2013) Babies in the well: Archaeological evidence for newborn disposal in Hellenistic Greece. In J. E. Grubbs and T. Parkin (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Childhood and Education in the Classical World*. Oxford Handbooks. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 62–82.
- Lorentz, K. O. (2009) The malleable body: Headshaping in Greece and the surrounding regions. In L. A. Schepartz, S. C. Fox and C. Bourbou (eds) *New Directions in the Skeletal Biology of Greece. Occasional Wiener Laboratory Series. Hesperia Supplement*, pp. 75–98.
- Mays, S. (2008) Septal aperture of the humerus in a mediaeval human skeletal population. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 136(4): 432–440.
- Musgrave, J. (2005) An anthropological assessment of the inhumations and cremations from the Early Iron Age cemetery at Torone. In J. K. Papadopoulos (ed.) *The Early Iron Age cemetery at Torone*. Los Angeles, CA: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, UCLA, pp. 243–315.
- Mutolo, M. J., Jenny, L. L., Buszek, A. R., Fenton, T. W. and Foran, D. R. (2012) Osteological and molecular identification of brucellosis at Ancient Butrint, Albania. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 147(2): 24–263.
- Papathanasiou, A. (2005) Health status of the Neolithic population of Alepotrypa Cave, Greece. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 126: 377–390.
- Papathanasiou, A., Richards, M. and Fox, S. C. (2015) *Archaeodiet in the Greek World. Occasional Wiener Laboratory Series II. Hesperia Supplement*.
- Pfaff, C. (2007) Geometric graves in the Panayia field at Corinth.

- Prevedorou, E. (2015) *The Role of Kin Relations and Residential Mobility during the Transition from Final Neolithic to Early Bronze Age at Attica, Greece*. Unpublished dissertation. Arizona State University.
- Prowse, T. L., Schwarcz, H. P., Saunders, S. R., Machiarelli, R. and Bondioli, L. (2005) Isotopic evidence for age-related variation in diet from Isola Sacra, Italy. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 128(1): 2–13.
- Prowse, T. L., Schwarcz, H. P., Garnsey, P., Knyf, M., Machiarelli, R. and Bondioli, L. (2007) Isotopic evidence for age-related immigration to Imperial Rome. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 132: 510–519.
- Rotroff, S. (1999) The artifacts from Well G_{5.3} and some conclusions concerning the deposit. In colloquium entitled, ‘The reanalysis of a well deposit from the second century B.C. in the Athenian Agora: Animal sacrifice and infanticide in Late Hellenistic Athens’. 100th Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America. *American Journal of Archaeology* 103: 284.
- Schepartz, L. A. and Papathanasiou, A. (2015) In A. Papathanasiou, M. Richards and S. C. Fox (eds. *Archaeodiet in the Greek World. Occasional Wiener Laboratory Series II. Hesperia Supplement*. Princeton, NJ: American School of Classical Studies at Athens.
- Schepartz, L. A., Miller-Antonio, S. and Murphy, J. (2009) Differential health among the Mycenaeans of Messenia: Status, sex and dental health at Pylos. In L. A. Schepartz, S. C. Fox and C. Bourbou (eds) *New Directions in the Skeletal Biology of Greece. Occasional Wiener Laboratory Series. Hesperia Supplement*, pp. 155–174.
- Schepartz, L. A., Papathanasiou, A., Miller-Antonio, S., Stocker, S. R., Davis, J. L., Murphy, J. M. A., Malapani, E. and Richards, M. (2011) No seat at the table? Mycenaean women’s diet and health in Pylos, Greece. In L. A. Schepartz (ed.) *Anthropology á la Carte: The Evolution and Diversity of Human Diet*. San Diego, CA: Cognello, pp. 359–374.
- Sköldstam, L., Hagfors, L. and Johansson, G. (2003) An experimental study of a Mediterranean diet intervention for patients with rheumatoid arthritis. *Annals of Rheumatic Diseases* 62: 208–214. doi:10.1136/ard.62.3.208.
- Triantaphyllou, S. (2016). Constructing identities through ageing the body in the prehistoric Aegean: The view of the human remains. In M. Mina, S. Triantaphyllou and Y. Papadatos (eds) *Embodied Identities in the Prehistoric Eastern Mediterranean: Convergence of Theory and Practice*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow.
- Triantaphyllou, S. and Bessios, M. (2005) A mass burial at fourth

- century BC Pydna, Macedonia, Greece: Evidence for slavery? *Antiquity* 79(305), Project Gallery. <http://www.antiquity.ac.uk/projgall/triantaphyllou/index.html>.
- Trichopoulos, D. and Papaevangelou, J. (1974). *The Population of Greece. C. I. C. R. E. D. Series*. Athens, Greece: Department of Hygiene and Epidemiology of the University of Athens Medical School.
- Tritsaroli, P. (2006) The extra mural cemetery from the Byzantine Maroneia. Bioarchaeological analysis and burial customs. *AEMTH* 20: 31–43.
- Tritsaroli, P. (2010) Artificial cranial modification on a female skeleton from the Byzantine site of Maroneia (Thrace, Greece). *International Journal of Osteoarchaeology* 21(4): 464–478.
- Trotter, M. and Gleser, G. (1952) Estimation of stature from long bones of American whites and negroes. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 10(4): 463–514.
- Trotter, M. and Gleser, G. (1958) A re-evaluation of estimation of statures taken during life and of long bones after death. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 16(1): 79–123.
- Ubelaker D. L. and De La Paz, J. S. (2012) Skeletal indicators of pregnancy and parturition: A historical review. *Journal of Forensic Science* 57(4): 866–872.
- Walker, P. L. and Cook, D. C. (1998) Brief communication: Gender and sex: Vive la difference. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 106(2): 255–259.
- Walker, P. L., Bathurst, R. R., Richman, R., Gjerdrum, T. and Andrushko, V. A. (2009) The causes of porotic hyperostosis and cribra orbitalia: A reappraisal of the iron deficiency anemia hypothesis. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 139(2): 109–125.
- Weiss, K. (1972) On the systematic bias in skeletal sexing. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 37: 239–250.
- Wheeler, S. M., Williams, L., Dupras, T., Tocheri, M. and Molto, J. E. (2011) Children in Roman Egypt: Bioarchaeology of the Kellis 2 cemetery, Dakhleh Oasis, Egypt. In M. Lally and A. Moore (eds) *(Re)Thinking the Little Ancestor: New Perspectives on the Archaeology of Infancy and Childhood*. BAR International Series 2271. Oxford, UK: Archaeopress, pp. 110–121.

WOMEN IN EARLY IRON AGE AND ARCHAIC GREECE

A view from the grave

James Whitley

Introduction

This book is about ‘real women’ in Antiquity. That is, it is not about goddesses such as Athena, Artemis, Demeter, or Hera; neither is it about women in ‘fiction’ (that is in any of the tales we associate with Greek myth, such as the Trojan War cycle). So no mention of Penelope, Briseis, Andromache, Elektra, Clytemnestra, or Antigone – however vividly such characters endure in the modern consciousness of the ancient world. And certainly no sphinxes or gorgons, however strongly they figure in Greek or later Western art, and no matter how much they may have influenced modern notions of the unconscious.

The notion of ‘real women’, however, remains problematic. The only ‘real’ women who represent themselves in Archaic Greece are the poets Sappho and (possibly, if improbably) Corinna. And what they say is filtered through the genres and poetic conventions through which they are allowed to speak. To imagine that either Sappho or Corinna was an ‘individual’ in the modern sense of the term – that their ‘I’ is equivalent to the ‘I’ in a twentieth-century prose writer¹ – is to think anachronistically (Capra 2009). And when we look beyond literature to material culture (that is to archaeology) we are still dealing with representations. We cannot interrogate ancient Greek women to ask them about the reality of their lives. We have, inevitably, to look at either traces (traces of female bodies in the archaeological record) or representations (such as images of women on pots or sculpture). And looking at representations, of course, raises its own methodological problems, since we have to think of who is

representing what to whom. Problems arise, for example, when we try to ‘read’ representations of women made by Athenian artisans but found in Etruscan tombs, and try then to ‘read out’ some generic ‘ancient Greek view of women’ from this evidence (see, for example, Topper 2012). Are these images, made by Athenians but consumed by Etruscans, representations of what (male) Athenian craftsmen thought? Or are they an Etruscan fantasy of ‘Greekness’, a kind of Etruscan ‘Greek’ Orientalism (for a good discussion, see Lewis 2002)?

This chapter will primarily look at how women were represented in burials over the long Early Iron Age and Archaic period (circa 1000–480 BC). It will try to ‘contextualise’ these women by looking at the burial rites, the grave goods and (where that evidence is available) the bones themselves (see Liston 2012). It will focus first on three very different burials (the ‘queen’ of Lefkandi Tomba; the ‘rich Athenian lady’ of the ninth century; and Phrasikleia, an Attic maiden represented by a tombstone and an inscription), while going on to discuss the overall status of women by the end of the Archaic period (in particular the question of whether women could, in any sense, be citizens). But before we get down to the details I want to look at two external factors that inevitably affect the study of ancient Greek women: the view from the household and the view from feminist anthropology.

The view from the household

Most of the studies of women and gender in ancient Greece take the house and the household as their starting point. That is, researchers have begun with ideas of male and female space (articulated in the words of fourth-century BC Athenian orators) and then have tried to link these literary testimonia with the material record of later Classical Greece (for a critical review, see Nevett 1999; cf. Whitley 2001: 319–28). Athenian houses being relatively poorly documented, researchers have turned with alacrity to the evidence from Olynthos, a large city with abundant Classical houses conveniently destroyed in 348 BC. Attempts however to define what was purely female and what purely male in such houses have proved largely fruitless. The dining spaces (conventionally referred to as *andrones*) may appear largely a male preserve (reserved, it is thought, for ritualised dining associated with the *symposion*), but women, it seems, were not confined to particular ‘female’ spaces within the household. It has been maintained, however, that the overall design of the Classical courtyard house was there to keep women inside, to confine them entirely to the domestic sphere. It has even been proposed that Classical Greek

women only went out in public – outside the house – wearing a veil, and in so doing they carried their domestic confinement with them (e.g. Llewellyn-Jones 2007).

These ideas have affected the way women are viewed in the Archaic period. Changes in house design in the final period of the Late Geometric settlement at Zagora on Andros, where internal courtyards were created around 700 BC, have been seen as in some ways anticipating the Classical courtyard house, and so the principle of female confinement (Morris 1998: 28–9, 1999). The existence of some Archaic courtyard houses, intermediate forms between Zagora and the classic Olynthian house, seems to confirm this.

There are several problems with this thesis. The first is that it understates Greek regionalism. Something like Archaic courtyard houses may be found in Corinth or Athens. But, elsewhere within Ian Morris' (1998) 'central Greek' area (such as Emborio on Chios) much simpler dwellings persisted well into the seventh century BC (Boardman 1967: 40–51). In Crete, simple one or two room structures remain the norm down until Hellenistic times (Westgate 2007). Women simply cannot be 'confined' in such houses, neither could they be confined in any of the earlier structures we find in Iron Age settlements at Nichoria, Lefkandi Xeropolis or Oropos (see now Westgate 2015). The reason is simple. Such structures are so small that they could only be used for shelter and sleeping. For a woman to do all or indeed any of the tasks we associate with the domestic sphere she would have to work outside, and so interact on a daily basis with other members of the community. In a tightly packed civic space, such as late Classical/Hellenistic Praisos on Crete, or a more open-plan village or hamlet, such as Early Iron Age Nichoria (Coulsen 1983), 'confinement' would be equally (if differently) impossible.

The second reason is more complex and relates to citizenship. For, underlying the idea that women were 'confined' is the idea that women could not, in any sense and to any degree, participate in the public realm and so might be considered citizens. There is one aspect of ancient life where such an idea is demonstrably false. For we do know that women played quite an important role in Greek public religion. Not only were some women priestesses to powerful gods, such as Athena and Artemis, but women alongside men participated in the major religious festivals involving sacrifices to the gods and the feasts that followed. Recently Josine Blok (2014) has taken this idea further and argued that participation in such public rituals was what marked out citizens from non-citizens. Women could be citizens too – albeit second-class ones.

For all these reasons, to look only at the household as the arena where gender relations and gender politics may have been played out (as Foxhall (2009) does) simply will not work. And to view gender simply as a male/female divide may be equally misleading.

Gender: feminism and anthropology

A common-sense understanding of gender is that it more or less equates to biological sex, and that it is essentially binary (male/female). Since the 1980s, a number of anthropologists (Moore 1988) and archaeologists (Gilchrist 1999) have been quietly undermining this simple picture. For one thing, gender is as much cultural as natural; gender is a given society's interpretation of biological differences, including those of age as well as sex. Gender may change with age – and for women the different interpretations placed on the years immediately before, during and after the years of childbearing are particularly important. For another, gender is relational. So the standing of women within a particular society, culture or social order depends on the interpretation given to 'maleness' or 'childhood' (see Derevenski 1997, 2000). 'Gender studies' does not equate simply to 'women's stuff' – as if 'women's stuff' were intrinsically uninteresting or inferior. Gender relations are also power relations, and these 'structure' a particular social order in a number of often surprising ways (see, in particular, Moore 1991). Lastly, for all these reasons, gender is not a simple binary opposition, a case of 'either/or'. There can be intermediate or ambiguous genders (as increasingly we seem to have in our society), and gender shifts subtly with age.

All these ideas have particular importance in Early Greece. Once single graves and single cremations in urns become an established practice throughout many regions of the Aegean in the eleventh century BC (Snodgrass 1971: 140–197), gender differences in burial become very apparent. Yet the major axis of difference we see in Greek burial practices throughout the period we are talking about is not between adult men and adult women: it is between adults and children (Whitley 1991a; Houby-Nielsen 2000). A child or infant is much more likely to be inhumed, or their remains placed inside a pithos or amphora, than an adult in almost every region of Greece at any time between 950 and 480 BC. Adults, conversely, are more likely to be cremated (though this statement also requires qualification). Male/female gender representations are played out along this central axis of difference (Whitley 2000). The first of these examples – the 'queen of Lefkandi' – illustrates these points very well.

The Queen of Lefkandi

In 1980 British and Greek archaeologists who had been working at the Early Iron Age site (settlement and cemeteries) of Lefkandi in Euboea came across a remarkable building on the hill called 'Toumba'. This building was located close to the Early Iron Age 'Toumba' cemetery, which had already been partially investigated (Popham *et al.* 1980). But, before the large structure could be properly investigated, the landowner, who wished to develop the land for holiday flats, decided that the remains were simply getting in the way. So he bulldozed the central portion of this remarkable, 40 m long structure, the largest of its kind dated to the tenth century BC. Illegal bulldozing revealed two large rectangular burial shafts underneath the building. The pottery found above (largely Middle Protogeometric) dates these shafts to the middle of the tenth century BC (Catling and Lemos 1990). The northern shaft contained two horses, which may have been sacrificed (Popham *et al.* 1993: 19–21). The southern (Figure 46.1) contained two human burials; one a 'warrior grave' (cf. Whitley 2002), where the cremated remains of a male between 30 to 45 years old had been interred in an antique bronze Cypriot amphoroid krater (Catling 1993) accompanied by a sword and whetstone; the second an extended inhumation of a younger woman around 25 to 30 years old.

The quantity and quality of the grave goods is impressive – gilt coils, gold and electrum rings, two large discs of sheet gold over the breast and an antique Babylonian (seventeenth century BC) necklace with gold and faience beads (Popham *et al.* 1982: 172–173, figs 5–6; Popham *et al.* 1993: ix and 20–21; Popham 1994). This is the 'queen' of Lefkandi. How should we interpret her?

One thing we cannot do is simply 'read' her status from the grave goods. To be sure, these are both rich and exotic. Reading status from grave goods, however, is an inherently problematic exercise, as 'status' can be expressed in a number of ways (Parker Pearson 1999: 72–94). Burials are never simply those of individuals, but always form a part of a universe of representations particular to a certain culture. So the queen's burial must be seen in relation to other burials in Lefkandi. Her status must be seen as *relational*. I mean this in three senses: first in relation to her 'consort', the 'hero of Lefkandi' (Popham *et al.* 1982); second in relation to other female graves in Lefkandi; and finally in relation a whole raft of apparently extraneous issues that cluster around this site in general and these burials in particular. Chief amongst these is Homer (Antonaccio 1995). For the Toumba cremation burial has many points in common with the description of

the burials of the heroes, Patroklos (*Iliad* 23: 161–257) and Hector (*Iliad* 24: 782–804). The principal ‘hero’ is cremated and his remains wrapped in cloth and placed in a golden *phiale* – that seems to be an antique. The cremation is placed beneath a large tumulus. In the case of Patroklos, the burial is accompanied by the sacrifice of horses, dogs, and Trojan captives (*Iliad* 23: 171–176). In the first notice of these burials (Popham *et al.* 1982) it was suggested that the ‘queen of Lefkandi’ might have been sacrificed too – the comparison drawn was with the nineteenth-century Indian practice of *suttee*, where the bereaved wife, in thrall to her grief, throws herself onto the pyre of her deceased husband. In this light, the rich grave goods are not so much a reflection of her status as that of her (older) consort, the ‘hero’ or warrior himself. But we still lack a detailed osteological report on the bones from the ‘queen of Lefkandi’, and if she was sacrificed then there is no other example of such a practice in these (tenth century BC) or later times.

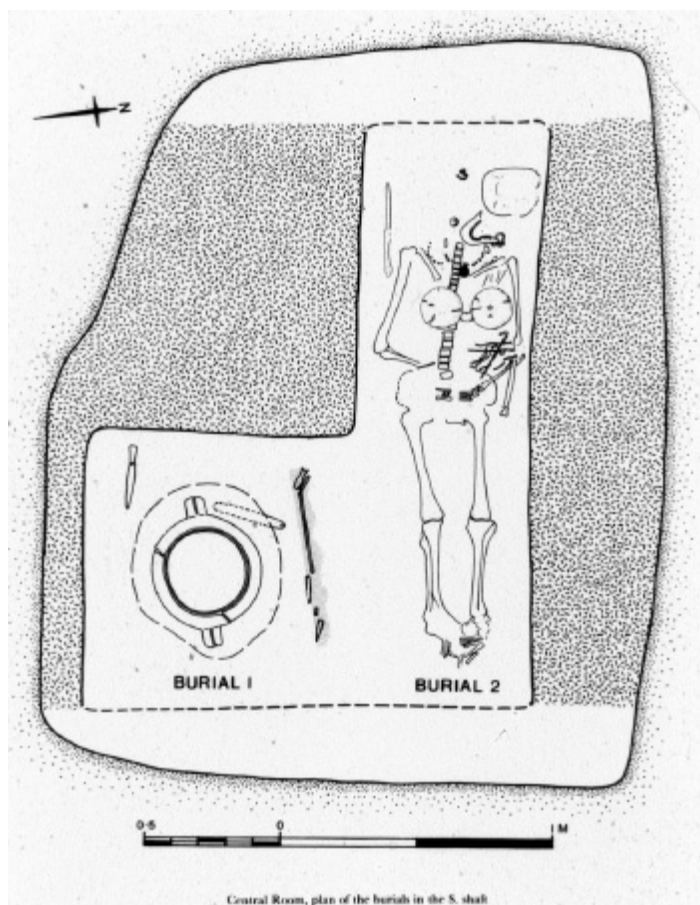


Figure 46.1 Southern burial shaft on hill at Toumba, Lefkandi in

But even if the evidence of ‘cut marks’ turns out to be a misinterpretation, the fact that she was buried whole (inhumed) rather than cremated emphasises both the difference from her consort and her similarity to contemporary and (slightly) later female inhumations from Lefkandi. Examples of such graves might include Palia Perivolia grave 22 and Toumba 63 (both dating to the tenth century; Popham *et al.* 1980: 149–151; Popham and Lemos 1996, plates 68–69); and the ninth-century graves, Toumba 33, 36 (Popham *et al.* 1980: 188–189, 190–192) 42, 51 and 74 (Popham and Lemos 1996, plates 46, 57–58 and 73). These are the graves that Langdon (2008: 130–143, table 3.2) places within her group of ‘maiden’ graves, that is graves of young women who died before they could either marry or give birth. This classification however is made, not so much on the basis of osteology (Musgrave 1980) as on the general appearance of the grave and the type of grave goods (hair spirals, fibulae and so forth).

Even if we cannot be certain of the osteology, there is enough here to place the ‘queen of Lefkandi’ into a wider pattern within Early Iron Age Greece. This is not so much a straightforward male/female binary pattern. I have argued elsewhere that, in Early Iron Age Greece the chief principle that seems to structure most burial practices is not a male/female division, but a polarity with the cremated ‘warrior’ burial at one end and the inhumed child at the other (Whitley 2000). This pattern is easier to discern if we move away from Lefkandi in the tenth century to Athens in the ninth.

The grave of a rich Athenian lady

The ‘grave of a rich Athenian lady’ (Agora H16:6) was discovered in 1967 on the slopes of the Areopagus hill in Athens, within the boundaries of the Agora excavations. The grave was published promptly and thoroughly (Smithson 1968). It seems to form part of a small cemetery, perhaps a family plot, on the Areopagus (Smithson 1974; cf Whitley 1991b: 116–137). This grave, unlike that of the ‘queen of Lefkandi’, was a cremation inside an urn ([Figure 46.2](#)). Initial osteological analysis revealed this to be a woman of middling years (30 to 35 years).²

Further osteological analysis seems to confirm this, and shows that not only was a woman buried here, but her baby (or foetus) as well (Liston and Papadopoulos 2004). In one respect, her burial follows the

standard pattern for adult Athenian Early Iron Age graves. A rectangular trench is dug, and a hole or circular pit at one end. Into this hole (in the ‘trench and hole’ grave) is placed the urn containing the cremated remains of the woman (and baby). In this case the urn is a fairly magnificent example of an Early Geometric II- Middle Geometric I belly-handled amphora, 0.715 m high, decorated with a ‘bi-metopal’ panel between the handles. There are many examples of such amphoras (Kourou 2002: 81–83), and where their context is known, as in the case of grave G41 in the Kerameikos (Kübler 1954: 235–236) or grave XII from Kriezī street (Alexandri 1968) they seem to have been used to contain the remains of women of middling years. Moreover, the design on the central panel of the cremation urn (circle metopes), the shape of the urn (a belly-handled amphora) and the kinds of ‘rich’ grave goods interred with the deceased (bronze fibulae with a large catchplate, dress pins covered in gold leaf) seem to reinforce one another symbolically. This highly redundant pattern seems to speak clearly of the high status of such women within the various kin groups of ninth-century Athens (Whitley 1991a: 116–137).

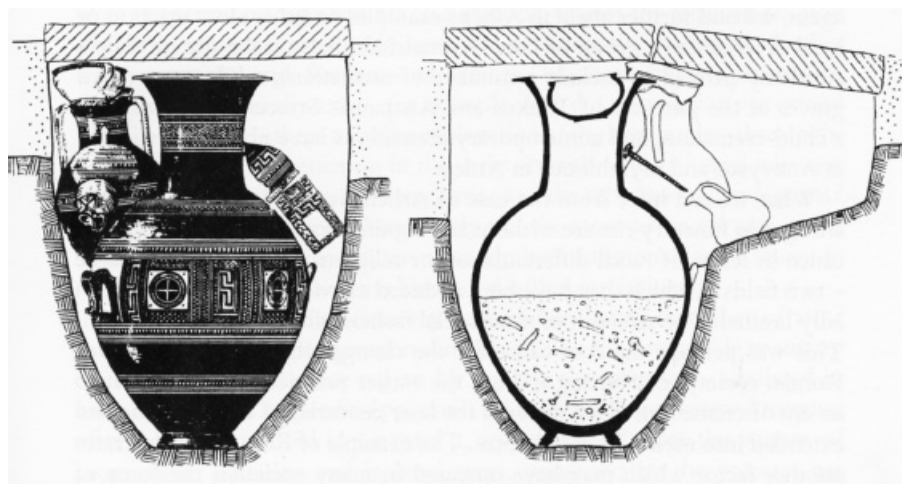


Figure 46.2 Cremation inside an urn. Slopes of the Areopagus hill in Athens, within the boundaries of the Agora excavations.

The tomb of the rich Athenian lady nonetheless stands out as being exceptional. Partly this is through its exotic grave goods, such as the faience necklace and the two gold earrings, decorated using techniques of granulation and filigree, which must (it is thought) have been brought in from the East. The find that seems to speak most eloquently of high status was not however exotic, but local: a model of

a granary, or rather five granaries, clearly manufactured in Attica and decorated with a maeander in a clearly Geometric manner. The original excavator, Evelyn Smithson, interpreted this ‘granary chest’ metonymically: each of the five granaries stood for 100 bushels, and so the ‘rich Athenian lady’ must have belonged to the *pentekosiomedimnoi*, the ‘500 bushel people’, the highest of the four property classes associated with the later Athenian lawgiver Solon (cf Aristotle *Politics* 1274a, 19). If so, ninth-century Athens becomes a social pyramid, a society already stratified, with wealthy women at the apex (or wealthy families whose collective status is symbolised in women such as our ‘rich Athenian lady’).

But I do not think we can read burial practices in quite so literal a manner. For, just as with the ‘queen of Lefkandi’, our understanding of this grave has to be relational – that is, we have to place it within the framework of other types of tomb, and what these are telling us about gender. And indeed several kinds of graves can be distinguished. First, there are the male ‘warrior graves’, cremations in urns where the iron sword has often been deliberately damaged by being placed around the neck of the cremation urn, in this case invariably a neck-handled amphora (D’Onofrio 2011). Then there are rich, apparently male cremations in more elaborately decorated neck-handled amphoras, such as graves G2 and G43 in the Kerameikos, sometimes accompanied by gold diadems and invariably marked by a krater placed above the ground. In addition to the rich female graves I have been discussing, there appears to be another class of female grave, for younger women. These are Langdon’s ‘maiden graves’ (Langdon 2008: 130–143, table 3.2). These were cremations in another distinctive and rather rare shape, the shoulder-handled amphora, examples being Kerameikos grave G7 and Agora grave D.16.2 (with its two pairs of clay boots). Then there are the inhumations, either in trenches or in cists, which seem to be reserved for children in this period. I have argued elsewhere (Whitley 2000, 2015) that Athenian ninth-century graves can be grouped into five ‘genders’ along an axis, with male ‘warrior graves’ at one end and child’s graves at the other.

Why group these along an axis? Well, the fundamental ‘binary’ division seems to be between male ‘warrior’ at one end and child at the other, something along these lines:

Adult male :	child
<i>Heros</i> (warrior) :	<i>nepios</i>
Weapons :	personal items
Cremation :	inhumation

But this ‘binary division’ cannot accommodate five apparently gendered types of graves, and so instead of a binary division we have an axis, like this:

Younger male (warrior); (older) male; (older) female; (younger) female; child

Abstract
Damaged
Burnt
Flat
Weapons

Concrete
Whole
Unburnt
Round
Personal items

Adult women here are betwixt and between warrior men and children. Their burials are like male graves in that they are cremated and placed in urns; but like child’s graves in that they are also accompanied by whole objects ‘in the round’, such as clay boots or the granary chest (male graves have no such objects; Whitley 2000). If we factor in the wealth of the grave goods (making use of the wealth score in Whitley 1991a: 116–137) then it becomes immediately apparent that wealthy female graves with belly-handled amphoras are much ‘richer’ in terms of grave goods than wealthy male graves marked by kraters. We have not an axis but a parabola, like this (Figure 46.3).

In this scheme of things, the position of our ‘rich Athenian lady’ is a paradoxical one. She and other rich females are, in one sense, at the apex of a social order that could be seen as stratified. But they are also ‘betwixt and between’ fully adult, ‘warrior’ men on the one hand and children on the other. It is the ‘warrior’ men who seem to figure much more prominently in the heroic narratives (proto-Homeric lays) that were surely already being performed at this time.

This leads us back to the problem we mentioned earlier. Are these women ‘rich’ in their own right, or are they rich only by virtue of the family they have married into or the family from which they might have come? It seems inherently unlikely that ninth-century Athens was in any sense a matriarchy. There are no matriarchies known ethnographically, and ninth-century Athens touches on (if it does not belong to) the Homeric world. And Athens is certainly unusual at this time – female graves are consistently richer than male graves in the Athenian Early Iron Age sequence of graves; and no other region of Greece has a distinctive symbolic package for rich women (or indeed for any women). So, while I would argue that the axis I have outlined can ‘work’ for other regions of Greece, I am reluctant to say that such

graves are not telling us something about the different status of women in this time and place.

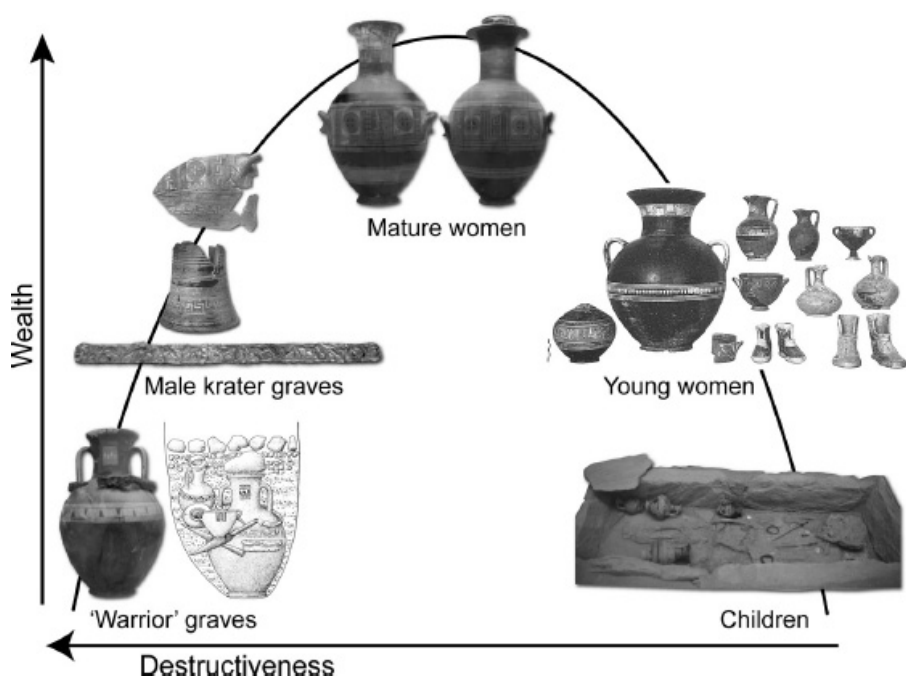


Figure 46.3 The arc of ninth-century Athenian ‘gendered’ burial practices. (Drawn by Kirsty Harding.)

The rich female grave however did not last – or rather she lasted into the eighth century (in some of the Dipylon graves, marked by the largest ever belly-handled amphorae, Athens NM 803 and 804; Brückner and Pernice 1893) and into a distinctive series of rich female inhumations with horse pyxides (Whitley 1991b: 137–180). But such burials are very hard to trace in the succeeding seventh century, when Athenians become much more effective in cremating their dead (and much more destructive of any useful osteological evidence). The symbolic axis seems to collapse into (apparently) male cremations at one end, and child inhumations at the other (Whitley 1994, 2000). It is only in the sixth century that women again become highly visible in the mortuary sphere.

Phrasikleia: the maiden who speaks forever

Epigraphers (experts on inscriptions) had long known of the inscribed base of Phrasikleia found in the fabric of the church of the Panayia at Merenda (ancient Myrrhinous) in Attica, first noted by Michel Fourmont in 1730 (Svenbro 1993: 9–10). This base is one of many from Archaic Attica (Jeffery 1962), which are often positioned to address a passer-by. Such bases supported either a grave stele or a statue in the round, either a *kouros* (a young male) or a *kore* (a young, unmarried girl or ‘maiden’). In 1972 both a *kouros* and a *kore* were found together in a trench within the Geometric to Classical cemetery of ancient Myrrhinous about 200 m from the church (Mastrokostas 1972), and it was realised immediately that the *kore* (dated stylistically to around 540 BC) fitted the inscribed base precisely. Statue and inscription could be considered together. The excavator interpreted the destruction and burial of the *kouros* and *kore* to the actions of the Persian invaders in 480 BC.

While *kouroi* with inscribed bases are relatively common in the sixth century BC, funerary *korai* (plural) are not – we know of only three. The other two appear to be associated with the large tumuli (such as those at Veladineza, Vari and Vourva) traditionally associated with ‘aristocratic’ families or kin groups (though this interpretation is far from certain – see Houby-Nielsen 1995; cf Whitley 2001: 258–265). In this way of thinking, Phrasikleia would have belonged to one of these ‘aristocratic’ groups. But, if so, why celebrate a ‘maiden’ quite so prominently?



Figure 46.4 Statue of Phrasikleia.

For, if we take both image and inscription together, then the symbolism of the whole ensemble becomes very rich (Svenbro 1993: 8–25), providing a window onto the symbolic universe of late Archaic Greece (*Figure 46.4*). The statue, of which the colour survives (see Brinkman 2003, 174A), is crowned with a series of lotuses; Phrasikleia at the same time holds a lotus with her left hand and pulls on her *peplos* with her right. Below, her inscription (an epigram in the form of an elegiac couplet, where a hexameter is followed by a pentameter) reads (Jeffery 1962: 138–139. n. 46):

Sema Phrasikleias: kore keklesomai aiei

anti gamou para theon tout' lachousa onoma

[I am] the tomb of Phrasikleia: I will be called a maiden [*kore*]

forever

Having received this name from the gods instead of marriage.

The 'I' of this inscription shifts subtly. First, it is the tomb that speaks, then it appears that Phrasikleia is speaking in the first person – the statue becomes Phrasikleia (Fame-speaker, or She who draws attention to *kleos* [fame]), eternally lamenting that she will be a maiden forever, having never married. In Svenbro's reading, this fact refers back to the lotus which she both holds in her hands and which crowns her head – the flower that, like the hearth in the centre of the house, 'rekindles' in the morning and 'dies down' at night. The lotus, like Phrasikleia, is unceasingly reborn (but as a maiden, forever unmarried).

Phrasikleia then both celebrates the status of maidenhood and laments it. Somehow, not being married is not to be fulfilled. This ambiguity is perhaps reflected in the findspot, where Phrasikleia is found next to a *kouros*. Does this represent her intended husband? Or a brother who also died young?

But there is a further ambiguity about such *korai*. These remain the most popular form of votive offering in late Archaic Athens, as the numerous examples from the Athenian Acropolis attest (Keesling 2003). Whether or not these *korai*, being dedications to Athena, are also representations of her (as a maiden goddess); and whether or not such dedications are 'aristocratic' in any meaningful sense are problems which have long exercised scholars and remain unresolved. But, taken in conjunction with the (relatively rare) funerary *korai*, they indicate a certain ambivalence about 'maidenhood', about the value of young women. In one sense a maiden was valued as someone who could cement a future marriage alliance (as in the Hippokleides story in Herodotos [Hdt. 6.127–131]; or the story of Peisistratos' bride, the daughter of Megakles, with whom he had relations *ou kata nomon* [Hdt. 1.61]). But with this there is the suggestion that an unmarried woman is an unfulfilled one, certainly the middle-aged mothers of ninth-century Athens have been entirely forgotten by this stage, and this particular status was to remain uncelebrated until (one could argue) we reach the funerary stele of late fifth-century Athens (Hegeso and so forth). Late Archaic Athens celebrated 'maidens', but in an ambiguous and ambivalent fashion.

Conclusions

It would be foolish to draw out of my three examples any trend or linear pattern. While two examples are from Athens, taken together they demonstrate how things seem to have changed between the ninth and the sixth century BC, such that we cannot in any sense make useful generalisations about the status of 'Athenian women'. Similarly, the differences between the 'queen of Lefkandi' (in Euboea) and the 'rich Athenian lady' (in Attica) underpin the importance of regionalism – and regional differences – throughout the Archaic period. To draw another regional comparison, there really is no equivalent of the 'rich Athenian lady' outside of Attica – certainly not in either Argos or Knossos in the ninth century BC (Whitley 2015).

So we cannot write a straightforward linear story, either of progressive female empowerment or progressive female subordination. I would argue that the popular story of female 'confinement within the household' in Classical times is an exaggeration. But this does not mean that we cannot say anything useful about gender. Both the examples of the 'queen of Lefkandi' and the 'rich Athenian lady' defy notions of persistent female inferiority in ancient Greece. And the pattern discernible in ninth- and eighth-century Athens does not resolve itself into a simple binary division between (adult) male and (adult) female. Instead, we have a pattern of five age/gender categories along an axis with male 'warriors' at one end and children at the other. Richer women lie between these two poles – with the added oddity that their graves are much richer than those of men.

Is this pattern a peculiarly Athenian or a peculiarly Dark Age one (Whitley 1991b)? certainly, it is one harder to discern in later periods in Athens – Phrasikleia aside, there are only a few 'maiden' graves (Langdon 2008: 130–143). But one could argue (and I would like to argue) that its disappearance from view does not equate to its disappearance. If Blok (2014) is right about the centrality of sacrificial ritual for citizenship, then fifth-century married Athenian women could be seen as being 'betwixt and between' adult (citizen/warrior) men and (sexually undifferentiated) non-citizen children. In this account of things, the ninth-century pattern does not so much disappear as disappear from view.

Women as 'second-class citizens' may not be confined to Athens. In Crete at the very end of the sixth or the beginning of the fifth century BC, it could be argued women had something close to citizen status (Perlman 2010) – that is if the reading of *asti* is correct. The heiress of the Gortyn law code is a person of some consequence, to judge by the amount of space she occupies on the inscription. But, unlike Athens, these higher-status Cretan women are in no sense anticipated in the

burial record of the Cretan Early Iron Age (at least not in the best known cemetery, that of Knossos; Whitley 2015: 142–149). The position of ‘real’ women in Archaic Greece was subject to kaleidoscopic shifts which cannot be accommodated within any existing metanarrative.

Notes

- 1 Poetry is perhaps always different. The ‘I’ of a Sylvia Plath, of a Marianne Moore or of a John Berryman may be as elusive as the ‘I’ of Sappho or Archilochos.
- 2 Nowadays, of course, this age range might be classified as ‘middle youth’ in affluent Western countries, such as Britain or the United States.

References

- Alexandri, O. (1968) Νυκτερινή ανασκαφή κατά μήκος της Οδού Κριέζι. *Archaiologika Analekta ex Athenon/Athens Annals of Archaeology* 1: 20–30.
- Antonaccio, C. M. (1995) Lefkandi and Homer. In Ø. Andersen and M. Dickie (eds) *Homer’s World*. Bergen, Norway: P. Åström, pp. 5–27.
- Blok, J. H. (2014) A ‘covenant’ between gods and men: *hiera kai hestia* and the Greek polis. In C. Rapp and H. A. Drake (eds) *The City in the Classical and Post-Classical World: Changing Contexts of Power and Identity*. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 14–37.
- Boardman, J. (1967) *Excavations in Chios 1952–1955: Greek Emporio* (British School at Athens Supplementary Volume 6). London: Thames & Hudson.
- Brinkman, V. (2003) *Die Polychromie der archaischen und früharchaischen Skulptur* (Studien zur antiken Malerei und Farbgebung 5). Munich, Germany: Biering and Brinkman.
- Brückner, A. and Pernice, E. (1893) Ein attischer Friedhof. *Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung* 18: 73–191.
- Capra, A. (2009) Chapter 37: Lyric poetry. In G. Boys-Stones, B. Graziosi and Ph. Vasunia (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 454–468.
- Catling, H. W. (1993) The bronze amphora and burial urn. In M. R. Popham, P. G. Calligas and L. H. Sackett (eds) *Lefkandi II.2: The Protogeometric Building at Toumba: The Excavation, Architecture and Finds*. British School at Athens Supplementary Volume 23. London: British School at Athens, pp. 81–96.

- Catling, R. W. V. and Lemos, I. (1990) *Lefkandi II.1: The Protogeometric Building at Toumba: The Pottery*. British School at Athens Supplementary Volume 22. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Coulsen, W. D. E. (1983) The Dark Age: The architecture. In W. A. McDonald, W. D. E. Coulsen and J. Rosser (eds) *Excavations at Nichoria in South-West Greece III: Dark Age and Byzantine Occupation*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 9–60.
- Derevenski, J. S. (1997) Engendering children, engendering archaeology. In J. Moore and E. Scott (eds) *Invisible People and Processes: Writing Gender and Childhood into European Archaeology*. Leicester: Leicester University Press, pp. 192–202.
- Derevenski, J. S. (ed.) (2000) *Children and Material Culture*. London: Routledge.
- D'Onofrio, A. M. (2011) Athenian burials with weapons: The Athenian warrior graves revisited. In A. Mazarakis-Ainian (ed.) *The 'Dark Ages' Revisited: Acts of an International Symposium in Memory of W. D. E. Coulson, University of Thessaly, Volos, 14–17 June 2007*. Volos, Greece: University of Thessaly Press, pp. 645–671.
- Foxhall, L. (2009) Chapter twenty-nine: Gender. In K. A. Raaflaub and H. Van Wees (eds) *A Companion to Archaic Greece*. Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World. Chichester and Oxford, UK and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 482–507.
- Gilchrist, R. (1999) *Gender and Archaeology: Contesting the Past*. London: Routledge.
- Houby-Nielsen, S. (1995) 'Burial language' in Archaic and Classical Kerameikos. *Proceedings of the Danish Institute at Athens* 1: 129–191.
- Houby-Nielsen, S. (2000) Chapter 12: Child burials in ancient Athens. In J. S. Derevenski (ed.) *Children and Material Culture*. London: Routledge, pp. 151–166.
- Jeffery, L. H. (1962) The inscribed gravestones of Archaic Attica. *Annual of the British School at Athens* 57: 115–53.
- Keesling, C. M. (2003) *The Votive Statues of the Athenian Acropolis*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kourou, N. (2002) *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum: Greece: Athens, National Museum: Attic and Atticizing Amphorae of the Protogeometric and Geometric Periods*. CVA Greece Fasc. 8, Athens National Museum Fasc. 5. Athens, Greece: Academy of Athens/Union Académique Internationale.
- Kühler, K. (1954) *Kerameikos: Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen V: Die Nekropole des 10. bis 8. Jahrhunderts*. Two volumes, text and plates. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Langdon, S. (2008) *Art and Identity in Dark Age Greece, 1100–700 BC*.

- Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lewis, S. (2002) *The Athenian Woman: An Iconographic Handbook*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Liston, M. A. (2012) Reading the bones: Interpreting the skeletal evidence for women's lives in Ancient Greece. In S. L. James and S. Dillon (eds) *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*. Oxford, Chichester and Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 125–140.
- Liston, M. A. and Papadopoulos, J. K. (2004) The 'rich Athenian lady' was pregnant: The anthropology of a Geometric tomb reconsidered. *Hesperia* 73: 7–38.
- Llewellyn-Jones, L. (2007) House and veil in ancient Greece. In R. Westgate, N. Fisher and J. Whitley (eds) *Building Communities: House, Settlement and Society in the Aegean and Beyond*. British School at Athens Studies 15. London: British School at Athens, pp. 251–258.
- Mastrokostas, E. I. (1972) Myrrhinous: La koré Phrasikleia, Œuvre d'Aristion de Paros et un kouros de marbre. *Athens Annals of Archaeology* 5: 298–324.
- Moore, H. (1988) *Feminism and Anthropology*. Cambridge, UK: Polity.
- Moore, H. (1991) Epilogue. In J. M. Gero and M. W. Conkey (eds) *Engendering Archaeology: Women and Prehistory*. Oxford, UK and Malden, MA: Blackwell, pp. 407–411.
- Morris, I. (1998) Archaeology and archaic Greek history. In N. Fisher and H. Van Wees (eds) *Archaic Greece: New Approaches and New Evidence*. Swansea, Wales: The Classical Press of Wales, pp. 1–91.
- Morris, I. (1999) Archaeology and gender ideologies in early Archaic Greece. *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 129: 305–317.
- Musgrave, J. H. (1980) Appendix C: The human remains from the cemeteries. In M. R. Popham, L. H. Sackett and P. G. Themelis (eds) *Lefkandi I: The Iron Age Settlement and cemeteries*. Two volumes, text and plates. British School at Athens Supplementary Volume 11. London: Thames & Hudson, pp. 429–446.
- Nevett, L. (1999) *House and Society in the Ancient Greek World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Parker Pearson, M. (1999) *The Archaeology of Death and Burial*. Stroud, UK: Sutton.
- Perlman, P. J. (2010) Of battle, booty and (citizen) women: A 'new' inscription from Archaic Axos, Crete. *Hesperia* 79: 79–112.
- Popham, M. R. (1994) Precolonization: Early Greek contact with the East. In G. Tsetskhladze and F. De Angelis (eds) *The Archaeology of Greek Colonisation*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Committee for

- Archaeology, pp. 11–34.
- Popham, M. R. and Lemos, I. (1996) *Lefkandi III: The Toumba cemetery* (plates). London: British School at Athens.
- Popham, M. R., Sackett, L. H. and Themelis, P. G. (1980) *Lefkandi I: The Iron Age Settlement and cemeteries*. Two volumes, text and plates. British School at Athens Supplementary Volume 11. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Popham, M. R., Sackett, L. H. and Touloupa, E. (1982) The hero of Lefkandi. *Antiquity* 56: 169–174.
- Popham, M. R., Calligas, P. G. and Sackett, L. H. (1993) *Lefkandi II.2: The Protogeometric Building at Toumba: The Excavation, Architecture and Finds*. British School at Athens Supplementary Volume 23. London: British School at Athens.
- Smithson, E. L. (1968) The tomb of a rich Athenian lady circa 850 BC. *Hesperia* 37: 77–116.
- Smithson, E. L. (1974) A Geometric cemetery on the Areopagus 1897, 1932, 1947. *Hesperia* 43: 325–90.
- Snodgrass, A. M. (1971) *The Dark Age of Greece: An Archaeological Survey of the Eleventh to the Eighth centuries BC*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.
- Svenbro, J. (1993) *Phrasikleia: An Anthropology of Reading in Ancient Greece*. Trans. J. Lloyd. Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press.
- Topper, K. (2012) Approaches to reading Attic vases. In S. L. James and S. Dillon (eds) *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*. Oxford and Chichester, UK and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 141–152.
- Westgate, R. (2007) House and society in Classical and Hellenistic Crete: A case study in regional variation. *American Journal of Archaeology* 111: 423–457.
- Westgate, R. (2015) Space and social complexity in Greece from the Early Iron Age until the Classical period. *Hesperia* 84: 47–95.
- Whitley, J. (1991a) *Style and Society in Dark Age Greece: The Changing Face of a Pre-Literate Society*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Whitley, J. (1991b) Social diversity in dark Age Greece. *Annual of the British School at Athens* 86: 341–365.
- Whitley, J. (1994) Protoattic pottery: A contextual approach. In I. Morris (ed.) *Classical Greece: Ancient Histories and Modern Archaeologies*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 51–70.
- Whitley, J. (2000) Gender and hierarchy in early Athens: The strange

- case of the disappearance of the rich female grave. *Métis: Revue d'Anthropologie du Monde Grec Ancien* XI [1996]: 209–232.
- Whitley, J. (2001) *The Archaeology of Ancient Greece*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Whitley, J. (2002) Objects with attitude: Biographical facts and fallacies in the study of late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age warrior graves. *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 12: 217–232.
- Whitley, J. (2015) Agency and the belly-handled amphora: Exchange and society in the ninth-century Aegean. In N. Kourou, A. Tsingarida and V. Vlachou (eds) *Pots, Workshops and Early Iron Age Society: Function and Role of ceramics in Early Greece*. Brussels, Belgium: Publications of the Université Libre de Bruxelles, pp. 133–153; Études d'Archéologie, CReA Patrimoine.

MOTHERING IN ANCIENT ATHENS

Class, identity, and experience

Yurie Hong

Introduction¹

For the majority of Greek women, motherhood was a defining experience and a primary source of identity. Virtually all women were expected to marry and bear children, who were viewed as fundamental to the wellbeing of the household and the functioning of society. However, mothers were not a homogenous group, neither was mothering a fixed experience. This chapter explores the lives of both citizen mothers and poor, immigrant, and slave mothers in Athens during the fifth and fourth centuries BCE.² Two concerns, consciously held or not, govern mothering across all social groups: (1) balancing the immediate needs of children with daily tasks; and (2) securing long-term stability for oneself, one's children, and one's household within Athenian society.

Accessing the experience of mothering in antiquity is a challenge. The archaeological and literary record is often less complete or informative than we would like. The perspectives and interests of women and marginalized groups are under-represented in our sources. Speeches, philosophical texts, and plays were written for specific rhetorical, intellectual, and artistic purposes and cannot serve as unmediated windows into “real” life. The same is true of seemingly straightforward artifacts, such as funerary monuments and painted vases which had their own visual codes and conventions and contain many ambiguities (Pomeroy 1998: 128–134). It is not always clear, for example, whether a woman holding a child is meant to be its mother, grandmother, sister, or wet-nurse or whether the scene represents real life, an abstract ideal, a generic type, or a mythic scene inaccessible to modern viewers (Topper 2012). Nevertheless, by using the lens of

social and economic status to examine the multiple dimensions of bearing, caring for, and raising children for adulthood, we may obtain a fuller picture of the ways that motherhood simultaneously upheld and obscured the social distinctions that shaped women's lives.

Mothers and children: sentiment, anxiety, and practicality

Fundamental to the experience and practice of mothering is the value that a given culture assigns to having children. Athenian evidence generally takes for granted that children were desired and cherished across all sectors of society (Lacey 1968: 110–112; Golden 1990: 84–94). Lycurgus, a fourth-century Athenian speechwriter, says, “all women are naturally fond of children” (*Against Leocrates* 99–101); the Athenian philosopher Aristotle, also from the fourth century, identifies mutual love of children as crucial to the husband-wife bond and as the basis for household stability (*Politics* 1.1, 1252, a26–30; *Nicomachean Ethics* 8.12, 13.8; Konstan 2007: 179). Another text attributed to Aristotle characterizes children as a reward for loyal slaves (pseudo-Aristotle, *Oeconomicus* 1344, b17–18; Kamen 2013: 15), and lack of children is seen as a disaster for both family and community. Consequently, mothers are portrayed as performing an important role in the household and society. Socrates, in a fictionalized dialogue from the fourth century, praises mothers for risking their lives in childbirth and devoting themselves day and night to their children (Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 2.2.5ff.); and the historian Herodotus, writing in fifth-century Athens, depicts mothers as reinforcing and transmitting culture to their children (*Histories* 4.78, 6.138–139).

These images, however, reflect the *idea* of children and motherhood, viewed at a distance and tinged with nostalgia. Other texts acknowledge that the mother–father–child dynamic could also be infused with conflict, and mothers were, likewise, seen as the source of familial strife. The eight/seventh-century poem *Theogony*, regarded across Greece as a foundational cultural text, portrays the origin of the gods as a series of struggles over reproduction, with mothers regularly siding with their children against their male consorts (e.g., Hesiod, *Theogony* 459–506). In Aristophanes' fifth-century comedy, *Clouds*, Strepsiades blames his wealthy wife for his son Pheidippides' extravagant interest in horses (*Clouds* 68–73). In Xenophon's *Memorabilia* 2.2.5–14, Socrates' defense of motherhood comes in response to his son Lamprocles' complaints about his mother, saying that “no one could stand her awful temper.”

Ultimately, for all the pleasures and challenges of raising children,

in a society with no retirement plans or nursing homes and which believed that without proper burial one's soul would wander aimlessly through the underworld as a shade, children filled a practical, as well as an emotional, need. Men and women of all social classes relied on children to contribute to the household through their labor, to fulfill their social roles, to support them in their old age, and to perform proper burial rites and maintain the family cult after death (Golden 1990: 93). Consciously or not, these long-term considerations influenced the mother-child relationship and the practice of mothering itself.

Becoming a mother: birth, death, and care

Marriage and birth

Nearly all Greek girls grew up expecting to become mothers. Athenian fathers married off their daughters during their teens (13 to 17) to men in their thirties “for the bearing of legitimate children” (Menander, *Perikeiromene* 1013–1014; Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 2.2–4). In a fourth-century BCE philosophical treatise on household management, Ischomachus reports approvingly that his wife came to him when “she was not quite fifteen” (Xenophon, *Oeconomicus* 7.5).

The birth of the first child conferred upon her a new social identity as an actively contributing member of her husband's household (Demand 1994: 11–26). In Lysias' fourth-century speech *On the Murder of Eratosthenes*, the Athenian Euphiletus says that, after the birth of his son, “I handed all my possessions over to my wife, thinking that this was the greatest possible proof of her affection” (*Lys.* 1.6). Birth also marked the point at which young women “joined the club,” so to speak, of the adult female community, several of whom—midwives, relatives, or friends—would have assisted during the delivery. The fifth/fourth-century BCE medical treatise *Excision of the Fetus 4* assumes at least four women assistants, and fourth-century Athenian tombstones and vases and fifth-century figurines from Cyprus portray women providing physical and moral support to a woman in labor (Garland 1990: 64; Demand 1994: 275–282; National Archaeological Museum of Athens 12205, 12206). Given that tending to sick slaves was one of an Athenian housewife's duties, slave mothers probably also had access to some degree of care (Xenophon, *Oeconomicus* 3.4, 7.37; Kamen 2013: 15).

Given the importance of children to the household and women's social identity, becoming a mother was often viewed as a cause for

celebration. Childbirth, however, was also the source of great anxiety. Numerous complications could arise, including miscarriage, premature birth, stillbirth, breech births, and infection (*Diseases of Women* 1.21–25, 1.32, 33, 36). Mortality rates in antiquity are difficult to ascertain, but some put women's death in childbirth at 10 to 20 percent (Morris 1987: 63). Dedications of tombstones for women who died during childbirth attest to how dangerous it was, particularly for girls in their mid to late teens (Demand 1994: 157–166). Offerings of sculpted breasts, vulvae, and uteri to the healing god Asclepius, and of protective charms and amulets to goddesses associated with childbirth, express relief and gratitude for both successful conception and delivery (Dillon 2002: 28–29; Taraskiewicz 2012: 46–45). While family size in ancient Greece is notoriously difficult to estimate, it has been suggested that a woman may have given birth as many as six times throughout her life (Demand 1994: 157–166, 21). The possibility that she and/or the child might die at any stage could never have been very far from an expectant mother's mind.

The shadow of death

Even after a successful birth, not all mothers would have wanted or been allowed to keep their babies. Brothel workers or slaves could be prevented from having children or from keeping those they already had so as not to reduce their labor output. One fifth-century medical writer reports that he helped a prostitute owned by his kinswoman to induce a miscarriage so that “the girl should not become pregnant and lose her value” (*On the Nature of the Child* 13). Owners could keep these infants as an investment in future labor or sell them.

Across the social classes, factors such as physical defects, infant viability, illegitimacy, poverty, and possibly gender preference, might lead the male head of the household to expose (i.e., abandon) the infant rather than raise it. Exposed babies were often left by the road and could be adopted, sold into slavery, or left to die. The frequency of exposure, how heavily each factor weighed in any particular case, or how mothers individually or collectively felt about the decision are all unknowns (Patterson 1985: 111–123; Foxhall 2013: 52–54). For example, poor families might desire fewer mouths to feed, yet in the absence of child labor laws children could become contributing members of the household relatively quickly. Wealthier families could afford more children, yet a smaller family would prevent diminishing the family estate. Daughters might be viewed as a drain on household resources or an investment in expanding social networks through marriage (Patterson 1985: 117–118).

Even if a baby was accepted into the household, there was no guarantee that it would survive. According to one estimate, 30 to 40 percent of infants died before their first year (Golden 1990: 83), and it has been suggested that only 50 percent of children reached adulthood (Ingalls 2002: 246–247). Poor urban mothers and slave mothers, who lived in less healthful conditions and/or had less access to adequate nutrition, would have seen more of their children die than the upper class and those who lived in the country (Garland 1990: 108–111).

High infant mortality and a culture of exposure does not mean, however, that mothers mourned the death of their children any less keenly. A mid-fourth-century funerary inscription asserts that a woman named Xenocleia died of sorrow over her 8-year-old son's death (IG 2² 23335; Golden 1990: 90). On a vase from c.430 BCE, a woman gazes down at a boy, who looks back and stretches his arm out to her as he walks toward Charon, the ferryman of the Underworld (Munich Painter 2335 Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund 1909; Oakley 2003: 162, 173). A mother burying her child would have derived important support and comfort from the communal and ritual nature of women's role in preparation of the corpse, lament over the dead, and maintenance of the tomb over time (Golden 1990: 84–85; Pomeroy 1998: 107).

Post-partum care

Women and children who survived birth began the process of integration into the household through ritual. Birth, like death, was considered to be polluting. A late fourth-century law from Cyrene in North Africa states that a woman who has given birth pollutes the house and its members (RO no. 97.16–20; Garland 1990: 96–97). A lying-in period shielded outsiders from ritual contamination. It also allowed the household to adjust to its new configuration and for mother and child to recuperate during the vulnerable early days (Garland 1990: 97; Taraskiewicz 2012: 57). The mother was gradually reintegrated into the social life of the community as the pollution dissipated, after about 40 days, with the tapering off of post-partum bleeding.

Many Athenian households contained multiple generations, unmarried relatives, and/or slaves (Pomeroy 1998: 25). These, along with friends and neighbors, provided a support network for the recovering mother, assisting with the newborn, helping with chores, and providing advice (Golden 2011: 141–143). For Greek mothers, breastfeeding their own children was a sign of devotion (*Lysias* 1.10),

but they also employed wet-nurses and used bottles (Figure 47.1) (Garland 1990: 119) which enabled infant care to be shared, rather than concentrated solely in the hands of the mother. Poor mothers presumably had fewer slaves to rely on, but communal networks strengthened by necessity may have helped fill the gap. Rural women, probably more isolated than their urban counterparts, may have resumed household labor fairly quickly after birth. Comparative material from Rome and modern agricultural societies suggest that rural women worked up until the time of delivery and returned to their duties as soon as possible thereafter (Scheidel 1996: 7; cf. Pseudo-Aristotle *On Marvelous Things Heard* 91). Slave mothers, rural or urban, likely found themselves in a similar situation (Golden 2011: 143–144).



Figure 47.1 Terracotta baby bottle in the form of a pig, Cleveland Museum of Art 1975.91. (Drawing by Paul C. Butler, used with kind permission.)

Working at home and mothering at work

Domestic labor and childcare in the home

For many, mothering took place primarily, though not exclusively, in the home. Citizen women engaged in domestic labor, spinning, weaving, cooking, and washing clothes, as did slave and immigrant women (known as “metics”). As in the vast majority of cultures, the organization of the household both necessitated and enabled communal childcare and labor, which blended more easily than in most modern societies (Hrdy 2011: 65–85, 101–109). Household and

neighborhood children could keep each other occupied while mothers and other adults worked and provided care, guidance, and discipline where necessary (Golden 1990: 128).

At age six or seven, citizen boys would spend more time in the company of males, going to school and learning the family business (Golden 2003: 18). Citizen girls and slave and metic children would stay with their mothers, learn to do chores, and participate in age-appropriate tasks, e.g., picking through wool, caring for younger siblings, helping with cooking, or learning to weave (Foxhall 2012: 194–199). A black figure vase from the fifth century, for example, depicts women of various sizes weaving together in groups (Figure 47.2). While it is difficult to know whether the figures represent citizens and slaves, mothers and daughters, or some combination thereof, we may assume that much household labor was communal and that a mother would teach her daughter the skills necessary for managing her own household (Xenophon, *Oeconomicus* 7.6). Rural mothers, both slave and free, would likewise have performed various agricultural tasks while watching children and allotting them tasks, such as feeding animals and gathering olives (Golden 1990: 32–36; Scheidel 1996: 1–6).

Given that most domestic slaves lived with their owners and wet-nurses likely had young children of their own, Athenian households may have included a mix of free children and slaves (Golden 2011: 143–144; Foxhall 2013: 55). Permission to have children was viewed as a privilege, but a slave mother would have labored under the knowledge that she and/or her children could be sold at any time or subject to various forms of physical or, perhaps, sexual abuse (Kamen 2013: 11; Cohen 2014: 186–192). To protect against these possibilities, she would have closely monitored her children's behavior as well as her own. Children could be used as a form of social control against slave mothers (Kamen 2013: 15), who had to navigate complex social and emotional terrain to preserve their children's wellbeing. Thus, in Euripides' fifth-century tragedy, *Trojan Women*, the captive queen Hecuba advises her daughter-in-law Andromache to “show respect to your present master and owner . . . and you will, perhaps, one day raise [your son]” (*Trojan Women* 698–702).



Figure 47.2 Black figure amphora with textile workers, Metropolitan Museum of Art 31.11.10. (Drawing by Paul C. Butler, used with kind permission.)

Mothers in the marketplace

For many women, the need to earn money rendered the cultural ideal of women's seclusion in the household untenable.³ Poor citizen women and metic women frequently worked in the marketplace in a range of occupations, producing and selling goods and services, sometimes as part of family ventures (Kennedy 2014: 126, 155 n. 24; cf. *IG II²* 1570 l.73, and *IG II²* 1561 l.27). The children of Theoris, a metic healer charged with poisoning a citizen man (Demosthenes 25.79), were executed along with their mother. Their equal share of the punishment suggests that Theoris' children participated in the labor (Kennedy 2014: 143–144). Because paid labor was associated with the lower classes, working to support one's family carried a stigma, particularly for citizen women and their children (Kennedy 2014: 123–126, 154 n. 12). Euxitheus, for example, is ridiculed for selling ribbons with his mother at the market (Demosthenes 57.30–35), and the fifth-century Athenian comic playwright, Aristophanes, mocks Euripides as having a vegetable seller for a mother (*Women at the Thesmophoria* 387).

Given the precariousness of their economic and social position (Kennedy 2014: 97–117), non-elite and metic mothers likely placed a strong emphasis on securing their children's livelihood and would have prioritized opportunities, such as apprenticeships (Jordan 2000: 98), which would reduce the number of children requiring maternal attention. While fathers made the arrangements, children also looked to their mothers for assistance. In a particularly poignant example, a

boy, presumably not a citizen, in early fourth-century BCE Athens, wrote a letter pleading with his mother to find a better situation for him: “I have been handed over to a man thoroughly wicked; I am perishing from being whipped; I am tied up; I am treated like dirt—more and more” (Agora inv. IL 1702; trans. Jordan 2000: 96). Much later in the second century CE, Lucian’s mother rebukes her sculptor brother, to whom the boy had been apprenticed, for beating her son as punishment for breaking a piece of marble (Lucian, *Somnium* 3; Jordan 2000: 98). Concerns about the child’s economic future and that of the family, thus, began the transition to mothering that took place at greater distances. Despite the reduction in mother–child contact, however, it is a testament to the strength of the mother–child bond that in both cases, the child looks to the mother for aid.

Social status and mothering for adulthood

Mothering citizens

As children grew older, the stakes were raised as civic status became increasingly important to the mutually reflective relationship between mothers and children. Citizen mothers raised sons and daughters for participation in the Athenian citizenry. Given girls’ young age at marriage, a mother had about ten years to teach the skills and demeanor that would reinforce the respectability of their daughters and, by extension, the family. Ischomachus reports approvingly that his wife was taught by her mother “to exercise self-control” (Xenophon, *Oeconomicus* 7.14). Girls were often married to neighbors, enabling continued interaction between many mothers and daughters (Cox 1998: 38–67). Herodotus tells how the Athenian tyrant Peisistratus, to avoid producing heirs, had intercourse with his new wife, “not after the customary manner” (possibly anally or intercrurally, i.e., “between the thighs”). The young woman “told her mother, and her mother told her husband,” Megacles, who had the tyrant overthrown (Herodotus 1.61). Fictional or not, the story assumes intimate mother–daughter communication and its potential to reach the male head of the household. The story also reveals the potential significance of the mother–daughter bond, especially among the elite (Foxhall 2012: 193).

Additionally, mothers could reconnect with married daughters at rituals and women’s festivals, such as the Thesmophoria, a fertility rite restricted to mothers and dedicated to the mother–daughter goddesses, Demeter and Persephone (Pomeroy 1998: 81; Dillon 2002: 110–120). Procreation and participation in civic ritual were two of the

most important roles citizen women fulfilled in Athenian society (Kamen 2013: 95). Reuniting with their daughters in the presence of respectable women of Athens enabled citizen mothers further to acculturate their daughters to their civic roles as contributors to both family and state.

A mother's civic status and her relationship to her son were of particular importance for citizen men. Sons were legally obligated to take care of their parents in old age (pseudo-Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians* 55.1–3; Garland 1990: 157). Those who did not could be barred from office (Golden 1990: 100–102). The speaker of Lysias 30.20–1, arguing against a man named Philon's candidacy, claims that Philon mistreated his mother in life and in death. Conversely, supporting parents and maintaining familial tombs was taken as evidence of piety and good character (pseudo-Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians* 55.3). In return, a mother could be an important resource, informally overseeing the household and its members and modeling proper behavior for daughters-in-law (Cox 1998: 99–103, 211–212). In Lysias 1, for example, Euphiletos traces his wife's transformation from “the best of wives” to an adulteress back to his mother's funeral (Lysias 1.6, 19).

As proper Athenian mothers, citizen women helped to confer civic identity and respectability on their families. After the Periclean Citizenship Law in 451 BCE, restricting citizenship to men born of two citizens, elite commemoration of mothers increased, providing an opportunity to advertise the family's bloodline on both sides (Osborne 1997: 29–32; Closterman 2007: 649). Like Mother's Day cards, inscriptions tend to be formulaic and praise the dead woman for conforming to ideals of femininity, such as thrift, prudence, or devotion to family. While these monuments may reflect genuine grief and appreciation of mothers, their prominent public display also promoted the social status of individual families and reinforced maternal and feminine norms throughout Athenian culture.

Mothering while metic

By contrast, Athenian society offered non-elite and metic women little social mobility and regarded metic motherhood, actual or suspected, as a liability. Laws from the fifth to fourth centuries discouraged Athenian men from marrying non-citizen women, who were perceived as threats to the Athenian citizenry if they consorted with citizen men (Bakewell 2008/9; Kennedy 2014: 107ff.). Since women were not registered in demes, their status could be difficult to determine—a

situation regularly exploited in the courts to impugn a rival's citizenship (Pomeroy 1998: 67, 80–81). Aeschines, for example, frequently attempted to defame Demosthenes as having a “Scythian” mother (Kennedy 2014: 107–111; Aeschines 2.77–78, 93, 180).⁴

This anxiety over metic motherhood permeates the courtroom activities of the fourth-century Athenian Apollodorus. In an inheritance dispute, Apollodorus, who was enfranchised along with his now-deceased metic father, Pasion, implies that his younger brother, Pasikles (a full citizen at birth), was actually the child of his metic mother and her second husband Phormio prior to their marriage and Phormio's own recent enfranchisement.⁵ Apollodorus' willingness to make such claims attests to the tensions that could arise within a family when civic status on the mother's side was considered a variable (Demosthenes 36 and 45.84; Pomeroy 1998: 183–191; Bakewell 2008/9; Kennedy 2014: 100–103).

Significantly, metic women who did not stray outside their social bounds were praised on tombstones in the same manner as citizen women, as models of traditional femininity (Kennedy 2014: 107). Such tombstones advertised the metic family's identity, as it did for citizens, though the promotional focus here would be on respectability rather than lineage. Metic mothers may have encouraged their children to play by the rules and to seek potential citizen allies to offset the tenuousness of their social and economic status. One metic woman, Zobia, for example, escaped being sold into slavery thanks to her sponsor and a city official, who testified on her behalf (Demosthenes 25.57), and the ex-prostitute metic, Neaira, was able to persuade the Athenian Stephanos to bring charges against another citizen, Phrynion, for subjecting her to gang-rape (Demosthenes 59.37–40).

Raising slaves and the master's children

Since the prospect of sale made the relationship between slave mothers and children more precarious, a slave mother, who lived in the home of her master, would likely acculturate her children to slave life, teaching domestic skills and raising them to avoid trouble. Some slaves, however, lived independently and were able to conduct business and establish their own households with little oversight from their owners (*IG* ii² 1570.78–9; Cohen 2014: 189). Women in this “privileged slave” category likely faced mothering conditions similar to that of non-elite free persons (Kamen 2013: 28–31). Along with domestic slaves, they were the most likely to be freed. A series of

dedicatory inscriptions from the late fourth century includes 158 slaves. Of these, 63 were female, and a number seem to have been freed along with their children (*IG ii² 15553–78*; Golden 2011: 143–145).

Slaves and metics whose jobs fostered intimate relationships with the master's family might enjoy some of the privileges of biological parenthood and receive care in their old age (Kamen 2013: 15). There is extensive evidence for strong, continuing bonds of affection between nurses and their adult charges (Kennedy 2014: 119 n. 18). Although he was under no obligation to do so, the speaker of Demosthenes 47 took in his old ex-nurse, who had been freed by his father and had been living on her own for some time (Kennedy 2014: 101–103). A funerary inscription for a metic nurse from mid-fourth-century Athens reads, “In this place the earth covers over the deserving nurse of Hippostratê . . . I held you dear while you lived, nurse, and still now honor you . . . and will honor you as long as I live” (*IG II² 7873/SEG 30.235*; trans. Kennedy 2014: 133–136). The public display of affection for “social mothers” of slave and metic status contrasts strikingly with the potential stigma of having a biological metic mother.⁶

Conclusion

While generalizations are always hazardous, it is safe to say that social and economic factors were of great consequence for mothers and children in classical Athens. Citizens, metics, and slaves had varying degrees of access to social support, economic stability, and cultural authority, factors which shaped mothers' priorities and informed the mother–child relationship as it changed over time: elite citizen mothers had to navigate the high-stakes game of social respectability; metic and non-elite citizen mothers had to deal with the threat of social stigma and economic instability; and slave mothers lived with the knowledge that they and/or their children might be sold at any time.

And, yet, even as these categories of citizen, metic, and slave point to vast disparities in status and resources, they can sometimes obscure the ways in which the activities, concerns, and experiences of mothers overlapped. Women from all three groups often lived and worked in the same spaces, performing similar household duties and teaching their children how to live according to the rules of Athenian society. Individual finances and living conditions could further blur the distinctions of civic status. Thus, poor citizen mothers, who were

compelled to work for pay, could end up having more in common with metic mothers than with wealthy citizens; and slave nurses may have enjoyed some of the same emotional bonds and reciprocal benefits from raising their master's children as the citizen mothers who bore them.

Although the stakes of mothering could differ greatly within and across social groups, concerns about children's short- and long-term prospects would have impacted women of all classes. Mothers and children provided support and conferred identity upon one another in various ways over the course of their lives. Motherhood was, thus, consequential for all members of Athenian society, not least of all for women, the complexities of whose lives we cannot hope to grasp unless we take proper account of their experiences and identities as mothers.

Notes

- 1 I would like to express my sincerest thanks to Ruby Blondell, Seán Easton, Rebecca Kennedy, Mark Nugent, Kate Topper, and Stephanie Budin for reading drafts of this chapter. Their feedback has improved it greatly. Any errors are, of course, my own.
- 2 Patterson 1986: 51 argues persuasively that Athenian women did have citizenship, but that it was of a different sort to that of Athenian men. For the distinctive social institutions of motherhood at Sparta, see Pomeroy 2002: 51–71.
- 3 See Cohen 1989 on women's nominal invisibility and Llewellyn-Jones 2003: 208 on the veil as a portable home that enabled respectable women to be out but not "outside."
- 4 This strategy does not seem to have been particularly successful. The daughter of a male Athenian citizen, Demosthenes' mother was born abroad and gave birth to Demosthenes during a period when the citizenship law had been relaxed (Pomeroy 1998: 167–168).
- 5 Enfranchisement granted citizenship to the man along with current and future sons. A metic woman married to such a man might find herself the wife and mother of citizens. If her husband died or divorced her, however, she would revert back to metic status (Carey 1991: 88).
- 6 My thanks to Rebecca Kennedy for this observation.

References

- Bakewell, G. (2008/9) Forbidding marriage: *Neaira* 16 and metic spouses at Athens. *CJ* 104(2): 97–109.
- Carey, C. (1991) Apollodoros' mother: The wives of enfranchised aliens in Athens. *CQ* 41(1): 84–89.
- Closterman, W. (2007) Family ideology and family history: The

- function of funerary markers in Classical Attic Peribolos Tombs. *AJA* 111(4): 633–652.
- Cohen, D. (1989) Seclusion, separation, and the status of women in Classical Athens. *Greece and Rome* 36(1): 3–15.
- Cohen, E. E. (2014) Sexual abuse and sexual rights: Slaves' erotic experience at Athens and Rome. In T. Hubbard (ed.) *A Companion to Greek and Roman Sexualities*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, pp. 184–198.
- Cox, C. A. (1998) *Household Interests: Property, Marriage Strategies, and Family Dynamics in Ancient Athens*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Demand, N. (1994) *Birth, Death, and Motherhood in Classical Greece*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Dillon, M. (2002) *Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion*. New York: Routledge.
- Foxhall, L. (2012) Family time: Temporality, gender and materiality in Ancient Greece. In J. Marincola *et al.* (eds) *History Without Historians*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 183–206.
- Foxhall, L. (2013) *Gender in Classical Antiquity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Garland, R. (1990) *The Greek Way of Life: From Conception to Old Age*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Golden, M. (1990) *Children and Childhood in Classical Athens*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Golden, M. (2003) Childhood in Ancient Greece. In J. Neils and J. H. Oakley (eds) *Coming of Age in Ancient Greece: Images of Childhood from the Classical Past*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, pp. 13–29.
- Golden, M. (2011) Slavery and the Greek family. In K. Bradley and P. Cartledge (eds) *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, Vol. 1. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 134–152.
- Hrdy, S. B. (2011) *Mothers and Others: The Evolutionary Origins of Human Understanding*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Ingalls, W. (2002) Demography and dowries: Perspectives on female infanticide in Classical Greece. *Phoenix* 56(3/4): 246–254.
- Jordan, D. R. (2000) A personal letter found in the Athenian agora. *Hesperia* 69: 91–103.
- Kamen, D. (2013) *Status in Classical Athens*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Kennedy, R. (2014) *Immigrant Women in Athens*. New York: Routledge.
- Konstan, D. (2007) *The Emotions of the Ancient Greeks*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

- Lacey, W. K. (1968) *The Family in Classical Greece*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Llewellyn-Jones, L. (2003) *Aphrodite's Tortoise: The Veiled Woman of Ancient Greece*. Swansea, Wales: The Classical Press of Wales.
- Morris, I. (1987) *Burial and Ancient Society: The Rise of the Greek City-State*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Oakley, J. H. (2003) Death and the child. In J. Neils and J. H. Oakley (eds) *Coming of Age in Ancient Greece: Images of Childhood from the Classical Past*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, pp. 163–194.
- Osborne, R. (1997) Law, the democratic citizen and the representation of women in Classical Athens. *P&P* 155: 3–33.
- Patterson, C. (1985) 'Not worth the rearing': The causes of infant exposure in Ancient Greece. *TAPA* 115: 103–123.
- Patterson, C. (1986) *Hai Attikai*: The other Athenians. *Helios* 13: 49–67.
- Pomeroy, S. B. (1998) *Families in Classical and Hellenistic Greece: Representations and Realities*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.
- Pomeroy, S. B. (2002) *Spartan Women*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Scheidel, W. (1996) The most silent women of Greece and Rome: Ritual labour and women's life in the Ancient World. *G&R* 42(2): 202–217.
- Taraskiewicz, A. (2012) Motherhood as *Teleia*: Rituals of incorporation at the Kourotrophic Shrine. In L. Hackworth Petersen and P. Salzman-Mitchell (eds) *Mothering and Motherhood in Ancient Greece and Rome*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, pp. 43–70.
- Topper, K. (2012) Approaches to reading attic vases. In S. L. James and S. Dillon (eds) *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 141–152.

‘CHRYISIS THE HIEREIA HAVING PLACeD
A LIGHTED TORCH NEAR THE
GARLANDS THEN FELL ASLEEP’
(THUCYDIDES IV.133.2)

Priestesses serving the gods and goddesses in Classical
Greece

Matthew P. J. Dillon

While there were many priesthoods and priestesshoods in ancient Greek cities such as Athens, there was in no sense a collective organisation of these. Most priestesshoods in ancient Greece (the sources, as usual, focus on Athens) had originated in pre-democratic days as aristocratic dominances of various cults. There was no official attempt to ensure that all the gods were worshipped, as there was no need to do so, because the gods and goddesses since the misty past had had their priests and priestesses. These cult personnel were responsible for the correct and traditional worship of deities. They were distinct from other religious functionaries such as diviners (the *manteis* and *chresmologoi*: oracle-singers), in most cases, with the major exception of the Pythian priestess who did serve as the prophetic mouthpiece of Apollo at Delphi, and the priestesses of Zeus at Dodona, who answered questions put to them on lead tablets by enquirers, usually with a simple affirmative or negative. Priestesses could be so prominent that they served as chronological markers: Hellanikos the historian used the priestesses of Hera at Argos as a dating system (Hellanikos *FGrH* 323a) and Thucydides read his work (Thuc. 1.97.2). This is reflected when the latter dates the commencement of the Peloponnesian War by giving the name of the ephor at Sparta and of the archon at Athens, and by noting that Chrysis was in the forty-eighth year of her priesthood (Thuc. 2.2.1, cf. 4.133.2–3).¹ Priestesses were known as *hiereiai* (singular: *hiereia*), as priests were *hiereis*:

(singular: *hiereus*); the typical lack of Greek specialist religious vocabulary is apparent here: this term simply means ‘ones to do with sacred things (*hiera*)’, which neatly identifies what they did, if only in a very broad sense. Priestesses, like priests, underwent no special training (Isokrates *To Nikokles* 6), presumably learning their tasks ‘on the job’ or, when possible, from the previous incumbents. There were no books of ritual in traditional Greek religion, unlike in ancient Rome, so all knowledge of ritual was verbal, especially in the case of the various secret rites priestesses presided over in honour of goddesses.

Priestesses as ritual agents

Worshipping the gods on behalf of the community, priestesses (like priests) acted as ritual agents serving deities. Demeter’s priestess on Kos presided over rituals for those being betrothed and those being married (*LSCG* 175.4–5). Athena Polias’ priestess at Athens had a similar role: she presided over the *proteleia*, the day when the parents of a girl about to be married led her to the acropolis: sacrifices were offered to the goddess, first fruits offered and the priestess, wearing Athena’s aegis, sanctified the marriage (Suida s.v. *proteleia*; Hesychius s.v. *gamon ethe*),² a role further reflected at Athens in Demeter’s priestess attending weddings (Plutarch *Moralia* 138a; Athenaeus 377b).

Priestesses presided over sacrifices: for example, at the Thesmophoria, women in general sacrificed piglets to Demeter. Elsewhere, priestesses had a dramatic sacrificial role as ritual agents: at Hermione in the Peloponnese in the summer each year four cows were sacrificed. Each was led to the temple of Demeter Chthonia one at a time; within, four old women slaughtered the beasts as they were led in, one of them slitting its throat with a sickle. Pausanias saw the seats within the temple on which the old women sat while waiting for the cows; outside the temple were a few statues of Demeter’s priestesses (Paus. 2.35.6–8; cf. 4.17.1). It was in order that Athena would give benefits to the community that the priestess of Athena Polias at Athens presided over the state sacrifices at the Panathenaia. These women’s sacrificial competency is obvious, but in most cases, priestesses presided over sacrifices rather than performing them.

Priestesses as custodians of temple keys

When Hektor’s mother Hekabe led a group of old Trojan women to the

temple of Athena in Troy to sacrifice heifers to and present Athena with the finest robe in the city, the door to the temple was opened for them from within by Theano, priestess of Athena, the first priestess appearing in Greek literature (Hom. *Il.* 6.269–311). She will have been the custodian of the temple and holder of its key. On Apulian vases and Athenian grave stelai, women are shown carrying large keys: these are long and thick and often resemble lightning bolts. The women so depicted often but not always carry them by their middle section, allowing for some even distribution of their heavy weight, carrying them as a badge of honour. These keys signify these women as *kleidouchoi* (singular: *kleidouchos*), ‘key bearers’, priestesses who guard the key to their goddess’ temple.³

The epic poet Phoronis (Fragment 4) as early as the seventh century BC identified this as a major role for Kallithoe, as *kleidouchos* of Hera of Argos, who was the ‘first to decorate the slender pillar of the lady’. Men are not described, however, as *kleidouchoi*, emphasising the gendered nature of this role, even though male priests must have been in possession of the keys to the temples of the gods of which they were priests.

Various tomb stelai from Athens show women holding keys; it is a natural supposition that these women are priestesses, especially as, in contrast, several Athenian tombstones show priests, with their typical long flowing gowns, holding sacrificial knives.⁴ Polystrate is a very good example: her fourth-century BC gravestone from Athens simply has her name and beneath, her portrait, in which she holds in her right hand a key by its short end.⁵ A very interesting example is a fragmentary marble relief from fourth-century BC Athens, probably the top of an honorary decree, depicting a woman on the left with a key in her left hand being crowned by a winged Victory who leans forward from the right hand of a goddess, twice the woman’s size, who wears a helmet on her head, with a shield resting against her leg (Figure 48.1). Presumably, the relief is the crowning ornament of an inscribed stele which may have recorded official honours for the priestess, presumably of Athena Nike, from the Athenian *demos* (people).⁶ Much earlier, the theme is also reflected on a fifth-century BC Athenian red-figure cup (a *kotyle*) which shows a woman holding a key, with a thick fillet bound horizontally at regular intervals.⁷ This could well be a representation of Iphigeneia as a priestess, for on the other side of the *kotyle* a youth holds a strigil and could be identified as her brother Orestes (see later in this chapter). But more generically, this vase could be a reference to priestesses who decorated temple keys with tassels to honour the deity of their temple. Worthy of mention in this context is the woman’s facial expression which is grim

and earnest – the type of demeanour the priestess who presided over sacrifices would need to assume.



Figure 48.1 Nike, held on Athena’s hand, crowns a priestess who carries a temple key. A marble relief, second half of the fourth century BC. (Staatliche Museen, Berlin SK 881; Art Resource 305233; photo: Johannes Laurentius.)

Several Athenian cylinder funerary stelai, which give the names of women but not their portraits, are decorated with temple keys. One from the second century BC for the priestess Habryllis has a particularly well-carved key, decorated with ribbons (other examples

show rudimentary keys).⁸ A fragment of a relief from Lokris in Italy shows a woman carrying a key in her left hand,⁹ indicating that priestesses had the same roles in Greek cities, east and west. While male priests presumably also did have keys to the temples of the male gods which they served, the engendered nature of the iconographic representation of priests and priestesses favoured the women priests as being depicted in the passive role of key bearers, while male priests favoured a more active image demonstrating a sacrificial rather than key-holding role. Priestesses presumably stored the temple key in their home, where the keys would be safe under the guard of the priestess's male family members. In Hera's cult at Argos, however, the role of *kleidouchos* was separate from that of priestess (*SEG* 47.304). That a woman was a priestess would be a position which a family would be proud to mention on a gravestone, as in the case of the Athenian woman Chairestrate, who is termed *propolos* (priestess) of 'Mother of All Things' (that is, presumably Cybele) in her fourth-century BC funerary epigram (*ceG* 566) and is shown holding a large temple key over her shoulder.¹⁰

Priestesses and cult statues

Male figures on Athenian gravestones are never shown holding a small image, but women are: these can be safely interpreted as priestesses with care of the cult image. Myrrhine, the first priestess of Athena Nike at Athens, is recorded on her funeral epitaph as the first who 'tended the statue' of Athena Nike (*SEG* 12.80). An extremely finely carved grave stele from Boeotia, dating to the end of the fifth century BC, shows a woman whose name is given as Polyxena wearing a peplos, mantle and veil, holding a small statue of a female in her left hand and looking at it intently (*Figure 48.2*).¹¹ Unfortunately, the details of the statue are difficult to discern, but the statue is heavily garbed, wears a girdle and a polos crown and stands on a statue base; she is possibly Demeter. Her dress is dissimilar to that of Polyxena; moreover, the relaxed chiasitic pose of Polyxena, whose left leg is slightly bent, contrasts markedly with the stiff erect pose of the goddess's statue. This small figure represents a cult image, and Polyxena's holding of this represents her care of the statue as a priestess in the cult of a goddess. Polyxena carries the statue of a goddess in her left hand, while the right is empty: but a small round hole in her lowered right hand conceivably held an actual metal key denoting her role also as *kleidouchos*.¹²

At Roman Sparta, the rites of Artemis Orthia involved the priestess acting as a *xoanaphoros*, a statue bearer. During the whipping

ceremony of Spartan youths, to honour the goddess of bloodletting Artemis, her priestess was in attendance, holding the small, light wooden statue of the goddess. Whenever the goddess felt that a boy was not being whipped hard enough (because the flogger went light on him because of the lad's good looks or birth), she made her statue become so heavy in the priestess's hands that she could hardly hold it anymore, and the priestess would blame the floggers (Paus. 3.16.10).

An amphora from Paestum iconographically combines the role of *kleidouchos* and *xoanophoros*: in the centre of the vase Orestes sits on the steps of a column shrine holding an urn (presumably containing the ashes of his father Agamemnon). Before him on the right stands a priestess, with close-shaved white hair, holding in her left hand an elongated cult-statue of an armed goddess, presumably Athena, and in her right a betasselled, letter 'I'-shaped key. She is a priestess of Athena, the goddess who will save Orestes from the Erinyes (Furies). Both key and statue secure her as a priestess and neatly confirm through this iconographic depiction the main roles of the priestess.¹³ Young priestesses at the shrine of Artemis Ortheia at Messenê carried the statue of the goddess as part of their ritual duties. One, Mego, had her statue dedicated in the temple by her parents, with an inscription indicating that she had carried the image (*bretas*) of the goddess (SEG 23.220).¹⁴



Figure 48.2 Marble grave stele of Polyxena from Boeotia, end of the fifth century BC; height: 112 cm, width: 65 cm. (Staatliche Museen Berlin, inv. SK 1504; courtesy of ©Art Resource NY 363328.)

A praying, not a cursing priestess

Plato in the *Statesman* (*Politikos* 290c-d), discussing the different roles of *hiereia* (priests) and *manteis* (diviners), notes:

As is the custom, the race (*genos*) of priests know how to provide the gods with the gifts that are pleasing to them from you through sacrifices, and through

As part of the pre-sacrifice ritual it is to be imagined that a priestess, such as that of Athena Polias, would pray for benefactions for the city. When the Athenian state decreed that Alkibiades be cursed by ‘all the priests and priestesses’ for parodying the Eleusinian Mysteries, one priestess, Theano (with the same name as the Trojan priestess), refused to do so as she was a ‘praying priestess, not a cursing one’ (Plut. *Alk.* 22.5, see later in this chapter). Artemis Pergaia’s priestess at Halikarnassos was to make a prayer for the protection of the city at each new moon and was in fact paid a drachma to do so (*LSAM* 73, see translation below): this was both a payment for her services, but also presumably an incentive that she would not forget this aspect of her role as the ritual agent of Artemis.

Priestesses as purifiers of victims at sacrifices

Standing before a barbeque style altar before a larger than life statue of Athena (indicating her recipient status of the sacrifice), a priestess is shown on an Athenian black-figure vase of about 540 BC holding three sprigs of vegetation in each hand, while behind her men bring forward the sacrificial beast. Such sprigs are a ‘preliminary’ offering by the priestess to the goddess, which she will place and burn on the altar (*ABV* 296.4).¹⁵ This will also be the function of the knife which Iphigeneia carries for the sacrifice – not to kill the human victims, but presumably to cut locks of their hair as a preliminary offering to the goddess Artemis (Eur. *Iph. Taur.* 1190).

Numbers of priestesses

There was not an oversupply of priestesses at Athens or in other cities. Despite what might seem to be an even spread of gods and goddesses in the Olympian pantheon, priests outnumbered priestesses both in terms of the deities they served and the numbers per deity. Yet when the major deity of a city was a goddess, this gave a prominence to the priestess of that cult: for example the priestess of Hera at Argos and of Athena Polias at Athens had a prominent public image and role as ritual agents for the goddesses. While the requisite evidence is not available, the same could be assumed for any priestess of Aphrodite at Corinth. In the polis religion of Athens, there were cults for important deities such as Athena Polias and Athena Nike on the acropolis, as well as priestesses for various other cults.¹⁶ Priestesses also had ritual assistants – the priestess of Athena Nike had a *diakonos* (see later in

this chapter), as well as two assistants: a *trapezophoros*, literally ‘table-bearer’, whose role is unclear except that she, along with another personnel called the Kosmo, assisted the priestess of Athena Polias (Harpokration sv *Trapezophoros* [Lykourgos *On the Priestess* F20; FGrH Istros 334 F9]).

Dress of priestesses

Whereas many men on stelai are shown with a standard form of dress which can be described as a loose, unbelted flowing gown, women priests on Athenian vases had no ‘standard’ uniform of dress, but the emphasis was on decorated clothing. On the east Parthenon frieze, the central adult woman figure, who is usually identified with the priestess of Athena Polias, wears clothes which would originally have been painted: now all that can be said is that she dressed well, in a peplos with a chiton over it. Nikeso, priestess of Demeter and Kore at Priene is shown wearing a himation undergarment, with a chiton over the top (and is thus heavily garbed – this is full formal attire for a woman); her hair is loose and uncovered, three lengths of wavy plaits fall onto each shoulder and she wears sandals (Berlin SK1928; 300–250 BC). ¹⁷ This is fairly generic women’s dress, with nothing of a vestmental character about it. Polyxena as a *xoanophoros* is dressed completely differently from the statue of the goddess which she holds (see [Figure 48.2](#)).

Similarly, the third-century BC statue of Aristonoe, priestess of Nemesis at Rhamnous in Attika (*IG* II² 3462, statue: Athens NM 232), provides little guide to ritual attire: her head is not covered, her hair is bound up; like Nikeso she wears a himation over a chiton and sandals.¹⁸ While inscriptions at Lykosoura and Andania restrict women’s dress and in the case of Andania provide some information about priestesses’ dress, there is no equivalent for priestesses of the detailed points on what male priests were to wear while sacrificing in a ritual on Kos: ‘purple coloured chitons, gold finger-rings and wreaths of olive leaves’ (Segre 1983: *ED* 89 lines 8–10). When Alkibiades was found guilty of parodying the Eleusinian Mysteries, a decree of the Athenian assembly required the priests and priestesses to curse him publicly. Accordingly, they faced the west, shaking out their purple robes as they cursed: presumably the Eleusinian priests and priestesses are meant (Lysias 6.51).

Relevant here, perhaps, is the dress of the *kanephoroi*, the bearers of the baskets (*kana*) who were an essential part of processions and sacrifices (though in some vase scenes a man has this role). While not

priestesses, depictions of *kanephoroi* on Athenian vases can be taken as valid examples of the type of clothing which women would have worn when attired for religious performances and ritual duties. For example, a fifth-century BC Athenian red-figure oinochoe by the Triptolemos Painter shows a finely dressed *kanephoros* in a procession: she wears a pleated peplos with a border, voluminous sleeves to elbow length, with a mantle over her shoulders at the back and down to her waist at the front where another border can be seen and loose belt ends are shown (Figure 48.3).¹⁹ Similarly, the *kanephoros* who leads a procession to Pythian Apollo on a well-known fifth-century BC Athenian red-figure volute krater vase by the Kleophon Painter is elaborately dressed: her long sleeves are patterned, and there is elaborate decoration at her knee height on her dress; the clothing is voluminous (Ferrara 44894 – T57C).²⁰ *Kanephoroi* known from terracottas have a long wide, flowing mantle.²¹ Men's hieratic dress, traditionally simpler, did not allow for such magnificence, with the main exception being the Eleusinian hierophant and *dadouchos* who had a 'seemly and stately robe' (Athenaeus 1.21e), and Kallias as *dadouchos* of the Eleusinian Mysteries sported long hair and a headband (Plut. *Aristeides* 5.6). There was no specific attire for priestesses, as distinct from men whose 'uniform' was fairly consistently, apart from the Eleusinian priests, a simple white flowing robe. Clearly, the emphasis was distinctly not on plainness or the humbleness of clothing for priestesses; there were some restrictions but these did not on the whole dramatically affect their type of clothing, but its colour: the *arrephoroi* of Athens always wore white (IG II² 1060 + 1036a = SEG 28.90; Harpokration sv *arrephorein*). Similarly, Epie, priestess on the island of Thasos, wore white (SEG 18.343, line 33).

Kassandra, in ceasing to be Apollo's priestess, is told by her mother Hekabe to throw away her sacred laurel branches and remove the sacred garlands she wears (Eur. *Trojan Women* 256–258). Judging from the iconography, Athenian priestesses do not seem to wear these, even when presiding over sacrifices. Yet some cults, such as that of Despoina at Lykosoura, regulated women's clothing as a whole as well as their footwear and jewellery, and these regulations might also have applied to the priestesses, even though they are not specifically mentioned. This prohibition on black and purple clothing in the mysteries of the Despoina might in fact not have applied to the priestess, who may well have donned these colours to honour the goddess (Despoina: LSCG 68). Much later, the Andanian Mysteries established in the first century BC a highly regulated cult which had various prohibitions on clothing for worshippers (LSCG 65; Gawlinski

2012). Clothing worn by all participants was restricted, male and female, both for *mystai* of both genders and priests and priestesses. To place the regulations for priestesses' clothing in context, the dress behaviour of women *mystai* was strictly codified to ensure that any predilection for dressing high for religious ceremonies could be controlled: their clothing could not be worth more than 100 drachmas in value, not transparent and any stripes on the clothing not more than one half finger wide. Gold, make-up (white or rouge), hair bands and braided hair were all proscribed; the 'sacred women' (presumably women cult officials, if not priestesses) were to wear an Egyptian tunic, or an undergarment (not decorated) and a wool robe, of no more value than 200 drachmas, with the same restriction holding for stripes.²²



Figure 48.3 A kanephoros in a festival procession. Athenian red-figure oinochoe by the Triptolemos Painter, fifth century BC. (Staatliche Museen Berlin 2189. Drawing by Paul C. Butler, Used with kind permission.)

Becoming a priestess

In instituting the cult of Athena Nike on the Athenian acropolis, the state organised by decree that the priestess be democratically appointed for life (*IG I³ 35*): ‘For Athena Nike a priestess, who is to be chosen by lot from all Athenian women, shall be appointed.’²³ This is in sharp contrast to the hereditary priesthoods based on *genoi* (the so-

called gentilician priesthoods), which had their origins in the aristocratic state. Here, the democracy took the opportunity provided by the creation of a new priesthood to assert its ideology. Such an appointment process was unique, as despite the democracy and its increasing assertiveness, there was no general move towards democratisation of religious personnel. First to be chosen as priestess 'by lot from all Athenian women' was Myrrhine, daughter of Kallimachos.

Plato notes in the rules for his ideal state, that those priests and priestesses who have their position by virtue of hereditary should remain in their roles, but that otherwise some should be appointed by direct election and some by lot, for the gods will determine the choice of the priests and priestesses (*Laws* 759b–c).²⁴ In the Hellenistic period, priesthoods and priestesshoods began to be put up for sale or auction (but never at Athens). Kos, with a fulsome epigraphic record, provides several examples, chief amongst these being the auction of the life-long priestesshood of Aphrodite Pandemos, one of the island's principal deities. Whoever was the successful bidder was to pay the amount in four installments, of which the first was to be used by the city to finance building projects (*ED* 178a, lines 5–6, 8–15; b[A] line 8). Clearly the priestesshood was not cheap, and the bidding might have been competitive in a spirit of raising money for the polis and its projects. The woman, or the man (such as her husband or father) who paid for this, would expect a solid 'return' over the priestess's lifetime in the form of sacrificial perquisites, and the fines from those who failed to sacrifice, as well as the concomitant social status. That an auction was held indicates that there would be competition for the position – it was socially and financially attractive, in addition to bringing the priestess into a more intimate relationship with the goddess. That at Erythrai a priestesshood for life sold for 2,040 drachmas is indicative of how expensive such a purchasing could be and therefore how lucrative the position would be for the purchaser, for this money is the equivalent of about six years' labourers' wages (*LSAM* 25, line 42).²⁵ Elsewhere, competition for priestesshoods is attested to by that of Ge in Achaia: if several women wanted to be the priestess, lots were cast to decide the holder of the position (Paus. 7.25.13).

Sexual and other purity

In Greek religion as a whole the main form of purity was the simplest: the washing of hands before the sacrifice and, for any one attending a sacrifice, physical cleanliness of body (*Il.* 6.265–268). Some priestesses

had to be young girls (*parthenoi*, singular *parthenos*) who gave up their office when they came to be of marriageable age (presumably this meant after their first menstrual cycle) and would be replaced with another *parthenos*. This was the case for the priestess at the shrine of Poseidon at Kalaureia (Pausanias 2.33.2), the priestess of Artemis Triklaria in Ionia (Paus. 7.19.1), the priestess of Artemis in Aigeira (Paus. 7.26.5) and the priestess of Artemis in Patrai (who had the privilege of riding last in the sacred procession in a cart yoked with deer: Paus. 7.18.12). Artemis Hymnia's sanctuary on the boundary of Orchomenos near Mantinea also had a *parthenos* as a priestess. Aristokrates raped the *parthenos* priestess at the statue of Artemis in Arkadia and the Arkadians stoned him to death and no longer appointed a virgin but a woman who 'has had her fill of sex with men' (Paus. 8.5.11–13).

While the Pythia could be married (note Euripides *Ion* 1324), when she was in Apollo's service on the tripod she remained chaste (Plutarch, *Mor.* 435d 438c), had her own dwelling (SIG³ 823a) and dressed as a virgin, due to a similar incident to that of Aristokrates: when someone raped a beautiful virgin Pythia, the custom was changed (Diod 16.26.6).²⁶ Such myths are presumably aetiologies explaining a change from a virgin *parthenos* to a woman beyond sex or renouncing it (permanently or temporarily), for whatever reason, and there is no reason to doubt these stories. While the Pythia is shown on a red-figure Apulian krater as an aged priestess fleeing from the temple at the sight of Orestes and dropping her temple key in the process (Naples H3249),²⁷ this is based on Aeschylus whose Delphic priestess in the *Eumenides* is an old woman (*Eum.* 38). By contrast, on an Athenian red-figure *kylix* (cup) of about 440 BC, the Pythia Themis is shown as a pertly breasted, youngish woman (ARV² 1269.5).²⁸ A boundary stone of the end of the fifth century BC at Athens reads, 'House of the priestess of Athena Polias' and may refer to a dwelling she used when participating in Athena's rites, but need not relate to any requirement of temporary chastity (IG I³ 1049–1051). For the secret rites of Dionysos, the basilinna, the wife of the Athenian annual basileus archon, in which capacity she performed secret rites for the state, had to have been a virgin when she had married the man who was that year the basileus archon (Dem. 59.75).

At the sanctuary of Ge near Krathis, the priestess must have slept with only one man, and before she commenced her office, a test was applied of her sexual loyalty to this one man. She had to drink bull's blood, and if she failed to do so, she was punished and did not become priestess; if she passed the test, she had to practise sexual abstinence thereafter (Paus. 7.25.13). Interestingly, at odds with the usual Greek

practice, is that the Mantineans also had a priest and priestess at the sanctuary of Artemis Hymnia (to which Orchomenos also supplied a priestess), who were completely celibate and never had sexual intercourse, living in sexual purity and observing purity in all things; they did not wash, nor live like other people (Paus. 8.13.1). At the sanctuary of Aphrodite at the Isthmus, the *neokoros* (temple-guardian) was a woman who had to give up sexual intercourse when she was appointed, and there was also a *parthenos* serving as a *loutrophoros* (water bearer); only these two women could enter the temple (Paus. 2.10.4).²⁹ Sexual abstinence was therefore the exception rather than the rule and was not generally required. Artemis was served by virgin priestesses in many places, but when they reached marriageable age, she no longer required their service, or their virginity. Not surprisingly, the source of information for so many priestesshoods is Pausanias, who travelled throughout Greece and penned a description of its regions, including their geography, cities and religious practices. His comments often centre on the sexual status of priestesses and how sexual intercourse might be prescribed: his interest must reflect that this was a defining aspect of their identity. Such sexual abstinence, however, was generally lacking: while Iphigeneia when in Taurus and later in Attica at Brauron was a virgin priestess, the historical priestesses there were not, and Iphigeneia's virginity relates more to her origins and identity as a goddess in her own right.

Appearance and soundness of body

Priests and priestesses alike had to be sound of body (and presumably of mind). Anaxandrides the fourth-century Athenian comic poet contrasted the way in which Egyptian priests circumcised themselves with the Greek custom that priests be *holoklaros*, 'whole', or without blemish. Plato reflects this in his ideal state of the *Laws*, for which he prescribes that priests (and priestesses as he has just mentioned), be *holoklaros* and legitimate of birth, not be murderers or have committed offences against the gods, and whose mothers and fathers are similarly pure (Anaxandrides *Poleis* Fragment 40 [Kassel and Austin *PCG* ii.258; Athenaeus 7.299f-300a]; Plato *Laws* 759c). Aphrodite Pandemos' priestess on Kos was to be healthy and sound of body, as was the priestess of Dionysos Thylophoros, also on Kos; Aphrodite Pandemos' priestess was also specified as having to be *teleia*, literally, 'unblemished', so in addition to being sound of body she had to have no physical marks, such as birthmarks. Such requirements are understandable and also applied to priests. The gods needed to be served by those who were physically sound and,

especially in the case of Aphrodite, the goddess of sensual beauty would not wish to be served by a priestess who was blemished (*ED* 178, lines 6–7; *ED* 216.7–8: from the end of the third century BC; *LSCG* 166.8–10: of the second or first century BC).³⁰

Citizenship requirements

At Athens, it was normal that the priestesses of the city be legitimate citizens, meaning that after Perikles' citizenship law of 451 BC they were born of two Athenian parents. For example, the wife of the basileus archon had to be Athenian, perform various rituals as his wife, including secret rites and sacrifices, enter a sacred place which no other Athenian could do, administer the oath to the *Geraiai* ('Old Women') who presided over certain sacrifices and was the 'bride' of Dionysos (Dem. 59.73, 81).³¹ That only a priestess might enter a particular temple or sacred place is known from elsewhere (Paus. 2.10.4; 6.20.3). Aristotle noted generally that priests (by which he means both priests and priestesses) were to be citizens (*Politics* 1329a 29–30). Citizenship and the formal office of priests of both genders logically required citizenship, for they performed rituals for the body of citizens and needed to be drawn from their number. At Halikarnassos, the priestess of Artemis Pergaia had to be born of two citizen parents, but more particularly, was to come from three generations of citizens on both the maternal and paternal side (*LSAM* 73, third century BC). Several perquisites and duties of the priestess are recorded in the inscription concerning the sale of this priestesshood:³²

The sale of the priestesshood of Artemis Pergaia will be to a female citizen whose family has been citizens for three generations on both the father's and mother's sides. The purchaser will serve as priestess for life and will sacrifice the sacred offerings both public and private. She will receive from each of the public sacrifices one of the thigh bones and the things that go with it, and a quarter portion of the entrails and the skin. From the private sacrifices she will receive a thigh bone with dressings and a quarter of the entrails.

The treasurers will give to the prytanes at the sacrifice to Artemis 300 drachmas total. The wives of the prytanes will prepare the sacrifice having received what was given from the city in that prytany in the month of Herakleion. Let the sacrifice take place on the twelfth of that month. May the priestess have an equal portion to that of the wives of the prytanes of the things sacrificed for the populace. The priestess will offer a prayer of protection on behalf of the city every new moon, for which she will receive a drachma from the city. In this month when the sacrifice takes place at public expense let the priestess make a collection before the sacrifice for three days – although she may not go to anyone's actual house; and let the collection belong to the priestess. The priestess furnishes the sanctuary as she wishes, and

Tenure of office

While the wife of the Athenian *archon basileus* held priestly office, like her husband, for one year only ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 45), all other Athenian priestesshoods for adult women were for life. Athena Nike's priestesshood is explicitly stated to be for life (*IG I³* 35). Individual priestesses serving long terms are known: Chrysis, Hera's priestess at Argos, served for 56 years (Thuc. 4.133.2–3), Lysimache served Athena Polias at Athens for 64 years (Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 34.76; cf. *IG II²* 3453) and the priestess of Aphrodite Pandemos on Kos bought her priestesshood for life (ED 178 lines 7–8). Such long terms of religious service enabled the religious personnel involved to become adept and experienced in their role. This also meant that priestesses such as Lysimache and Chrysis took on the type of permanency of monarchs who reign for a long term, and many worshippers in both cities would not have remembered a time when the priestess had not been Lysimache at Athens, or Chrysis at Argos.

Honours for priestesses

Various tomb stelai from Athens depicting priestesses with their temple keys indicate that families held priestesses from within their ranks in high esteem. Myrrhine's funerary epitaph, dating to the late fifth century BC and discovered on mount Hymettos, is also a case in point (*IG I³* 1330):³³

This far-seen tomb is that of the daughter of Kallimachos,

Who was the first to tend the temple of Nike;

Her name shared in her good fortune, for by divine

Fortune she was called Myrrhine. Truly

She was the first who tended the statue of Athena Nike

Chosen by lot out of everyone, Myrrhine, by good fortune.

Her name Myrrhine means 'myrtle', a plant used in religious rites and hence the reference to this in her epitaph that she had been named this by her parents, 'by divine fortune', for it was a good-omened name for the first priestess of Athena Nike. A decree setting out the

pay for the priestess of this cult dates definitely to 424/3 BC (*IG I³ 36*) and the date of the decree establishing the priestesshood and the erection of the temple (*IG I³ 35*) can only date a few years earlier at the most (though the date is disputed). The character Myrrhine in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* is almost certainly meant to remind the audience of Myrrhine the priestess.³⁴ What this in particular reflects is that Myrrhine was a prominent public figure, immediately recognisable. Eponymous to the play, the character Lysistrata appears. Her name, Lysistrata ('Looser of Armies') is quite close to Lysimache ('Looser of War'), priestess of Athena Polias at the time of the play's production (410 BC), who when she died in somewhere around 380 BC had served the goddess for 64 years. Lysimache as priestess of Athena Polias may therefore be disguised – very lightly – as Lysistrata. Valid as a suggestion is that the name Lysimache does not suit the play's metre, whereas Lysistrata does.³⁵ What therefore needs to be pointed out is that two priestesses in *Lysistrata* oppose the war: Lysistrate-Lysimache as priestess of Athena Polias and Myrrhine as priestess of Athena Nike. So Athena, as the goddess of the city (Athena Polias) and the goddess of victory (Athena Nike), oppose the war and bring it to an end. Aristophanes has thrown the full weight of the religious authority of these two priestesses, and the goddess they serve, behind the peace message of his play. Whenever Lysistrata speaks in the play, she is listened to as an authoritative figure. Moreover, the play *Lysistrata* opens with Lysistrata, Myrrhine and another woman, Kalonike ('Beautiful Victory'), whose name blends appropriately with the others: she too is probably a priestess.

Lysimache, serving as priestess for 64 years, should logically have been honoured and she was in fact the first priestess to be so honoured at Athens, setting the trend for the Hellenistic period in which honours for priestesses and women religious personnel became fairly common. She was honoured by an honorific statue set up by the city in front of the Erechtheion on the acropolis; only the statue base survives and records that she served the goddess Athena Polias for 64 years, and it can be restored to read that she was 88 years old when she died (*IG II² 3453*).³⁶ If correct, this means that she started serving the goddess when she was 24 years old; at any rate given the length of her service she must have commenced her tenure of this office when she was quite young, and it is interesting to note that the city's most important priesthood could be held at an early age, which is in accord with what is known about priesthoods from Kos (see later in this chapter). Demetrios of Alopeke carved the statue; a marble head has long been identified as belonging to this statue and labeled: 'Lysimache' (most improbably). In addition, a statue base from the

Athenian acropolis honours a *diakonos* (called Syeris) of a Lysimache, priestess of Athena Polias (*IG* II² 3464), and it is probably safe to identify this Lysimache with the priestess of 64 years.³⁷ Pausanias saw a statue on the acropolis of a *diakonos* of Lysimache, and the uncertain and corrupted name in his text is easily emended to Syeris (Paus. 1.27.4).

Pausanias in the second century AD notes that when Chrysis of Argos fled after the temple burned down because she fell asleep, she took refuge as a suppliant at the temple of Athena Alea in Tegea, and the Argives respected this sanctity (Paus. 3.5.6); moreover, they did not take down her statue which Pausanias over 500 years later saw in front of the burned temple (2.17.7). Clearly, she had been honoured by the Argives at some stage, probably due to the longevity of her service. Honorary statues for priestesses are known from elsewhere in Greece and are dedicated to acknowledge their service of the goddesses concerned and their role as the ritual agents for the goddess's cult. Hence, such statues honoured the goddess as well. Significantly, statues for male priests are not mentioned in Pausanias. It is not indicated whether these were private dedications or made by the state, but given the number at these sanctuaries, it seems safe to assume that these were state honours. Of course, family members could honour the priestesses in their ranks, and this was particularly true at Priene. Menedemos erected a statue in honour of his daughter Niko, who was the priestess of Athena Polias there, sometime around 330 BC (*I.Priene* 160); only the statue base now survives.³⁸ But both the marble statue and statue base of Nikeso, priestess of Demeter and Kore also at Priene survive, intact except for her missing head. Only the barest details are given in the inscription: 'Nikeso, Hipposthenes' daughter, Eukritos' wife, priestess of Demeter and Kore'. Brevity of this kind is frustrating – she is surely honoured for more than just being priestess – what did she do to deserve this praise? What role and functions did she have? (Inscription: *I.Priene* 173; statue: Berlin SK1928; 300–250 BC.) Similarly, a statue base (for a bronze statue) survives for Timonassa, blandly giving the details, 'Timonassa, Euthydemos' daughter, Eupolis' wife, priestess of Demeter and Kore' (*I.Priene* 172; fourth to third century).³⁹ Menedemos is clearly stated to be the dedicator in the case of Niko's statue, but for Nikeso and Timonassa, no dedicator is given, so that it is a safe assumption that these statues were honours granted by Priene. Clearly, an iconographic and epigraphic habit existed at Priene for its priestesses – with statues dedicated both by the city and by the family.

In front of the Heraion near Mycenae were statues of women who had been priestesses of Hera (Paus. 2.17.3), a few statues of

priestesses who had served Demeter were outside her temple in Hermion (2.35.8) and statues of the priestesses of the Eumenides stood at the entrance to her sanctuary at Keryneia (7.25.7). Statues were placed prominently outside temples: they also served as a reminder to the current priestess that she too must serve the goddess faithfully. They also created a sense of awe and piety in the worshippers attending the temple and its rites.

In Athens, the award of crowns (gold, silver or vegetative) to benefactors and the state's male officials was fairly routine, and priestesses were amongst the honorands: in a relief of the mid-fourth century BC a priestess with a temple key is crowned by Nike with a crown of some kind (Figure 48.1), and this relief was probably the top of an Athenian official state decree. At a more local level, in the deme (village) of Aixone in Attika the priestess who served the goddesses Hebe and Alkmene was awarded an olive crown (*IG II²* 1199, lines 24–25). In about the mid-third century BC, Timokrite as hereditary and life-long priestess of Aglauros was honoured by the city with a myrtle crown (*SEG* 33.115), and similarly in 255/4 BC a priestess of Athena Polias with a crown of olive leaves (*IG II²* 776.24). In the case of Timokrite, the report to the Athenian assembly was made by her own son Aristophanes, and the decree was proposed by Demosthenes, apparently her father; clearly it was in the family's interests to have her honoured. No crowns of precious metals are known to have been awarded to Athenian or any other priestesses.⁴⁰

Late inscriptions of the first and second centuries AD on the stone seats of the theatre of Dionysos at the foot of the Athenian acropolis record seats for many priesthoods (*IG II²* 5022–5164). Amongst these are seats for the priest of Dionysos Eleuthereos, the various priests and heralds of the Eleusinian Mysteries (but not the priestesses) and the priest of Pythian Apollo. There are also seats for the priestesses of Artemis Kolainis, Athena of Athens (presumably Athena Polias), Ourania Nemesis, Demeter, Hestia, Aphrodite Pandemos, and a seat for 'Theano' (5164b) whose priestesshood is not given. Seats reserved for priesthoods outnumber those for priestesses, reflecting the numerical disparity between male and women priests, but not reflecting an unequal importance; nevertheless, the inscriptions might not represent the full complement of Athenian priesthoods.

Perquisites of priestesses

Just as Greek priests received perquisites, so too did priestesses, at least on the evidence of the regulations instituting the cult of Athena

Nike at Athens, in which the priestess was to receive 50 drachmas per year as an emolument and from the sacrifices over which she presided, the thighs and the hide of the sacrificed beast (*IG I³ 35, 36*). This was a new priestesshood instituted in the 420s BC, and whether it reflected emoluments for other priestesses is unclear. *Apometra*, presumably money for the expenses of sacrifices, was paid to the priestess of Athena Polias, indicating that priestesses of this cult did not need to meet any costs attendant upon their duties (*LSCG Suppl.* 10a.75–76). At Eleusis, priests and priestesses received money from the *mystai* (initiates) in the mysteries: the priestess of Demeter received one obol from each of the *mystai*. Given that the fifth-century BC *telesterion*, the initiation hall, could seat 3,000 this was no inconsiderable sum. Other officials also received (unknown) amounts for the *mystai*, and the Eumolpidai and Kerykes, the families presiding over the mysteries, received three and five obols respectively, which helps to contextualise the Demeter priestess's fee – it was quite considerable (*IG I³ 6c.6–20*, about 460 BC).

On the island of Kos, merchants and skippers beginning their naval voyages were required by state decree to sacrifice to Aphrodite Pandemos, and if they did not do so they had to pay a fine of ten drachmas to the priestess (*ED 178*, lines 21–26). It is not merely that the goddess would be angered, but that the priestess, having paid a large sum for this priestesshood, would be deprived of the portions of these sacrifices which would otherwise have been hers. There is a related point concerning the priestess of Artemis Pergaia at Halikarnassos, who purchased the priestesshood for life: from the sacrifices which were made on behalf of the state to Artemis Pergaia, the priestess was to receive from each victim a thigh, the meat around the thigh, a quarter share of the entrails, and the hide; from sacrifices made by private individuals, a thigh, the meat around the thigh and a quarter share of the entrails (but the hide is not mentioned: *LSAM* 73.4–25, see above). In addition, once a year in a particular month, she could take up a collection over a three-day period, but could not solicit this by door-knocking on people's houses.⁴¹ Therefore, it would be in the interest of the priestess, having paid for her priestesshood, to be present at every sacrifice which was made. From a sacrifice at Sparta to Semele and another to Dionysos, the priestess was to have the hide of the sacrificial victim in each case (*SEG* 21.541, lines 144–151).⁴²

Priestesses and ritual speech

In the historical works of Herodotos, Thucydides, Xenophon, and

Diodoros, there are many speeches, usually by commanders prior to battle. While Thucydides can claim that he recorded speeches as they were given or as was called for by the situation (Thuc. 1.23.6), women's speech is rarely encountered in historical narrative, separated as they were from the political and legal world of men. Yet voices of Greek priestesses can be discovered, for their religious role occasionally meant that they had to make public statements concerning cultic matters. Such discourse was accepted in the patriarchal world, for priestesses spoke with religious authority and, indeed, in the case of the Delphic priestess, the Pythia, she transformed the thoughts of Apollo into articulate discourse which men listened to, usually without question or criticism.

Their speech could be distorted by the desire for financial gain. Infamously, the Pythia Periallos was bribed by Kleomenes, king of Sparta (reigning from about 510 to 490 BC), to persuade the Spartans to depose his fellow king, Demaratos. Her corruption was discovered by the Delphians who deprived her of office, providing the only known instance in which a priestess – or priest – lost her office through a corruption scandal (Hdt. 6.66). Timo, *hypozakoros* ('underpriestess') of the chthonic goddesses on the Aegean island of Paros, was accused of revealing to the Athenian general Miltiades who had besieged the town on the island, rites which were unknown to men. Subsequently, the Parians sent to Delphi to ask if they could put Timo to death. Apparently there was a sanctity attached to Timo as a *hypozakoros* and presumably to women in higher religious positions than the one she held, for the Pythian priestess refused to countenance her execution, stating that Timo was but an instrument in what happened to Miltiades: when he had broken into the sanctuary of the goddesses, he had taken flight, smashed up his leg and was to die thereof from gangrene soon after in Athens (Hdt. 6.134).

Further accusations of bribery of the Pythia, never proven, occurred at other times: the Alkmeonidai were said to have bribed the Pythia to tell the Spartans to overthrow the Athenian tyranny, which they did in 510 BC (Hdt. 5.63, 5.66.1, 5.90.1; [Arist] *Ath. Pol.* 19.4), and the Spartan king, Pleistoanax, who had been deposed, was accused of having bribed the Pythia to tell the Spartans to restore him to the throne, which they did in 428 BC (Thuc. 5.16–19). All three cases of bribery, alleged or otherwise, involve the Spartans and the Pythia. Lykourgos in the 330s BC delivered at Athens a speech 'Concerning the priestesses' of which twenty-two short fragments survive. He belonged to the same *genos*, the Eteoboutadai, as the one to which the priestess of Athena Polias belonged by hereditary descent. Was he defending the current priestess on some charge? Has she committed some ritual

incorrectly? Had her prerogatives been questioned?

According to Plutarch, Lysimache (probably the well-known one) at Athens was asked for a drink by the muleteers who had brought the sacred vessels. But she replied, 'I shrink from doing so, lest it make its way into the ancestral ritual' (Plut. *Mor.* 534b–c). She not only had supervision of the rites but was their custodian. Priestesses could assert themselves in ritual contexts. Brave was the unnamed priestess of Athena Polias who, when the Spartan King Kleomenes came to Athens in 510 BC to overthrow the Athenian tyranny, forbade him entry to Athena's temple on the acropolis, on the grounds of the cult rule that Dorians were not permitted to do so. He joked that he was not a Dorian, i.e. not Dorieus his fellow king but an Achaeon, i.e. a Greek (Hdt. 5.72.3, cf. 6.81). Her prohibition did not prevent him from stealing the collection of oracles which was housed on the acropolis (Hdt. 5.92.2). At the time of the Persian invasions in 480 BC, the priestess of Athena Polias reported that the sacred snake on the acropolis had not eaten its usual monthly offering of its honey cake. This was interpreted to mean that Athena herself had abandoned the acropolis, and the Athenians therefore duly hastened their evacuation of the city (Hdt. 8.41). To whom she made the report is not clear, perhaps to the Athenian council, certainly not to the Athenian assembly.

'Themistokles' Decree', fabricated and inscribed on stone in the fourth or third century BC and purporting to be a decree of the Athenians on the eve of the Persian invasion of 480 BC, instructs the treasurers and priestesses to remain on the acropolis to guard the treasure there: obviously the treasures of Athena and Athena's priestesses are meant (why plural, 'priestesses', is uncertain). Herodotos does record that the treasurers did stay on the acropolis, because they interpreted the wooden walls of the second Pythian oracle as the acropolis's wooden walls. Yet he does not mention the priestesses, and clearly fifth-century BC Athenians did not expect the priestess of Athena Polias to remain and be killed on the acropolis by the Persians, but to follow the example of Athena's sacred snake and flee (decree: Athens NM 13330; *SEG* 18.153, lines 11–12; Hdt. 8.51.2).⁴³ To commit the priestesses, by an official state decree, to their certain deaths, would have been a brutal act given that the rest of the population was fleeing on the assumption that the city would fall to the Persians.

At the time of the scandal at Athens of the mutilation of the Hermai and the accusations that Alkibiades and his friends had parodied the Eleusinian Mysteries in a private house in 415 BC, Alkibiades was

found guilty and sentenced to death in absentia: the priests and priestesses were ordered by the people to curse him (Lysias 6.51). Yet one priestess, Theano, refused to do so, asserting that she was a praying not cursing priestess. One can almost hear her say, some 2,500 years ago: 'I am a praying priestess, not a cursing one' (Plut. *Alk.* 22.5).⁴⁴ Plutarch's story need not be doubted as he generally employed sound fourth-century BC sources, the priestess's full name is given (Theano daughter of Menon, of the deme Agraule) and priestesses did 'speak out' on occasion. This statement concurs very well with what is known of priestesses, who were articulate and engaged in religious discourse as the need arose and did more than act as ritual agents for the cults of goddesses. Theano's exceptional stand is paralleled by the refusal of the hierophant, Theodoros, when the polis requested that the Eumolpidae and the Kerykes rescind these curses, to take back his curse (Plut. *Alk.* 33.3).

Summing up: Kleobis and Biton: 'get me to the temple on time'

Kleobis and Biton's story comes as part of the Solon-Croesus narrative in Herodotos, in which Solon sets out to prove to Croesus (the king of Lydia) that one cannot be truly happy until the end of one's days. Tellos the Athenian was the most blessed of all men for he died in battle, had a fine family (including grandchildren) and sufficient wealth. Next happiest were the brothers, Kleobis and Biton: Herodotos recounts that the Argives were celebrating the festival of Hera and it was crucial that the youths' mother drive to the temple in her ox-cart – yet the oxen were delayed in returning from the fields. With no time to lose, her sons yoked themselves to the cart and pulled it for 45 stadia (5 miles) to Hera's temple. Having already assembled, the worshippers witnessed the entrance of the mother and her sons: the men present hailed the lads for their strength, while the women kept telling the mother how blessed she was to have such sons. Accordingly, she prayed to Hera, 'before whose image she stood' that her sons, who had 'brought her such honour' be granted the 'greatest blessing that can befall mortal man'. After the sacrifice and feasting, her boys fell asleep in the temple, never to awake. Argos, 'considering them to be the most virtuous of men', dedicated statues to them at Delphi (Hdt. 1.31.1–5).⁴⁵

This is clearly a very truncated account and the original story must have been much longer. It is surprising for Herodotos that he does not name the woman, yet it is crucial for her to arrive at the temple at a

certain time. When she does arrive, a crowd of worshippers awaits her. Without her, the sacrifice and feasting cannot commence, and when standing in front of the cult-statue she prays to Hera, her prayer is answered in an astonishing manner, causing the Argives to dedicate two statues at Delphi. Ancient sources identified her as the priestess of Hera at Argos and gave her a name: Kydippe, indicating that fuller versions of Herodotos' tale were in circulation and perhaps explaining why Herodotos did not need to provide more details (Plut. *Mor.* 108e, F133 [Sandbach], Luc. *Charon* 10, Cic. *Tusc.* I 47, 113).

Her importance as a priestess is clear and indicates the roles of other priestesses – her presence is crucial, for without her the festival cannot take place, and the reason for the sons becoming substitute cart oxen is because she must arrive at the temple on time; only after she arrives can the sacrifice be made and the feasting commence. Then in front of the cult-statue, she prays to Hera, and this prayer was probably a supplement to the one she would normally have prayed in front of the statue on behalf of the Argives in supplicating Hera. But it is not simply a prayer that the goddess reward her son, but rather to acknowledge publicly the piety of the two youths whose action enabled the festivities for Hera to commence. Her prayer asking for Hera's aid, of course, immediately reminds the reader of that of Apollo's priest Chrysis, who because of his especial relationship with the god, in roofing Apollo's shrine and burning many thigh-pieces of goats for him, can confidently and successfully call upon the god for a special intervention (Hom. *Il.* 1.37–42). As priestess, Kydippe calls upon Hera in the same way as Chrysis invokes Apollo: priest and priestess have the same reciprocal relationship with their respective gods.

Conclusion

Priestesses were not necessarily vocal members of their communities, but they nevertheless did have their say as and when required, and this need not be a surprise as the Pythia at Delphi was required to be vocal as part of her role. More of the words of the Pythiai are recorded than of any individual Greek men. Long-serving priestesses, such as Lysimache and Chrysis, not only had religious roles of great importance but become part of the social fabric of their cities through their longevity. For the worship of female deities, priestesses were crucial and established vital relationships with these important deities. These priestesses were 'real women' who were essential to the prayers and sacrifices offered up by the community to many goddesses; they had ritual competence in public places, but also presided over secret

rites crucial for the city or community in which they lived. As with priests, they ensured the correct observation of numerous rituals and safeguarded the rites of goddesses. Communities recognised that it was women who had to deal with women gods and that men could not empathise with fertility or love deities. Their position was public in a sense unobtainable by other women, moreover it was a role required of them by a male dominated patriarchal society. Leading not only women but men in worship, these real women engendered not only Greek religion, but society as a whole. Through their acquisition of payments in money and kind, many would have been wealthy; all had high social status. Statues, decrees, crowns in their honour as organised by the state and the summarising of their cult roles on their tombstones by families indicate that not only was their role crucial but it was recognised as significant by the state and their families.

Notes

- 1 For discussions of Greek priestesses, see Garland 1984, esp. 75–78, 1990: 77–81; Simon 1991; Dillon 1999, 2002: 73–106; Goff 2004: 61–69. The seminal study for the iconography of Greek priests and priestesses is Mantes 1983 (in modern Greek), see also now Connelly 2007. Turner 1983 is still an invaluable source of ancient sources and interpretation, and marked the first serious attempt at studying Greek priestesses. All subsequent anglophone studies are indebted to it.
- 2 Dillon 1999: 72.
- 3 For the iconography of women and temple keys, the main study is Mantes 1983: 28–65, who provides a copious list of the evidence.
- 4 Examples of priests with knives: *ThesCRA* v 2a.88, 125, 136.
- 5 Polystrate: Athens Kerameikos Museum I.430 (Mantes 1983: pl. 11a; *ThesCRA* v 2a.137; Dillon 2002: 82, fig. 3.2; Connelly 2007: 230–231, fig. 8.4; Von den Hoff 2008: 116, fig. 4).
- 6 Berlin SK 881, height 33 cm, width 22 cm (*LIMC* ii Athena 213, vi Nike 192; *ThesCRA* v 2a.124; Mantes 1983: 12a–b; Lawton 1995: n. 164, pl. 86; Ridgway 1987: 405; Connelly 2007: 95–96, fig. 4.7, pl. 13; Hoff 2008: 119, fig. 6). Cf. Athens NM 3492 (*ThesCRA* v 2a.125): a priest, holding a sacrificial knife, being crowned.
- 7 BM F127 (no ARV²; CVA BM ii p.4, pl.4: 5a–b; *ThesCRA* v 2a.7; Mantes 1983: 65, pl. 27b; Connelly 2007: 15, fig. 1.1).
- 8 Athens National Museum 1727 (*ThesCRA* v 2a.139; *IG* II² 13062; Mantes 1983: 44 [no. 1], pl. 14a; Connelly 2007: 241, fig. 8.14).
- 9 Mantes 1983: 35, fig. 6b.
- 10 Piraeus Museum 3267; Chairestrate is shown with a temple key on her shoulder (*IG* II² 6288; *SEG* 29.275; Mantes 1983: 46–47, pl. 13a; Connelly 2007: 235, fig. 8.8; Tsagalis 2008: 67, 226).
- 11 Berlin 1504 (*ThesCRA* ii 5.584; Mantes 1983: 67–68, pl. 28; Dillon 2002: 81–83, [fig 3.3](#); Connelly 2007: 239, fig. 8.12; not in Dillon 2010).

- 12 Ridgway 1987: 405.
- 13 Berlin F3025 (Mantes 1983: 62, n. 13, pl. 26b; Connelly 2007: 101, fig. 4.14).
- 14 See Budin 2015: 110.
- 15 Berlin 1686 (Dillon 2002: 88, fig. 3.4; Dillon 2010: 47, fig. 1.27).
- 16 Garland 1984: 86–103.
- 17 Current height: 173 cm (Nikeso: *ThesCRA* v 2a.131, with pl.; Mantes 1983: 98–99, pl. 44b; Ridgway 1987: 405; Kron 1996: 146–148; Connelly 2007: 136, fig. 5.12, 137–138; Dillon 2010: 17, fig. 3, 41). A loose statue head found at Priene and sometimes associated with Nikeso does not in fact belong to her statue.
- 18 Athens NM 232 (*ThesCRA* v 2a.126 with pl.; Mantes 1983: 109–110, pl 46b, 47b; Connelly 2007: 145, fig. 5.14; Hoff 2008: 130, fig. 10; Dillon 2010: 106–108).
- 19 ARV² 363.27 (Roccos 1995: 653, fig. 13; Connelly 2007: 37, fig. 2.4).
- 20 ARV² 1143.1 (Roccos 1995: 649, fig. 3; Connelly 2007: 35, fig. 2.2).
- 21 Roccos 1995; Dillon 2002: 42, fig. 2.2.
- 22 For clothing regulations at Greek sanctuaries: see, especially, Mills 1984; Culham 1986; Dillon 1997: 161–163.
- 23 IG I³ 35 (Dillon and Garland 2010: 110, doc. 3.65; *ThesCRA* v 2a.30).
- 24 *ThesCRA* v 2a.11.
- 25 See for the selection of priests and priestesses: Turner 1983; Garland 1984 passim; Aleshire 1994: esp. 325–327; Parker 1996: 124–126.
- 26 Dillon 1997: 83.
- 27 Mantes 1983: pl. 21a; *LIMC* vii Orestes 12; *ThesCRA* iii 6d.78.
- 28 Berlin F2538 (Dillon 2016: fig. 7.6). For the prophetic role of the Pythia, see Maurizio 1995; Dillon 1997: 82–86, 2002: 98–101, 2016, [chapter 7](#) (especially for the fact that the Pythia was not ‘inspired’ by gas seepages at Delphi).
- 29 *ThesCRA* v 2a.22.
- 30 Dillon 1999: 65.
- 31 For the basilinna, see Garland 1984: 112; Dillon 2002: 101–104; Goff 2004: 38–39, 171–173.
- 32 *Halikarnassos* 3 (= *LSAM* 73), lines 4–30. I am indebted to Stephanie Budin for her translation of this inscription.
- 33 *ceG* 93 (*SEG* 12.80, 36.50; cf. *IG* I³ 1285, c.420–410 BC?). See the discussion of Rahn 1986; Lougovaya-Ast 2006; Dillon and Garland 2010: 112–113.
- 34 For this identification, which is generally accepted, see Lewis 1955: esp. 1–2 (developing an idea of J. Papdemetriou 1948–49: *AE* 146–153).
- 35 See for this argument, Lewis 1955: 2–4.
- 36 Cf. *SEG* 31.140 for alternative readings in the inscription. For Lysimache: Pliny *Nat. Hist.* 34.76 (Demetrios carved a statue of Lysimache who served for 64 years); Mantes 1983: 70–74; Ridgway 1987: 405; Dillon 2002: 75, 78, 86–87, 92; Connelly 2007: 130–131.
- 37 Keesling 2012.
- 38 Dillon 2010: 42.
- 39 Dillon 2010: 41.
- 40 Pilz 2013: 157. For awards of crowns to priestesses, see Turner 1983: 396–397; Connelly 2007: 204; Piz 2013: 157–160.

- 41 For other priestesses making collections of money, see Dillon 1999: 76.
- 42 For these priestesses' perquisites at Halikarnassos and Sparta, see Osborne 1993: 399.
- 43 See for the priestesses, especially Jordan 1979: 77–80, cf. 64–76.
- 44 Sourvinou-Inwood 1988 unnecessarily doubted this information, but the non-cursing priestess fits the religious milieu of the classical period.
- 45 For the episode, see especially Chiasson 2005: 42–45. The brothers' statues are often identified with two limestone *kouroi* at Delphi, but the identification is largely wishful: Delphi museum inv. 467 and 1524.

References

- Chiasson, C. C. (2005) Myth, ritual, and authorial control in Herodotus' story of Cleobis and Biton (*Hist.* 1.31). *AJPh*, 126: 41–64.
- Connelly, J. (2007) *Portrait of a Priestess: Women and Ritual in Ancient Greece*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Culham, P. (1986) Again, what meaning lies in colour! *ZPE* 64: 235–245.
- Dillon, M. P. J. (1997) *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece*. London: Routledge.
- Dillon, M. P. J. (1999) Post-nuptial sacrifices on Kos (Segre, *ED* 178) and ancient Greek marriage rites. *ZPE* 124: 63–80.
- Dillon, M. P. J. (2002) *Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion*. London: Routledge.
- Dillon, M. P. J. (2016) *Omens and Oracles: Divination in Classical Greece*. Farnham, UK: Ashgate.
- Dillon, M. P. J. and Garland, L. (2010) *The Ancient Greeks. Social and Historical Documents from Archaic Times to the Death of Alexander*, third edition. London: Routledge.
- Dillon, S. (2010) *The Female Portrait Statue in the Greek World*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Garland, R. S. J. (1984) Religious authority in Archaic and Classical Athens. *ABSA* 79: 75–123.
- Gawlinski, L. (2012) *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Goff, B. (2004) *Citizen Bacchae: Women's Ritual Practice in Ancient Greece*, Berkeley, CA: University of California.
- Jordan, B. (1979) *Servants of the Gods*. Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Kassel, R. and Austin, C. (1983–98) *Poetae Comici Graeci*, volumes 1–8. Berlin: De Gruyter.

- Keesling, C. M. (2012) Syeris, *Diakonos* of the Priestess Lysimache on the Athenian Acropolis (*IG II² 3634*). *Hesperia* 81: 467–505.
- Kron, U. (1996) Priesthoods, dedications, and euergetism: What part did religion play in the political and social status of Greek Women? In P. Hellström and B. Alroth (eds) *Religion and Power in the Ancient Greek World*. Uppsala, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, pp. 139–182.
- Lawton, C. L. (1995) *Attic Document Reliefs. Art and Politics in Ancient Athens*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.
- Lewis, D. M. (1955) Notes on Attic Inscriptions (II): xxiii. Who was Lysistrata? *ABSA* 50: 1–12.
- Lougovaya-Ast, J. (2006) Myrrhine, the first priestess of Athena Nike. *Phoenix* 60: 211–225.
- Mantes, A. (1983) *Provlēmata tēs eikonographias tōn hierieion kai tōn hierieōn stēn archaia Hellēnikē technē: Didaktorikē diatrivē*. Thessaloniki, Greece: Enalios.
- Maurizio, L. (1995) Anthropology and spirit possession: A reconsideration of the Pythia's role at Delphi. *JHS* 115: 69–86.
- Mills, H. (1984) Greek clothing regulations: Sacred and profane? *ZPE* 55: 255–265.
- Osborne, R. (1993) Women and sacrifice in Classical Greece. *CQ* 43: 392–405.
- Parker, R. (1996) *Athenian Religion*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.
- Pilz, O. (2013) The profits of self-representation: Statues of female cult personnel in the late Classical and Hellenistic periods. In M. Horster and A. Klöckner (eds) *Cities and Priests: Cult Personnel in Asia Minor and the Aegean Islands from the Hellenistic to the Imperial Period*. Berlin: De Gruyter, pp. 155–175.
- Rahn, P. J. (1986) Funeral memorials of the first priestess of Athena Nike. *ABSA* 81: 195–207.
- Ridgway, B. S. (1987) Ancient Greek women and art: The material evidence. *AJA* 91: 399–409.
- Roccos, L. J. (1995) The kanephoros and her festival mantle in Greek art. *AJA* 99: 641–666.
- Segre, M. (1993) *Iscrizioni di Cos*. Edited by D. P. Delmousoy and M. A. Rizzo, volumes 1–2, *ED: public decrees*. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
- Simon, S. J. (1991) The functions of priestesses in Greek society. *Classical Bulletin* 67: 9–13.
- Sourvinou-Inwood, C. (1988) Priestess in the text: 'Theano Menonos Agrylethen'. *Greece & Rome* 35: 29–39.

- Tsagalis, C. C. (2008) *Inscribing Sorrow: Fourth-century Attic Funerary Epigrams*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Turner, J. A. (1983) *Hiereiai: The Acquisition of Feminine Priesthoods*. PhD dissertation. University of California.
- Von den Hoff, R. (2008) Images of cult personnel in Athens between the sixth and first centuries BC. In B. Dignas and K. Trampedach (eds) *Practitioners of the Divine: Greek Priests and Religious Officials from Homer to Heliodorus*. Washington, DC: center for Hellenic Studies, pp. 107–141.

PROSTITUTES, WOMEN, AND GENDER IN ANCIENT GREECE

Allison Glazebrook

Prostitution in classical Athens was an accepted practice. In fact, the city collected a prostitution tax (Aeschines 1.119), legitimating the profession, and suggesting its economic importance. A history of ancient sex laborers, however, is difficult to write given the lack of evidence from the perspective of such workers themselves. Actual anecdotes about these working women, penned by male writers, cannot be trusted, since an accurate portrayal of the prostitutes themselves is not the motivation behind these accounts. Still, these portraits do reveal something about the expected circumstances and practices of sex laborers, and this chapter is an attempt to consider the possible environment and livelihood of female prostitutes in classical Greece by looking at the narratives of three women identified in our sources as sex laborers: Alke (Isaeus 6), an unnamed slave (Antiphon 1), and Neaira ([Demosthenes] 59). The accounts of these women appear in law court speeches and, by focusing on this one genre, I hope to reveal what we can and cannot know about these women, while also showing how negative female stereotypes centered on the prostitute body.

Preconceptions and terminology

Until recently, much of the discussion of sexual labor in ancient Greece has focused on the *hetaira* (sexual companion, commonly translated as courtesan), or sacred prostitution (sex purchased in honor of the goddess Aphrodite at Corinth). In both cases, this focus has limited the study of the variety and variability of sexual labor in ancient Greece. For example, the impression of the *hetaira* as beautiful, educated, and witty is based on anecdotes, such as Pausanias 1.20.1–2 (wherein the hetaira Phryne tricks the sculptor

Praxiteles out of his favorite statue) and Athenaeus 13.585c–f (clever comebacks of the famous hetairai of classical Athens, such as Phryne, Thais, and Glykera), written at least a few hundred years after any such woman likely lived and have little bearing on the reality of the *hetaira* in classical Greece.¹ While there are only two contemporary references to what might be interpreted as sacred prostitution at Corinth, the focus of prostitution in this ancient city has remained temple prostitution (see, for example, Strong 1997), neglecting the many references to prostitution at Corinth in general. Any conclusions about a class of female sex laborers serving the goddess Aphrodite and working in her sanctuaries is highly problematic and controversial.² Ignoring the importance of context and prioritizing one type of evidence over another have led to false dichotomies between *hetairai* and *pornai* (see later in this chapter) and sacred and non-sacred prostitution. The result is an idealization of the *hetaira* and the sacred prostitute.

A further complication is that our own conceptions of sexual labor and the terminology we use to translate the ancient terms often bias our interpretations. Common terms from the classical period for such female laborers were *pornē*, *hetaira*, and *pallakē*. *Pornē* likely comes from the verb to sell (*pernēmi*) and nicknames and slang terms such as One Obol (*Obolē*), Twelve Obols (*Didrachmon*) and penny whore (*khalkiditis*) emphasize the material nature of the prostitute–client relationship, the low cost of such women, and thus emphasize their communal accessibility.³ Modern scholarship generally assumes that *pornai* worked for a fee in brothels and were of slave status, while *hetairai*, freed or free, were longer-term companions of one man and often paid in kind rather than in cash (Davidson 1998: 112–126).⁴ *Pallakē* are frequently identified as foreign women in long-term relationships, which might even result in semi-legitimate children.⁵ While *pallakai* might, in fact, be of slave status, they differ from *hetairai* and *pornai* in that they live in semi-permanent arrangements with their lovers. Scholars frequently translate the terms as ‘whore,’ ‘courtesan,’ and ‘concubine’ respectively, words with strong connotations in English and not completely accurate representations of ancient attitudes and practices.

While certainly *pornē* appears to be a more pejorative term than *hetaira* and was indeed used as a term of abuse (Kapparis 1999: 126), it is a mistake to associate this terminology with a particular status or experience. According to Plutarch, *hetaira* was simply an Athenian euphemism for *pornē*, just as ‘contributions’ was for ‘tribute,’ and just as ‘protectors’ was for Athenian ‘garrisons’ posted in allied cities (Solon 15.3). Cognates of *hetaira* first appear in the sixth century BCE

and are related to *hetairos*, a man's war companion, and possibly hint at the affection and regular association that could exist between a prostitute and her client.⁶ Or it may have originally referred to an actual class of free women in archaic Athens who lived the lifestyle of *habrosunē* (eastern style luxury) by wining and dining alongside men or by holding their own symposia.⁷ While I agree that it is too simplistic to assume that there were no actual differences between sex laborers,⁸ it is a mistake to impose a kind of taxonomy of prostitution with *pornē* at the bottom and *hetaira* at the top. Categorizations and polarizations of *hetaira* versus *pornē* are over simplified and not accurate in every context.⁹

It is certainly possible that independent, high-priced prostitutes (*megalomisthoi*) like Phryne (Athenaeus 13.590e–591f; Pausanias 10.15.1) and Rhodopis (Herodotus 2.135) did exist, but such women were far fewer than we should imagine, and supposedly even Rhodopis began her career as a pimped slave.¹⁰ Working under the control of a *pornoboskos*, pimp, or *pornoboskousa*, procuress, appears common for women in the sex trade. The lexicographers list the ground beater (*khamaitupē*), streetwalker (*spodēsilaúra*, *peripolis*, and *dromas*), and bridge-girls (*gephuris*), terms that suggest prostitutes could ply their trade anywhere throughout the city.¹¹ Polluted one (*musachnē*) further implies the low regard of some ancient clients for these women and girls.¹² These terms demonstrate that sexual labor was more varied than we allow. Free, slave, ex-slave, and citizens in addition to foreigners openly practiced prostitution. According to the literary sources, prostitution occurred in private and public, secular and non-secular contexts. Access to prostitutes was easy, even for slaves, since the prices were cheap (an average of three obols for Athens)¹³ and prostitutes were readily available in various and diverse venues. They walked the streets, worked in brothels, entertained at drinking parties and special festivals, travelling from city to city, and were the personal companions of one or two men. These different situations do not correspond to an actual status (even in regard to slave or free) or working conditions, and the individual experiences of any such women and girls would have been very different.

Living the life: three case studies

Women working in *porneia* (brothels) in particular were likely of slave status and thus subject to a pimp, who was frequently female, the *pornoboskousa*.¹⁴ The remains of a possible *porneion* (brothel structure) dating to the classical period is Building Z located in the Kerameikos of Athens.¹⁵ The archaeological remains hint that the space itself was

‘commodius’ (Ault 2005: 149), with a garden courtyard, mosaic floors, dining rooms, ample water facilities, and drinking ware. The finds, furthermore, include jewelry, suggesting some of the prostitutes were richly adorned. The presence of loom weights indicate the women likely also worked at looms to maximize the profit from their labor when not with clients (see also Cohen, this volume). They may have also worked as servers, given the presence of drinking ware.¹⁶ Statuettes of foreign goddesses, Astarte and Cybele, suggest the women were non-Greeks and actually lived in the complex.¹⁷ Male drinking parties (*symposia*) in private homes were another important context for prostitution. The guests of such parties expected to be entertained, and hosts hired female dancers, harp players, and flute players (*aulētrides*). These women, often of slave status, might also double as prostitutes.¹⁸ Some guests brought along personal female companions, but even these could be of slave status (Antiphon 1.16–19 and [Demosthenes] 59.24—see below on both).

We most commonly hear about individual sex laborers associated with the elite. The narrative on Alke, for example, is part of an inheritance suit contesting the will of the wealthy Athenian Euktemon (Isaeus 6.19–21). The law court speech vilifies Alke and blames her for the inability of certain family members to inherit. It contains a discussion of her life as a prostitute, including her early career in a brothel. She was purchased and prostituted as a sex slave by a freedwoman managing some property for Euktemon. We are told she was bought while a *paidiskē*, a young girl (6.19). The freedwoman trains Alke in the sex trade and prostitutes her (as well as other girls). It appears that the freedwoman specialized in young sex laborers, since she purchased them all as *paidiskai*. The brothel was in the Pireaus, the main harbor of classical Athens, in a *sunioikia*, a multiple occupancy building including tenants and all types of businesses (Aeschines 1.124).¹⁹ It appears that she managed the entire complex for Euktemon, not just the brothel portion. Alke is described here as “sitting in an *oikēma*” (little room) (6.19), which likely refers to cubicles out of which the girls served customers. According to the prosecution, Alke worked and lived in the brothel for many years, but stopped when she reached a certain age. While still living in the *sunioikia*, she began a relationship with a freedman called Dion and possibly had two children with him (6.20). Since he recognized the children, he was likely in a long-term personal relationship with her. Dion raised the children, but then abandoned them in a move to Sikyon, leaving Alke to fend for herself with her two children. Following this, Euktemon put her in charge of another of his rental properties in the Kerameikos near the Postern Gate, near a major

thoroughfare in and out of the city (6.20).

At some point Alke gained her freedom, since she is freed by the time of the speech, but the narrator does not specify when or who purchased it for her, but possibly Euktemon purchased her freedom before setting her up in the Kerameikos. Alke has thus somehow gained her freedom and worked her way up from a brothel worker to a property manager.²⁰ It is possibly another place including prostitution which she manages, like the business in the Piraeus. The speech mentions it is located in a wine district and so likely near taverns and other venues of entertainment and leisure. This area of town is, in fact, where Building Z (likely a tavern and brothel), discussed earlier, is found. While managing this property, she begins an intimate relationship with Euktemon himself (6.21). The relationship seemingly starts off as a more casual affair, but then develops into more of a commitment with Euktemon neglecting his legitimate family. Alke greatly benefited from the relationship—at least this is how the speaker characterizes it—since Euktemon appears to have enrolled one of her children, who may or may not have been his, in his phratry (Isae. 6.21).²¹ While we are unable to verify the details about Alke's actual life, her story hints that some such women were able to use their trade to their own advantage and move up the socio-economic ladder.²²

The reverse, however, was also a possibility. One such example is the unnamed *pallakē* in Antiphon 1.14–20, a trial on murder by poisoning. The woman was the personal sex slave of an elite by the name of Philomenos, who has a house in the Piraeus. She accompanies Philomenos on his visits to friends, who put them both up in Athens (1.14). He keeps her as a regular companion in what appears to be a comfortable domestic arrangement. She, in fact, is described as developing a relationship with the wife of the friend at whose home they commonly stay in Athens. But as a slave woman, unlike a wife, she is able to accompany him to dinners with male companions (1.16–19). Philomenos appears to be her owner, since he supposedly has plans to place her in a *porneion* (brothel), likely selling her as a slave to a *pornoboskos* (brothel owner). In this case it is clear that she will not be managing the brothel, but will be one of the brothel workers and thus continue her life as a slave, but now serving multiple customers. Clearly, Philomenos has tired of her and wants to abandon the relationship and make a profit on her. The story of the *pallakē* does not end happily. The woman's only recourse is to use a love potion to win him back. The love potion turns out to be a poison which kills Philomenos, however. The woman is punished by being broken on the wheel and executed (1.20). The story reveals the

The narrative on Neaira, called both a *hetaira* and a *pornē*, has similarities to that of Alke, but also suggests different possibilities for sex slaves. Once again, we are dealing with a published law court speech. In this case, Neaira is accused of pretending to be the wife of an Athenian, Stephanos, when she was in fact of foreign status and originally a slave—making it illegal for her to marry and have legitimate children with Stephanos. The prosecutor attempts to prove her marginal status by detailing her life as a sex slave in Corinth, and then her life as a freedwoman practicing prostitution in Athens and Megara. The speech is the most extensive narrative we have on a woman in classical Athens and is noteworthy for its focus on prostitution, but its purpose in vilifying Neaira needs to be kept in mind in any interpretation of the speech. Here, I reduce the narrative (59.16–48) down to its basic elements.

Like Alke, Neaira is purchased as a *paidiskē* by a freedwoman, Nikarete, who first teaches her the art of the trade ([Dem.] 59.18–20).²⁴ Nikarete trafficks Neaira, along with other girls, at Corinth, her home base (59.18). She also travels with them to festivals in other cities, for the purpose of prostitution. Nikarete journeys to Athens as a favor to a client, who intends to initiate another of her girls, Metaneira, in the Eleusinian Mysteries (59.21).²⁵ Neaira is brought along for additional business and profit. The speaker comments here on the physical immaturity of Neaira and thus highlights the young age at which girls might be subject to sex trafficking (59.22).²⁶ Shortly afterwards, another client brings Neaira and Nikarete to the Greater Panatheneia festival (59.24), presumably covering all the expenses in exchange for exclusive use of Neaira. Eventually Nikarete sells Neaira, who is likely now in her late teens or early twenties, to two Corinthian youths, long-standing customers of Neaira, and they keep her as their own personal sex slave. They pay 30 minai for her (59.29), which could be as much as 150,000 US dollars today, but they consider this preferable to the daily costs imposed by Nikarete.²⁷ Once the men decide to marry, however, they offer Neaira the opportunity to buy her freedom at a discount, 20 minai. They prefer this alternative to selling her to another *pornoboskos* (brothel owner) (59.30). Neaira supposedly convinces past lovers to contribute to her freedom and Phrynion, a wealthy Athenian from a prominent family (see Kapparis 1999: 23–31), provides the bulk of the funds (59.30–32). Compare this outcome to that of the sex slave above in Antiphon 1.

Upon gaining her new status, Neaira travels to Athens with Phrynion as his sexual companion. Despite her freedom, she is far

from independent. Phrynion keeps her in clothes and jewels, and provides two personal slave attendants for her (59.35, 46). Through Phrynion, Neaira associates with the Athenian elite, including Chabrias, who won in the four-horse chariot race (an expensive hobby) at the Pythian Games at Delphi (59.33). We are told, however, that Phrynion mistreats her (59.33–35). To get away from Phrynion, she moves to Megara and continues to serve clients as a prostitute from an establishment in that city (59.35–37). She eventually moves back to Athens with an Athenian client, Stephanos (59.37–38). The narrative makes clear that she would not be safe moving back without a male protector, since Phrynion, when he discovers she is back, immediately tries to claim her as a runaway slave (59.40). Neaira thus finds herself as the cause of a dispute between two men.²⁸ The two men are reconciled by agreeing to share Neaira, with each man covering her expenses during her time with him. As we have seen, Neaira has experienced being shared before, and so it is not all that surprising that she agrees to it now despite her freedom (59.46).²⁹ Eventually, Neaira and Stephanos are left to themselves. Throughout this period, Neaira is said to continue to work as a prostitute for the benefit of the household (59.39, 41). Like Alke, we learn of children (59.38) and the text suggests that the daughter is also prostituted (59.67).

We also learn something more about the management of sex laborers from this text (see also Cohen, this volume and Glazebrook 2011a). The freedwoman Nikarete appears to be a *pornoboskousa*. She keeps her girls with her at Corinth, where she runs a house of ill repute catering to her customers. It is possible that her ex-master, Charisios, gets some profit from the business (59.18). Nikarete herself possibly worked as a sex laborer before managing her own girls, since she knows the trade secrets and has a strong client base (59.18). The clients served by Nikarete's girls appear well to do and among the elite. The orator Lysias (59.21) and the wealthy aristocrat Sinos (59.24), for example, are named as lovers of Metaneira and Neaira respectively.³⁰ Athenian clients of Neaira are a poet named Xenokleides and an actor named Hipparchos (59.26). Nikarete expects these clients to cover the cost of expenses for the daily running of her household as opposed to a single fee for sex with one of her girls (59.29). Likely the costs included food and drink, which the clients might also enjoy at her establishment in Corinth. The clients also furnish the girls with gifts, of which Nikarete appears to keep tight control (59.21). She has much oversight and control of the girls themselves. When they work off site, Nikarete appears to go with them, accompanying them to symposia and to foreign cities, where

they were sometimes put up by clients or the wealthy friends of clients (59.21, 24). Nikarete thus has strict oversight of the treatment of her girls and is thus able to control access to them. Interestingly, although the girls are slaves, she pretends they are of free status so that she can charge higher prices, suggesting status, more than looks, affected prices (59.19). Nikarete sells the girls once just past their prime, likely in their late teens or early twenties, but when she is still able to make a profit from their sale (59.19).

The narratives on these women, especially Neaira, are complex and detailed. There are many questions left unanswered and some accusations left unsupported, making the historical accuracy of all details impossible to verify and thus their use as informative biographies suspect.³¹ The individual scenarios represented in these three speeches, however, each appear plausible: (1) a slave prostitute working for a female pimp; (2) a personal sex slave owned and shared by one or two wealthy men; (3) a freedwoman continuing to work as a prostitute upon gaining her freedom; (4) a freedwoman favoring two clients, who each support her; (5) an ex-slave and prostitute living with one man and children; (6) a prostitute or ex-prostitute trafficking other women and girls, even her own daughter; (7) the vulnerability of freed prostitutes even when working independently in elite circles; and, thus (8) the dependency of freed sex laborers on male clients as protectors. The texts attest to the use of child prostitutes and an elite culture that lavished gifts and money in support of the sex trade. The slave status and young age of prostitutes argue against any agency and autonomy in their sexual relations, but the texts do suggest that some girls might eventually achieve freedom and better their socio-economic position through the practice of prostitution. Upon freedom, women might continue to work in prostitution, form a long-term relationship with a single client and/or set up business managing slave prostitutes themselves, likely with their ex-owners supporting them financially and benefitting from this new business venture. Still, women managing prostitutes appear to have exercised the most independence and seem to have been able to make a profit doing so. Managing sex laborers was thus one way for women to earn a living and perhaps even improve their standard of living. What stands out is the variety of working arrangements for each sex laborer, who might start by working in a brothel, move to serving one or two clients, and, in the best case scenario, eventually work for herself and even manage other prostitutes. The experience of each sex laborer varied substantially as well, with some moving up the socio-economic ladder, others moving up and then falling back down as they age, and many never making it out of the brothel and slavery at all. There appears no

one model or trajectory for sexually trafficked women. Instability perhaps characterizes best the lives of prostitutes in classical Athens.

Prostitutes and gender

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, the context of the law courts cannot be ignored when looking at these texts. All three women are associated with the speaker's opponent and thus portrayed in the worst possible light as untrustworthy, greedy, licentious, and even impious. Their characterizations depend on negative female stereotypes and demonstrate how gender was used to construct the prostitute body. As mentioned earlier, Apollodoros (= [Demosthenes]) claims that Neaira was practicing prostitution well before puberty, an age even considered young for a Greek ([Demosthenes] 59.22), but the speaker ignores the fact that she is working out of compulsion and provides her licentiousness as the motivation instead.³² Apollodoros' comment that "she was already working with her body, though being rather young, since she had not reached puberty yet" implies that prostitutes were thought to have a particular sexual nature that predestined them for their profession.³³ Whereas males might engage in prostitution (Lysias 3), women who did the same took on the identity of prostitute. So while verbs of prostitution more commonly indicate a male's profession in ancient Athens (i.e., "he prostituted himself"), she is a *hetaira*, *pallakē*, *paidiskē*, or *pornē*, suggesting it is more than an activity for making a living—it is her identity.³⁴ The distinction in terminology for male and female prostitutes at Athens reinforces the attitude that women are prostitutes by nature and that being a prostitute is more than simply a way to make a living. The ancients, at least in the case of women, did not view prostitution as a trade, like today, but treated it as an identity.³⁵

These portraits of prostitutes, delivered as they are in a court of law to juries of up to 500 members, enforced particular behavior in women more generally. Speakers encourage the male jurors to compare and contrast the women in the speeches with their own female kin, by developing an opposition between the female prostitute and marriageable woman. Sexual virtue was the most important quality for female citizens in classical Athens and Greek culture more broadly. The Greeks judged women using concepts of *aidōs* (shame) and *sōphrosynē* (modesty). certain rules were to be followed when respectable women ventured into public. The more elite the woman, the more strongly such rules were in force. In Athens, this meant averting one's eyes in the presence of men, avoiding non-kin males completely, and wearing a veil. The prostitute was seen as engaging in

the polar opposites of such behavior.

Although differences between wives, sisters, daughters, and prostitutes may not have been apparent in everyday life in certain contexts, it is clear that differences between the women were exploited and emphasized in the Athenian law courts. [Demosthenes] 59, in fact, makes the famous statement “we have *hetairai* for pleasure, and *pallakai* for the daily services of our bodies, but wives, for the production of legitimate offspring and to have [a] reliable guardian of our household property” (Trans. Carey 1992: 81) that divides women into those available for sexual enjoyment and those available for the production of offspring. In the course of the rest of the speech, Apollodoros distinguishes between wives and daughters and the *sōphrōn* (modest) behavior required of these women (sexual virtue, prudence, and moderation) and the behavior which marks a woman, such as Neaira, as a prostitute: sexually available to anyone for pay, extravagant in her tastes, excessive in her behavior, and even arrogant.³⁶ He directly contrasts the two types of women by commenting that most *sōphrones* women (their mothers, wives, and daughters) will be offended if the jurors acquit Neaira and allow her to share in their privileges as citizen women (59.110). Likewise, the speaker of Isaeus 6 highlights Alke’s past as a prostitute, while making clear the virtue of his own female kin. Near the end of his speech, the speaker recounts how Alke dared to participate in the *Thesmophoria*, an all-female festival for Athenian wives only (6.48–50). He argues that her participation was an affront to all citizen women on account of her shameful life, not just her past servile status, and makes known that it resulted in some sort of decree of the Athenian council (see Wyse 1967: 538). The discussion associates a certain type of behavior with female citizenship and differentiates Alke from such behavior, linking her to shamelessness and daring as opposed to sexual virtue and modesty. Such examples reveal how the existence of prostitution and prostitutes could work as a form of social control on female sexual behavior more generally. A woman, the man in charge of her, or other female kin would pay close attention to her behavior so that she might not be labeled a prostitute. Such an identity was not simply an insult, but brought her status as wife and thus the legitimate status of her children into question. The speakers’ use of stereotypes also sheds doubt on the actual status and behavior of the women under scrutiny in their speeches.

Conclusion

The prostitute, especially among Greek writers, was sometimes

idealized and sometimes degraded. The portrayals of prostitutes in Greek oratory present plausible scenarios of prostitution, even if exaggerated for particular effect. They outline a variety of practices (working in a brothel, under control of a sex trafficker, owned by a female pimp, shared between two men, maintained by one man, and so on) and suggest that a single girl/woman might experience a variety of practices in her lifetime. Some women might even be able to change their socio-economic status for the better through prostitution by gaining their freedom, being supported as a longer-term partner, or even by trafficking other women. But prostitutes were also vulnerable as ex-slaves and as commodities. The negative portrayal of prostitutes as excessive, untrustworthy, and licentious reveals a double standard of sorts. While prostitution was accepted, those practicing prostitution might be devalued and denigrated. Women had to watch their behavior so as not to be confused with sex laborers. In Athens, it was easy to obscure the relationship between a male and female and suggest it was prostitution, since women lacked a public persona. If the behavior of a woman, however, equated her with prostitutes, it not only sullied her reputation, but also raised questions about the status of her children. Prostitution, unlike the Christian and modern context, was not a controversial issue in Athens, but clearly being a prostitute was in certain contexts problematic.

Notes

- 1 McClure 2003: 4–6, 167–169. Also see Gilhuly 2006 and Kurke 2002.
- 2 See Budin 2006, 2008; also Beard and Henderson 1998: 56–79.
- 3 Davidson 1998: 78. See also Kapparis 2011 on these and additional terms.
- 4 Cohen describes *hetairai* as “predominantly free” (2006: 105).
- 5 Budin 2003 esp. 156 and 158. See McClure 2003: 18–21. On *pallakē* as an uncommon and even antiquated concept by the classical period, see Lape 2002/2003: 124–127.
- 6 For a detailed discussion of the term and its origins, see Kurke 1999: 208–217.
- 7 See Kennedy 2015. For a recent discussions of status categories see Kamen 2013. On *habrosunē* more generally, see Kurke 1997, 1999.
- 8 Cf. Keuls 1985: 188–200 and Reinsberg 1989: 80–86, 88–89.
- 9 See McClure 2003: 11–18; Cohen 2006: 95–99. Also Glazebrook 2005.
- 10 In support of *megalomisthoi* see Cohen (2015). Herodotus (2.135) writes:

Rhodopis came to Egypt brought by Xantheus the Samian, but once arrived she was released from her profession for a lot of money by Kharaxos of Mytilenē, son of Skamandronymos, brother of Sappho the poetess. Thus Rhodopis was liberated, and she remained in Egypt and was so utterly charming that she acquired a huge fortune, such as it would be for Rhodopis . . . The *hetairai* in Naukratis are quite lovely, for the very

woman about whom this story is told became so famous that all the Greeks learned the name of Rhodopis. And after this in Naukratis it was the name “Arkhidikê” that became the subject of song throughout Greece, although less so than her more notorious companion. Kharaxos who freed Rhodopis went back home to Mytilenê, where Sappho mocked him severely in song.

(Trans. S. L. Budin)

- 11 See note 3 above.
- 12 On negative stereotypes of prostitutes, see Glazebrook 2012.
- 13 Antiphanes fr. 293 (K-A). Loomis 1998: 169 and 185. On prices in general, see Loomis 1998: 166–185 and Halperin 1990: 107–112.
- 14 For a detailed look at *porneia*, see Glazebrook 2011a.
- 15 The majority of scholars seem to accept this identification (see Lind 1988; Davidson 1998: 85; Fisher 2001: 261; Ault 2005: 149–150; Younger 2005: 27), but Knigge, the excavator, remains cautious, stating instead only that it contained prostitutes (Knigge 2005: 78). Another possible brothel from this period was found at Markopoulou during the construction of the Olympic hippodrome at Athens. DAI (Deutsche Archäologische Institut) may have found another brothel in the Kerameikos and are working towards its publication, but information is not available at this time.
- 16 Davidson 1998: 86–90; Knigge 2005: 49, 78. See also Ault 2016. On the difficulty in identifying brothels in the archaeological record, see Glazebrook 2016.
- 17 Knigge 1982: 153–170, 1991: 93. See further Glazebrook 2011a: 50 as well as note 50 (p. 58).
- 18 Starr 1978: 401–410; Davidson 1998: 80–82; also McClure 2003: 21–22. But note Goldman (2015), who argues that the *aulêtris* was primarily hired for her music and only secondarily a prostitute and so not regularly hired for the purpose of prostitution.
- 19 On the conflation of residences and businesses, see Tsakirgis 2005. On the lack of zoning for prostitution, see Glazebrook 2011a, 2011b.
- 20 On manumission of prostitutes, see Glazebrook 2014.
- 21 Davidson suggests that this relationship with Euktemon proves Alke was never a *pornē* in a *porneion* (1998: 332, n. 55), but the mistake is our assumption that brothels were unsanitary and for customers of low status. See Glazebrook 2011a.
- 22 The narrative goes on to argue that Alke controlled Euktemon with *pharmaka* or took advantage of his senility (6.21) and blames her for the reduction of his assets. She is clearly not popular with the family, and this attitude along with the motivation behind the narrative (an inheritance suit) affects the presentation of facts here.
- 23 On prostitution and the law in classical Athens, see Glazebrook 2011a, 2011b.
- 24 Hamel 2003 is useful on the social, political, and legal context of the speech, but takes too uncritical a reading of Neaira’s life, as is clear from the title, *Trying Neaira: The True Story of a Courtesan’s Scandalous Life in Ancient Greece*. See, in contrast, Glazebrook 2005, which focuses on the construction of her identity as a prostitute instead.
- 25 Metaneira appears to be initiated into the Lesser Mysteries (Kapparis 1999: 211–212). The Eleusinian Mysteries was a cult of the goddess Demeter and her daughter Persephone. Mystery cults differed from other ancient religious cults in

that they required initiation prior to participation in their secret rites.

Furthermore, anyone was eligible for initiation, regardless of status. See Parke 1977: 55–72 and also Dillon 2002: 183–208 on prostitute women and cult specifically.

- 26 Age of marriage of girls at Athens was very young, 14 according to Xenophon (*Oikonomikos* 7.5) and 15 according to Demosthenes (27.4 with 29.43). For Apollodoros to comment on Neaira's immaturity must indicate she is below the marriageable age of 14. We might thus estimate her between age 10 and 13 years old. For a timeline of Neaira's life, see Patterson 1994: 206, table 1 and Hamel 2003: xvii–xxi.
- 27 One mina equals 100 drachma. One drachma is recorded in the Erectheum building inscription as the daily pay of a skilled laborer (Lambert 2000), which, if we estimate that at about US\$50 today, puts the purchase price of Neaira at US\$150,000. See Kapparis 1999: 227 on the average price of slaves and the high price of sex slaves. Also see Loomis 1998: 184 on prices of prostitutes.
- 28 See also Lysias 3 and 4 for disputes over prostitutes making it to the law courts. Note that Lysias 3 centers on a male prostitute.
- 29 See Kapparis 1999: 261. On contracts of prostitution, see Cohen 2000a.
- 30 On the identity of Lysias with the orator and on Sinos, see Kapparis 1999: 211 and 216.
- 31 See Glazebrook 2005 and 2006 on the stereotypical features of the portraits, the importance of the context in examining these speeches and even the questioning of Neaira's status as a prostitute. On the methods of Greek rhetoric and persuasion more generally, see Kennedy 1963 and Carey 1994.
- 32 On the rhetorical aspects of this speech and the representation of Neaira and other women in Greek oratory, see Glazebrook 2005, 2006.
- 33 See Carey 1992: 97. Contra Kapparis 1999: 214–215, but note his translation, "Neaira here accompanied them, already working as a prostitute, though still too young, as she had not yet reached maturity."
- 34 McClure 2003: 15. But note the use of *pornos* at Xenophon *Memorabilia* 1.6.13, Aristophanes *Wealth*. 153–159, Aeschines 1.130. In each case, the term is the highest insult.
- 35 Lewis 2002: 99 points out the important distinction that "prostitution is a trade, not an identity." But the ancients, like many moderns still, see it as an identity.
- 36 Glazebrook 2006: 125–138. On the excess of prostitutes, see Herter 1960: 99.

References

- Ault, B. A. (2005) Housing the poor and homeless in Ancient Greece. In B. A. Ault and L. C. Nevett (eds) *Ancient Greek Houses and Households: Chronological, Regional, and Social Diversity*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 140–159.
- Ault, B. A. (2016) Building Z in the Athenian Kerameikos: House, tavern, inn, brothel? In A. Glazebrook and B. Tsakirgis (eds) *Houses of Ill-Repute: The Archaeology of Brothels, Houses and Taverns in the Greek World*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 75–102.

- Beard, M. and Henderson, J. (1998) With this body I thee worship: Sacred prostitution in Antiquity. In M. Wyke (ed.) *Gender and the Body in the Ancient Mediterranean*. (Gender & History, Special Edition). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Budin, S. L. (2003) *Pallakai*, prostitutes, and prophetesses. *Classical Philology* 98(2): 148–159.
- Budin, S. L. (2006) Sacred prostitution in the first person. In C. A. Faraone and L. McClure (eds) *Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 77–94.
- Budin, S. L. (2008) *The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Carey, C. (ed.) (1992) *Apollodoros against Neaira: Demosthenes 59*. Translated by C. Carey. Vol. 6. Greek Orators. Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips.
- Carey, C. (1994) Rhetorical means of persuasion. In I. Worthington (ed.) *Persuasion: Greek Rhetoric in Action*. Taylor & Francis Ebooks. London: Routledge, pp. 26–45.
- Cohen, E. E. (2000) Whoring under contract: The legal context of prostitution in fourth-century Athens. In V. J. Hunter and J. C. Edmondson (eds) *Law and Social Status in Classical Athens*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, E. E. (2006) Free and unfree sexual work: An economic analysis of Athenian prostitution. In C. A. Faraone and L. McClure (eds) *Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 195–224.
- Cohen, E. E. (2015) *Athenian Prostitution: The Business of Sex*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Davidson, J. N. (1998) *Courtesans and Fishcakes: The Consuming Passions of Classical Athens*. London: Fontana Press.
- Fisher, N. R. E. (ed.) (2001) *Aeschines: Against Timarchos*. Clarendon Ancient History Series. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Gilhuly, K. (2006) The phallic lesbian: Philosophy, comedy, and social inversion in Lucian's Dialogues of the Courtesans. In C. A. Faraone and L. K. McClure (eds) *Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 274–291.
- Glazebrook, A. (2005) The making of a prostitute: Apollodoros' portrait of Neaira. *Arethusa* 38(2): 161–187.
- Glazebrook, A. (2006) The bad girls of Athens: The image and function of Hetairai in judicial oratory. In C. A. Faraone and L. K. McClure (eds) *Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 125–138.

- Glazebrook, A. (2011a) Porneion: Prostitution in Athenian civic space. In A. Glazebrook and M. M. Henry (eds) *Greek Prostitutes in the Ancient Mediterranean 800 Bce – 200 ce*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 34–59.
- Glazebrook, A. (2011b) *Prostitution, A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Classical World*, edited by M. Golden and P. Toohey. Volume 1 of *A Cultural History of Sexuality*, edited by J. Peakman. Oxford, UK: Berg Publishing, pp. 145–168.
- Glazebrook, A. (2012) Prostitutes, plonk and play: Female banqueters on a red-figure psykter from the hermitage. *Classical World* 105(4): 497–524.
- Glazebrook, A. (2014) The erotics of manumission: Prostitutes and the $\pi\rho\alpha\iota\sigma\iota\varsigma$ ἐπ' ἐλευθερίᾳ EuGeStA. *Journal on Gender Studies in Antiquity* 4: 53–80.
- Glazebrook, A. (2016) Is there an archaeology of prostitution? In A. Glazebrook and B. Tsakirgis (eds) *Houses of Ill-Repute: The Archaeology of Brothels, Houses and Taverns in the Greek World*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 169–196.
- Goldman, M. L. (2015) Associating the Aulētris: Flute girls and prostitutes in the Classical Greek symposium. *Helios* 42: 29–60.
- Halperin, D. M. (1990) The democratic body: Prostitution and citizenship in Classical Athens. In *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality and Other Essays on Greek Love*. New York: Routledge, pp. 88–112.
- Hamel, D. (2003) *Trying Neaira: The True Story of a Courtesan's Scandalous Life in Ancient Greece*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Herter, H. (1960) Die Sociologie der Antiken Prostitution im Lichte des Leidnischen und Christ-Lichen Schrifttums. *Jarhbuch Für Antike Und Christentum* 3: 70–100.
- Kamen, D. (2013) *Status in Classical Athens*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Kapparis, K. A. (1999) *Apollodoros against Neaira [D.59]*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Kapparis, K. A. (2011) The terminology of prostitution in the Ancient Greek World. In A. Glazebrook and M. M. Henry (eds) *Greek Prostitutes in the Ancient Mediterranean 800 Bce – 200 ce*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 222–255.
- Kennedy, G. A. (1963) *The Art of Persuasion in Greece*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Kennedy R. F. (2015) Elite citizen women and the origins of the Hetaira in Classical Athens. *Helios* 42: 61–80.

- Keuls, E. C. (1985) *The Reign of the Phallus: Sexual Politics in Ancient Athens*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Knigge, U. (1982) O astēr tēs Aphroditēs. *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung* 97: 153–170.
- Knigge, U. (1991) *The Athenian Kerameikos*. Trans. J. Binder. The German Archaeological Institute in Athens. Athens, Greece: Krene Editions.
- Knigge, U. (1995) *Der Bau Z. Kerameikos, Ergebnisse der Ausgrabungen*. Bd. 17.1–2. Munich, Germany: Hirmer Verlag.
- Kurke, L. (1997) Inventing the “Hetaira”: Sex, politics, and discursive conflict in Archaic Greece. *Classical Antiquity* 16(1): 106–150.
- Kurke, L. (1999) *Coins, Bodies, Games, and Gold: The Politics of Meaning in Archaic Greece*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Kurke, L. (2002) Gender, politics, and subversion in the chreiai of Machon. *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 48: 20–65.
- Lambert, S. D. (2000) The Erechtheum workers of IG ii² 1654. *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 132: 157–160.
- Lape, S. (2002/2003) Solon and the institution of the “democratic” family form. *The Classical Journal* 98(2): 117–139.
- Lewis, S. (2002) *The Athenian Woman: An Iconographic Handbook*. London: Routledge.
- Lind, H. (1988) Ein Hetärenhaus am Heiligen Tor? Der Athener Bau Z und die bei Isiaos (6, 20 f.) erwähnte Synoikia Euktemons. *Museum Helveticum* 45: 158–169.
- Loomis, W. T. (1998) *Wages, Welfare Costs, and Inflation in Classical Athens*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- McClure, L. K. (2003) *Courtesans at Table: Gender and Greek Literary Culture in Athenaeus*. New York: Routledge.
- Patterson, C. (1994) The case against Neaira and the public ideology of the Athenian family. In A. L. Boegehold and A. C. Scafuro (eds) *Athenian Identity and Civic Ideology*. London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Reinsberg, C. (1989) *Ehe, Hetärentum und Knabenliebe im antiken Griechenland*. Munich, Germany: C. H. Beck.
- Strong, R. A. (1997) *The Most Shameful Practice: Temple Prostitution in the Ancient Greek World*. Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press.
- Tsakirgis, B. (2005) Living and working around the Athenian agora: A preliminary case study of three houses. In B. A. Ault and L. C. Nevett (eds) *Ancient Greek Houses and Households: Chronological, Regional, and Social Diversity*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.

- Wyse, W. (1967 [1904]) *The Speeches of Isaeus*. Hildesheim, Germany: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung.
- Younger, J. G. (2005) *Sex in the Ancient World from A to Z*. London: Routledge, The Ancient World from A to Z series.

THE ATHENIAN BUSINESSWOMAN

Edward E. Cohen

Many Athenian women participated in the cash economy of Classical Athens, sometimes working at mundane tasks for limited compensation, sometimes exercising control over sizeable assets, sometimes engaging in commercial transactions of significance. Some women soared financially, and their accomplishments (and their names) tend to be memorialized in our sources. The toil of anonymous female slaves, however, almost invariably underlay this success, for Athens was a “slave society.” Despite the ubiquitous presence of unfree individuals in virtually all human communities prior to the nineteenth century (Klees 1998: 1–18), Attica constitutes one of the world’s few attested true “slave economies” (those in which the contribution of a huge number of unfree persons to the totality of wealth production is so substantial that the society’s overall production, distribution, and consumption are highly dependent on slave labor: Nafissi 2004: 395–399). A striking counterpoint is provided by the widespread exploitation of female slaves in two important sectors—textile production and sexual commerce—areas in which Athenian businesswomen achieved substantial success.

In this chapter, I will first examine the nature of the sources from which we are able to write meaningfully of “the Athenian businesswoman”; then I will explore the societal values that facilitated women’s business activity at Athens; and finally I will discuss, in the context of Athenian slavery, individual businesswomen, their occupations, and their economic significance.

Disinterring “the Athenian businesswoman”

Both Athenian women and Athenian business until recently have been almost entirely absent from modern scholarly literature. Not until about 1980 did scholars of Athens commence the task “of recovering

historical women and engaging in feminist critique of male authors” (Masterson *et al.* 2015: 3). Similarly, modern historians of ancient Greece have long eschewed the mundane details of Athenian commerce and labor: “so long as classics is dominated by the concerns of liberal humanism, economic questions will be marginal” (Morris 2001: 14). Yet significant information concerning businesswomen is preserved in Athenian inscriptions, especially public records chiseled in stone, and in literary sources, including law-court presentations that deal with or allude to female business operators, especially the speeches entitled Demosthenes, *Against Neaira* and Hypereidês, *Against Athênogenês*, in which Athenian businesswomen hold central position. Females involved in sexual businesses—sometimes prostitutes, sometimes operators of meretricious businesses—appear in profusion in surviving comedies (and extracts therefrom), particularly the “situation comedies” of Menander.

Although multitudinous, these sources must be used with care because of the potential misdirection inherent in both principal classes of surviving literary evidence—comedic material (which seeks laughs rather than the transmission of reliable information) and forensic testimonia (which seek persuasion rather than factual truth). Although Athenian forensic addresses are rhetorical contrivances that virtually always present evidence tendentiously (and often dishonestly), the presuppositions underlying litigants’ claims are generally reliable: since forensic presentations were made to panels composed of hundreds of jurors—with persuasion the speaker’s dominant motive—the presence of a general phenomenon may be confirmed by a claim that presupposes such a phenomenon, even if we cannot establish (or strongly doubt) the truth of the speaker’s specific factual assertion (cf. E. Cohen 1990: 178, 186–90; Todd 1990; Millett 1991: 2, 2000: 25–26). When Apollodôros claims (at Demosthenes 59.18–22) that Nikaretê presented as her own offspring the child prostitutes whom she owned, because the “highest prices” might be obtained from customers desiring to have sex with young girls whom they believed to be the free offspring of the woman providing the children’s services, we may be unable to evaluate the true personal status of these prostitutes, or to confirm Nikaretê’s actual business practices, but we can safely conclude that pricing of sexual services did in fact vary in accordance with a prostitute’s perceived status and a customer’s psychological predispositions, and that (male) jurors would not categorically rule out, as inherently implausible, the existence of female entrepreneurs manipulating the pricing of sexual services.

The context of women's business activity

In Aristotle's words, a "monied mode of acquisition" had arisen in fourth-century Athens from the new dominance of economic activity by persons pursuing financial gain ("making money from one another"), who "converted every aspect of life into monetary considerations" (*Politics* 1256b40–41, 1258b1–2, 1258a12–14). This individualistic pursuit of profit reflected society's new functioning through the exchange of goods and services for money (Picard 2008: 147–151; Schaps 2008), a process superseding the prior system of household production/consumption supplemented by barter based on social and political relations, a transformation that produced a "city [that] lived entirely by cash transactions" (Humphreys 1978: 148). It is this "monetised and money-using economy of fourth-century Athens" (Shipton 2000: 14) that provides the context for our study of the Athenian businesswoman, whose existence and livelihood were facilitated—*mirabile dictu!*—by Attic concepts of manliness (*andreia*).

In Aristotle's words, "the nature of the free man prevents his living under the control of another" (*Rhetoric* 1367a33). But by tending to relegate "slavish" business pursuits to foreigners, women, and slaves, the Athenian conceptualization of *andreia* tended to deprive Athenian men of economic opportunity and business experience. According to Lykourgos and Hypereidês, real Athenian men had, from ancestral times, preferred a military-oriented and politically involved *andreia* to the acquisition of wealth (*ploutos*) (Lykourg. 1.108; Hyper. 6.19), valorizing leisurely involvement with cultural and social interests (Stocks 1936; De Ste. Croix 1981: 114–117; Fisher 1998: 84–86). Every aspect of business activity was seen as incompatible with this idealized manliness. In the utopian community sketched in *The Laws*, for example, Plato recognizes that both Greek men and women are capable of engaging in business activities, but forbids commercial pursuits only to the male citizen (919d3–e2; cf. 846d–847b). In fact, business at Athens was generally dominated not by individual males, but by the "household" (*oikos*, plural *oikoi*), an entity with which virtually all persons, both free and unfree, were affiliated (Aristot. *Pol.* 1253b6–7; Cox 1998: 130–167). Slaves are explicitly included by Aristotle as members of the *oikos*, along with husband, wife, and children (*Pol.* 1252b12–14, 1253b4). In concept, the *oikos* was an entity encompassing the physical attributes of a residence, the complement of members now (and/or in some cases previously) living in that residence, and the assets and business activities relating to those members. Although scholars often dismiss the Athenian *oikos* as "simply 'the private sphere' to which women's activities were

relegated” (Murnaghan 1988: 13; Foxhall 1994: 138, who disagrees with this tendency), the *oikos*—and not the male individual—was in reality the basic constituent element of Athenian society. Juridically, “the polis was an aggregation of *oikoi*” (Wolff 1944: 93), with a legal system based on “the rights of families as corporate groups” (Todd 1993: 206). “Since economic enterprises largely existed and were managed within the structure of households” (Foxhall 1994: 139), the “household” was “the basic economic unit of the polis” (Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 113; cf. Cox 1998: 13). Thus the *oikos* was the physical location of virtually all retail establishments, workshops, and craft and trade activities (Demosthenes 47.56; Menander *Samia* 234–236; Pollux 1.80; Nevett 1999: 66–67, 88; Jameson 2002: 168–169). Ownership of property effectively came within the control of the *oikos*, and production of income, within its activities (Cohen 2000: 40–43; Harris 2002: 81–83). Most assets—especially ancestral property (*patrôia*)—belonged to the various households, and as a result, the *oikos* was seen as the primary repository of wealth (Xenophôn *Symposion* 4.34; Foxhall 2013: 25). Yet within the *oikos* women generally occupied a central position.

Athenian businesswomen: callings, careers and transactions

According to Xenophôn, the wife bore primary responsibility for managing the household (*Economics* 7.35–43, 9.14–17). In fact, Iskhomakhos (Xenophôn’s ideal male household denizen) insists that even a young wife “must take responsibility for all household revenues and must control all household consumption and retention, and must take care that expenditures intended for a year are not spent in a month” (7.36). Similarly, Euripides claims that “women order households . . . in the absence of a woman not even the prosperous household is well provided for” (*Captive Melanippê*, Fr. 1 Diggle 1998, lines 9–11). Aristotle derides as “absurd” Plato’s suggestion that women and men, on the analogy of animal life, can do the same work: “human females, unlike their biological counterparts in lower orders, have households to run!” (*Republic* 451d ff.; *Pol.* 1264b4–6). Hence, the Athenian phenomenon (described by Aiskhinês [1.170]) of numerous naïve young men of wealth whose widowed mothers actively managed the family property. One such widow was Kleoboulê (mother of Demosthenes) who “remained in economic control” of her *oikos* for over a decade, directly “managing four talents” of assets, more than a million dollars (US), perhaps much more, on a “purchasing power parity” basis¹ (Foxhall 1996: 147; Dem. 27.40, 53,

55; 28.26, 33, 47–48). The widow of the Athenian tycoon Pasiôn, Arkhippê, likewise dominated her *oikos*: she was intimately conversant with all aspects of the family's banking business, allegedly even keeping the bank's records under her own control (Demosthenes 36.14, 18). Menander's fictional Krôbylê controls her *oikos*: mistress of land, building, "everything" (Fr. 296–97 [K–A]).

This combination of women's significance within the *oikos*, and that institution's commercial centrality within Athenian society explain a phenomenon which scholars of ancient Greece have long acknowledged but whose implications have been seldom explored: women's widespread involvement in business at Athens and their prominence in a broad variety of mercantile and professional métiers (Brock 1994; Acton 2014: 19). The *Phialai Exeleutherikai* tablets (inscriptions relating to silver bowls [*phialai*] dedicated by slaves or metics) attest to at least sixty-three separate callings participated in by women (Labarre 1998: 793; Meyer 2010: 81–146). Because craft and trade activity occurred almost entirely within the household, women were extensively involved in every aspect of Athenian manufacturing: "they made investment decisions, managed factories, made items for sale and often took those items to market" (Acton 2014: 274–275). Women worked as doctors and in other medical callings (Nutton 2012: 112–114). Thus an inscription on the tomb of Phanostratê memorializes her activity as both a doctor (*iatros*) and a midwife (*maia*) (IG II² 6873), the latter field attracting many women of "knowledge and experience" (Kennedy 2014: 140–145), including Phainaretê, mother of the famous Sokratês (Plato, *Theaitatos* 149a). (For at least one woman, the provision of pharmaceutical items proved fatal: Demosthenes 25.79 reports the execution of a female metic, Theôris, who provided drugs that apparently resulted in the death of an Athenian citizen [Collins 2000: 267–270].) Women were also deeply involved in the functioning of Athenian banks (Cohen 1992: 101–110; Thür 2001: 147–155). Females are attested as sesame-sellers (IG II² 1554.40, 1561.27), honey-sellers (IG II² 1570.73), and as sellers of frankincense (IG II² 1576, l. 17) and of salt (IG II² 12073). They even appear as creditors in real estate arrangements (Fine 1951: n. 28; Finley 1985 [1951]: 114A), and as lenders in other financial transactions (Aristophanes, *Thesmophoriazousai* 839–845; Dem. 41.7–9, 21; Sealey 1990: 36–40). The Eleusinian treasurers are recorded as having dealt directly with at least two women (IG II² 1672, ll. 64, 71), purchasing from one of them, a certain Artemis of Piraeus, reeds for building materials having a value of at least 70 *drachmas* (although these same records [IG II² 1672–1673] reveal scores of transactions in which the named principals are men). Female traders worked as

dealers in a broad spectrum of goods, especially foods and commodities for domestic use (Schaps 1979: 61–63, 135–137; Brock 1994). Women sold bread (Aristoph. *Frogs* 857–858, *Lysistrata* 458; Hermippos *Artopolides* Frs. 7–12 [K-A]), other prepared foods (Aristoph. *Lys.* 457, 562, *Wealth* 427–428), meal and seed (Pollux 6.37; IG II² 1554.40; Diogenes Laertius 7.168; Aristoph. *Lys.* 457), figs (Aristoph. *Lys.* 564; Poll. 7.198), herbs (Aristoph. *Akharnians* 478, *Thesm.* 387, 456, *Frogs* 840), and beans (IG II² 1558.67). They traded in clothing (IG II² 1672.70–71, 11254; Apollodoros Karystios Fr. 30[K-A]); garlands (Aristotle *Athenian Constitution* 14.4; Aristoph. *Thesm.* 446–458); and ribbons (Eupolis, Fr. 262 [K-A]); Dem. 57.31, 35). Women's presence in Attica's retail markets as traders and as salespersons was so widespread that Lacey concluded that women "seem to have had, if not a monopoly, at least a privileged position in the market-place" (Lacey 1968: 171): in fact, a law prohibiting insults targeting citizens working in the Agora applied explicitly to contumely directed toward female as well as male citizens (Demosthenes 57.30).

Despite this profusion of evidence for women's involvement in commerce, many scholars still have posited *kyrieia*—the requirement that "an Athenian woman had to be represented in legal transactions by a male relative acting as her guardian (*kyrios*)" (Todd 1993: 383)—as a major barrier to women's importance, or even involvement, in Athenian business life. But in reality, by the fourth century BCE in actual practice (if not initially in legal theory), women were often recognized as the true owners of property in their possession (Cohen 1992: 79, 107–109). Furthermore, some women involved in commerce are known to have been *kyria heautês* ("self-representative," that is, not dependent for legal purposes on a male *kyrios*: Menander, *Perikeiromenê* 497; Xenophôn, *Memorabilia* 3.11; Dem. 59. 45–46; Antiphanês Fr. 210 [K-A]; Modrzejewski 1983: 52–53). In addition, Athenian law explicitly recognized women's right to contract, without male representation, in an unlimited number of individual transactions, provided that no single transaction exceeded the value of one *medimnos* of barley (often about US\$300 in purchasing power equivalence, but at times as much as \$1,500 to \$2,000), an amount more than sufficient to meet the normal cost of single retail transactions.

Furthermore, the frequent conduct of business through the *oikos* itself largely insured the availability, if needed, of a male representative (the *kyrios*, or public agent of the *oikos*)—no matter how unimportant the man's role might be in the general functioning of a household-related business (*ergasia*). Although Xenophôn claims that within *oikoi*, men and women make similar economic

contributions (*Oik.* 3.15)—the men “generally” being more responsible for the production of income, and the women for expenditures—in the most detailed description of an actual business functioning within an *oikos* (the textile operations of Aristarkhos and his female relatives), Xenophôn portrays the senior male as burdened by the knowledge that he is the only member of the family “eating but not contributing” (*Memorabilia* 2.7.12). The often covert economic importance of an otherwise unsung wife is startlingly revealed in a humorous passage of Lysias. Hermaios the “perfume merchant” retained this epithet only so long as he held his wife’s affection: once Aiskhinês the Sokratic won the heart of Hermaios’ mature wife, Aiskhinês, formerly a peddler, now became the new “perfume merchant” (and the titular possessor of “Hermaios” property). The former “perfume merchant,” and now-cuckolded husband, entered the ranks of the newly impoverished (Lys. Fr. 1.5 [Carey]).

Yet, despite this position of the senior male as the “public face” of family business activity, inscriptional evidence still occasionally records both husband and wife, or mother and son, as jointly active in a trade or business. Thus Midas and Sotêris work together as sellers of sesame (IG II² 1561, at lines 22–30). Artemis the gilder and Dionysios the helmet-maker practice symbiotic trades—apparently in the same shop (S. I. G.³ 1177 = IG III² App. 69). Euxitheos, the speaker of Demosthenes 57, acknowledges that he works together with his mother selling ribbons (Dem. 57.31). Stephanos and Neaira allegedly function together in the household-oriented prostitutional business described in Demosthenes 59.

Detailed and contextualized information about the operation of Athenian businesses has survived only for a few métiers—including perfumery, finance, wool-working, and commercial sex—but in all of these areas, women are known to have been significantly active.

Scents and cosmetics

A businesswoman, Antigona, plays a major role in the commercial dispute chronicled in Hypereidês’ *Against Athênogenês* (delivered between 330 and 324).² This case arises from the only domestic Athenian business “deal” now known in detail—the purchase and sale for the significant sum of 40 *mnai* (several hundred thousand US dollars) of a retail perfume business dealing in scents and cosmetics owned by an Egyptian male and operated by a slave and his sons. (As foreigner and slaves, these males were conceived of as more or less feminine under Athenian concepts of *andreia*.³) Antigona is charged in

court with conceiving of, and successfully participating in the execution of, a complex plan to defraud the purchaser, Epikratês (a male Athenian). Antigona (according to Epikratês) was the operator of a commercial sex business, but in this transaction she was working effectively as a business broker, bringing the two parties together, bridging their differences by serving as the intermediary orchestrating their negotiations, and after narrowing the differences between the two, finally bringing buyer and seller together for completion of the transaction pursuant to her instructions. For these services, Antigona received a fee of 300 drachmas (perhaps \$15,000 to \$30,000). A female agent's direction of a transaction relating to perfumes should not be surprising—given women's dominant position in the commercial provision of scents and cosmetics. Female perfume-sellers are well attested (IG II² 1576.17; SEG 25.180.34; Aristoph. *Ekklesiiazousai* 841), and a red-figure ceramic storage jar records what appear to be two women engaged in an actual sale of fragrances in the market-place (ARV 596.1, Bern 12227; cf. Rotroff and Lamberton 2006). A law of Solôn purportedly forbade men to engage in the retail sale of perfume (Athênaios 612a2–6), and Pherekratês could not even conceive of a male personally involved in the retail offering of fragrances in the *agora* (neither of women working as butchers or fish-cutters) (Athên. 612b2–3, explaining Pher. Fr. 70 [K-A]). Although this alleged female monopoly may not have been absolutely true (see, for example, IG II² 1558.37), “it may well reflect popular perceptions” (Brock 1994: 340).

Money and banking

Functioning within a legal system that did not recognize businesses as autonomous persons for juridical purposes, the Athenian bank (*trapeza*) was not an “institution,” but an intensely personalized “operation” (*ergasia*) conducted by individuals having considerable skill in finance (Cohen 1992: 111–189). On the death of its proprietor, control of a banking business was routinely left not to a male descendant, but to the proprietor's widow and a male slave of significant banking skill and experience—who were then joined in marriage pursuant to the deceased proprietor's direction (Dem. 36.29, specifying a number of important examples and noting the prevalence of this practice not only in Athens but also outside Attica). Although the pattern was somewhat surprising even to Athenian citizens (Dem. 36.30), and has been largely ignored by modern scholarship, this combination of wife and slave was a natural response to the traditional male citizen disdain for commerce and to the high skills and experience required to sustain a solvent *trapeza*. In the case of

Athens' dominant bank, that of Pasiôn, the only *trapeza* whose operations and ownership are known in detail over a substantial period (Dem. 36, 45, 46, 49, 50, 59; Isokratēs 17), the banker's widow, Arkhippê, had detailed knowledge of its complex operations. The extent to which Pasiôn's personal monies were utilized to fund loans, the use by the bank of proprietor's "capital" (*aphormê*), the legal arrangements under which the bank was leased during Pasiôn's lifetime, the terms of rental to successor lessees after his death—"all this" Arkhippê was knowledgeable about, "with specificity" (Dem. 36.14). Indeed, she had such control over the bank's records that she was even accused of having destroyed them to prevent development of legal claims against Pasiôn's successor, her second husband, Phormiôn (Dem. 36.18).

It appears to have been commonplace for women to possess knowledge of their male relatives' business and lending practices, and to act on this knowledge. The wife of Diodotos, for example, was familiar with his financial resources and dealings (Lysias 32.5), and after his death was able to produce documentary proof (*grammata*) of her husband's investment of 7 talents and 40 *mnai* in maritime loans—despite her own father's efforts to purloin these records (ibid., §§7, 14). At the time of her spouse's passing, she personally possessed the considerable sum of at least 2,000 drachmas and 30 staters (ibid., §15), and she exhibited detailed knowledge of Diodotos' financial affairs while persuasively refuting allegations concerning his estate (§§15–18). Similarly, in a complex case involving substantial financial assets, largely clandestine (*aphanês ousia*), the defendants insist that it was, *inter alia*, the death of the plaintiffs' mother, "who was knowledgeable of all these matters," that permitted the plaintiffs to proceed with their improper claims (Dem. 38.6). And when creditors went to a debtor's farm in an attempt to seize his property while he was absent, his wife was able to reveal to them that their efforts were futile since the funds owed were on deposit "at the bank" (Dem. 47.57).

Women even participated in bank-related matters independent of a familial role. In one of the few instances in which information has survived regarding the circumstances that generated a specific bank deposit, it is a woman, Antigona, who induces a would-be business purchaser to marshal the substantial funds, 40 *mnai*, to be deposited in a *trapeza* to effectuate a sizeable purchase (Hypereidês *Against Athênogenês* §§4–5).

In many historically attested societies, and in virtually all contemporary communities, the sale of sex has been largely a phenomenon in which female prostitutes, working for men, service male customers. But at Athens women generally appear to have been dominant in the ownership and operation of businesses offering women's sexual services (Glazebrook 2011: 50–52; see also Glazebrook, this volume). This preeminence had considerable economic significance, for at Athens prostitution was both lawful (MacDowell 2005: 85; Lanni 2010: 55) and pervasive (Xen. *Mem.* 2.2.4: prostitutes available everywhere; cf. Theopompos of Chios [FGrH 115 F213]), and while male prostitutes were not rare (Andokides 1.100; Eupolis Fr. 247 [K-A]; cf. Halperin 1990: 90), female sex-workers are believed to have been far more numerous (Davidson 1997: 77; Skinner 2005: 98; Goldhill 2015: 179). Indeed, some scholars assume that a majority of free non-citizen women resident at Athens “of whom we have knowledge worked as prostitutes” (Kennedy 2014: 124, who disputes this assumption).

Athenian aversion to the dependence inherent in salaried employment did mean that providing sex in brothels was appropriate only for slaves. Free female prostitutes, however, often were self-employed, living and working without male infringement on their compensation or business activity (Cohen 2006, 2015, [chapters 2 and 5](#)). Athenian literary sources recurrently chronicle prostitutes who have achieved extraordinary wealth and high income—the so-called “big earners” (*megalomisthoi*), “the wealthy, famous hetaeras of the law courts and the comic stage” (McClure 2003: 48; cf. Klees 1998: 147, n. 16; Lentakis 1999: 146, 165). But for some scholars, the recurring allusions to sophisticated and successful *hetairai*, and the stories illustrating their wit and prosperity, are deleterious myth and false romanticization (Richlin 2015 [03.04]: 3–4): the “refined hetaira” is “a fabrication of the male mind” (Keuls 1985: 199), and the Athenian courtesan (*hetaira*) is “a socially marginal figure” recreated as a cultural icon by the “representational modes and textual strategies” of male commentators in antiquity (McClure 2003: 3).

In any case, some Athenian prostitutes, according to Alexis, after achieving some personal success, did move on to acquire younger women, new to the profession (prostitution as a *tekhnê*, Dem. 59.18), whom they might refashion for their own, elevated profit (*kerdos*) (Fr. 103 [K-A]). These female entrepreneurs became, in Athênaios' phrase, “the ladies who run the houses” (568d). Antigona, the business advisor cited earlier, receives a substantial commission and earmarks the money for the purchase of yet another female servant—an appropriate investment for a woman allegedly a former *hetaira* now

operating her own prostitutional business (Hyper. *Ath.* §§2–3, 18). Theodotê, a woman portrayed as having become wealthy because of her penchant for sleeping with “men who are persuasive,” commands a stable of comely and provocatively attired young women (Xen. *Mem.* 3.11.4–5). Isaios alludes to several women who operated brothels in Athens (6.18, 21) and describes with particularity a female entrepreneur who ran a house (*synoikia*) in the Piraeus, where she maintained a number of slave girls (6.19). Aspasia, linked to the Athenian political leader, Periklês, was allegedly the owner of large numbers of prostitutes (Athên. 569f7–9). Masurios charges Sôkratês with consorting with Aspasia’s sex-workers at her brothels (Athên. 220e), and Aristophanês asserts, humorously, that the abduction of two of Aspasia’s whores was the proximate cause of the Peloponnesian War (*Akharnians* 524–529). Although these particular claims are, of course, not universally accepted,⁴ they do illustrate the connection, in popular imagination, between meretricious commerce and female entrepreneurship. Indeed, Aristophanes’ portrayal of Lysistrata’s erotic guidance of the play’s younger women in withholding sex from Athenian men has been likened to the control exercised over female sex-workers by senior women operating Athenian sexual businesses (Faraone 2006: 221–222; see also Henderson 2002).

Textiles

Wool-working—“the characteristic area of feminine expertise normally cited by ancient authors” (Brock 1994: 338)—was entirely dependent on female labor (Faraguna 1999: 70; Lewis 2002: 62–65; Wrenhaven 2009: 371). (Acton points out, however, the existence of specialist male tailors and “celebrated male weavers” (Acton 2014: 154–55).) Although the actual general production and servicing of textiles were almost wholly the work of enslaved women, many free females were skilled in this craft, and often supervised or even worked along with their slaves (Aristoph. *Frogs* 1349–1351, *Lys.* 519–520, 536–537, 728–730, *Clouds* 53–55; Plato *Rep.* 455c; Xen. *Econ.* 7.6, 21, 36; Plutarch. *Moralia* 830c). Although much production clearly was intended for internal use by the *oikos* that made the goods, the widespread manufacture of textiles for cash sale is suggested by finds of loom-weights and other durable textile production equipment in single locations at Athens in large amounts appropriate only for use by massive numbers of textile workers (Knigge 2005: 201–208; Tsakirgis 2016). Moreover, Carr (1999: 163–167) has shown that the extensive labor required to produce even simple items of clothing would have forced many Greek households to acquire textile products from sources outside their own *oikos*. Finally, the structure of the Athenian

slave economy—with large numbers of unfree persons having excess available time—meant that slave-owners' labor cost for producing textiles for cash sale was effectively non-existent: many female slaves simply added these duties to their other work obligations.

Working at home: sex and weaving

Even the best-educated and most highly skilled Athenian slaves often performed multiple tasks. Slaves who were skilled musicians frequently combined the provision of entertainment with the practice of prostitution (Omitowaju 1997: 21–22, n. 46; Coccagna 2011: 119, n. 3). Domestic servants often worked at both household tasks and commercial pursuits (Garlan 1988: 62; Jameson 2002: 168–170). Even slaves working as doctors or doctors' assistants are known to have devoted part of their time to household duties (Kudlien 1968; Joly 1969; Garlan 1988: 68).

This pattern of multiple tasking provides the context for a division of labor in which some female slaves worked as both prostitutes and wool-workers.⁵ Reflecting such factors as slaves' personal characteristics, owners' economic situation, and numerous other elements of chance and opportunity, the actual work assignments of unfree persons would have varied greatly. Many brothel prostitutes would likely have had no involvement in textile work, and many wool-workers, no involvement in commercial sex—but substantial evidence suggests that numerous female slaves functioned both as wool-workers and as sex-workers (Davidson 1997: 89; Neils 2000). This combination of tasks was in fact consonant with the traditional Athenian association of wool-working and feminine sexuality: “the connection between a girl's attaining sexuality maturity (and) acquiring the prerequisite skill in wool-working” (Sebesta 2002: 126) was exemplified by the important Athenian rite of the *arrhêphoroi*, for example, in which selected young girls nearing puberty were secluded on the Akropolis, taught the wool-working skills needed to weave the elaborate *peplos* presented each year to Athena, and then sent on a journey to a temple of Aphroditê carrying baskets of sexual significance—biscuits shaped like phalluses and snakes! (Aristoph. *Lys.* 641–647, Harp. s.v. *arrhêphor*). In turn, Athena (as goddess of female crafts) joined Aphroditê in receiving the real-life offerings of Athenian prostitutes (Harris 1995: 244–249)—and was portrayed in literature as the recipient of dedications by wool-workers who were also working or hoped to work as prostitutes. Attic pottery may have reinforced this linkage between wool-working and sexual commerce through its frequent presentations of Aphrodite's gestures of spinning

and of her elaborate headdress and embroidered bust ornament (Fischer 2013).

Surviving Athenian vases offer a number of scenes linking female erotic and textile labor, including depictions of young men bringing gifts or money-bags to women working with wool (ARV² 101.3; ARV² 557.123; ARV² 795.100; Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, F 2254; Heidelberg 64/5; ARV² 276.70) and scenes of women with names appropriate to prostitutes (Aphrodisia and Obolê) putting aside their wool while male customers approach or wait (Reinsberg 1993: 122–125; Sutton 2004: 333–337). A water-jar depicts a naked woman spinning wool before a clothed seated woman, “clearly the madam who forces her *pornai* to work during the off hours” (Neils 2000: 209). Strikingly, a number of ceramic vessels portray woven workbaskets “of the type often depicted in wool-working scenes” hanging on brothel walls, again “strongly suggest(ing)” the connection between wool-working and commercial sex (Wrenhaven 2009: 375; see also Gilhuly 2009: 161). So pervasive is the fusion on Greek vases of wool-work and monetary eroticism that for many art historians “spinning and textile activity have become synonymous with prostitution” (Ferrari 2002: 13). And beyond ceramic representation, material culture provides the evidence of more than 100 loom-weights found (along with hundreds of drinking vessels) in virtually every room in the classical levels of a labyrinthine building that has been identified as a brothel (*porneion*) (Glazebrook 2011: 39)—physical evidence of “courtesans who attended both to the loom and to the guests” (Knigge 1991: 93)—and generated substantial profits for the households dominated by Athens’ businesswomen.

Notes

- 1 The Athenian *drachma* was divided into 6 *obols*. 100 drachmas equalled a *mina*; 6,000 drachmas, a talent. In the context of its purchasing power at Athens (approximately a day’s labor by a not unskilled individual: see E. Cohen 1992: 22, n. 92), the *drachma* might thus be valued at \$50–\$100—although even this conversion must be adjusted for variations in labor costs and purchasing power in individual modern countries, changing from modern day to day.
- 2 On this forensic presentation, see Scafuro 1997: 61–64; Lanni 2004: 163–164; Zelnick-Abramovitz 2005: 217–218, 220.
- 3 Athenian male citizens were “perpetually on the superordinate side of a series of hierarchical and roughly congruent distinctions in status: master vs. slave, free vs. unfree . . . citizen vs. non-citizen, man vs. woman” (Halperin 1990: 48).
- 4 MacDowell finds the Aristophanic treatment of the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War “not inconsistent with the account given by Thucydides; it is not illogical or incredible; and I see no reason why it should not be essentially true” (MacDowell 1995: 66; cf. 187–88). Fisher disagrees (1993: 37, 46, n. 30).

See also Carey 1993: 252–253; Henderson 2014: 183.

- 5 In the modern world, prostitution is often a part-time pursuit: “in few cases are women and men engaged full-time . . . sex work is commonly just one of the multiple activities employed for generating income” (Kempadoo 1998: 3–4).

References

- Acton, P. (2014) *Poiesis: Manufacturing in Classical Athens*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Brock, R. (1994) The labour of women in Classical Athens. *Classical Quarterly* 44: 336–346.
- Carey, C. (1993) The purpose of Aristophanes’ *Acharnians*. *Rheinisches Museum* 136: 254–263.
- Carr, K. (1999) Women’s work: Spinning and weaving in the Greek Home. In D. Cardon and M. Fougere (eds) *Archéologie des textiles des origines au Vème siècle*. Montagnac, France: Editions Monique Mergoïl, pp. 163–166.
- Coccagna, H. (2011) Embodying sympotic pleasure: A visual pun on the body of an *Aulêtristria*. In A. Glazebrook and M. Henry (eds) *Greek Prostitutes in the Ancient Mediterranean, 800 Bce–200 ce*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 106–121.
- Cohen, E. (1990) Commercial lending by Athenian banks: Cliometric fallacies and forensic methodology. *Classical Philology* 85: 177–190.
- Cohen, E. (1992) *Athenian Economy and Society: A Banking Perspective*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Cohen, E. (2000) *The Athenian Nation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Cohen, E. (2006) Free and unfree sexual work. In C. Faraone and L. McClure (eds) *Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 95–124.
- Cohen, E. (2015) *Athenian Prostitution: The Business of Sex*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Collins, D. (2000) The trial of Theoris of Lemnos: A 4th century witch or folk healer? *Western Folklore* 59: 251–278.
- Cox, C. (1998) *Household Interests: Property, Marriage Strategies, and Family Dynamics in Ancient Athens*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Davidson, J. (1997) *Courtesans and Fishcakes: The Consuming Passions of Classical Athens*. London: HarperCollins.
- De Ste. Croix, G. (1981) *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World*. London: Duckworth.
- Diggle, J. ed. (1998) *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragments Selecta*. Oxford,

- UK: Oxford University Press.
- Faraguna, M. (1999) Aspetti della schiavitù domestica femminile in Attica tra oratoria ed epigrafia. In F. Merola and A. Storchi Marino (eds) *Femmes-esclaves: modèles d'interprétation anthropologique, économique, juridique*. (Atti del XXI Colloquio internazionale del G. I. R. E. A.). Naples, Italy: Jovene Editore, pp. 57–79.
- Faraone, C. (2006) Priestess and courtesan: The ambivalence of female leadership in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*. In C. Faraone and L. McClure (eds) *Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 207–223.
- Ferrari, G. (2002) *Figures of Speech: Men and Maidens in Ancient Greece*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Fine, J. (1951) *Horoï. Studies in Mortgage, Real Security, and Land Tenure in Ancient Athens*. *Hesperia*, Suppl. 9. Princeton, NJ: J. H. Furst Co.
- Finley, M. (1985 [1951]) *Studies in Land and Credit in Ancient Athens*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.
- Fischer, M. (2013) Ancient Greek prostitutes and the textile industry in attic vase-painting ca. 550–450 B.C.E. *Classical World* 106: 219–259.
- Fisher, N. (1993) Multiple personalities and Dionysiac festivals: Dicaeopolis in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*. *Greece and Rome* 41: 31–47.
- Fisher, N. (1998) Violence, masculinity and the law in Athens. In L. Foxhall and J. Salmon (eds) *When Men Were Men: Masculinity, Power and Identity in Classical Antiquity*. London: Routledge, pp. 68–97.
- Foxhall, L. (1994) Pandora unbound: A feminist critique of Foucault's *History of Sexuality*. In A. Cornwall and N. Lindisturre (eds) *Dislocating Masculinity: Comparative Ethnographies*. London: Routledge, pp. 133–146.
- Foxhall, L. (1996) The law and the lady. In L. Foxhall and A. Lewis (eds) *Greek Law in Its Political Setting*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 133–152.
- Foxhall, L. (2013) *Studying Gender in Classical Antiquity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Garlan, Y. (1988) *Slavery in Ancient Greece*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Gilhuly, C. (2009) *The Feminine Matrix of Sex and Gender in Classical Athens*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Glazebrook, A. (2011) *Porneion*. In A. Glazebrook and M. Henry (eds) *Greek Prostitutes in the Ancient Mediterranean, 800 Bce–200 ce*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 34–59.

- Goldhill, S. (2015) Is there a history of prostitution? In M. Masterson, N. Rabinowitz and J. Robson (eds) *Sex in Antiquity: Exploring Gender and Sexuality in the Ancient World*, London: Routledge, pp. 179–197.
- Halperin, D. (1990) *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality and Other Essays on Greek Love*. New York: Routledge.
- Harris, D. (1995) *The Treasures of the Parthenon and Erechtheion*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Harris, E. (2002) Workshop, marketplace and household: The nature of technical specialization in Classical Athens and its influence on economy and society. In P. Cartledge, E. Cohen and L. Foxhall (eds) *Money, Labour and Land: Approaches to the Economies of Ancient Greece*. London: Routledge, pp. 67–99.
- Henderson, J. (2002) Strumpets on stage: The early comic hetaera. *Dionisio* 1: 78–87.
- Henderson, J. (2014) Comedy in the fourth century II: Politis and domesticity. In M. Fontaine and A. Scafuro (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Greek and Roman Comedy*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 181–198.
- Humphreys, S. (1978) *Anthropology and the Greeks*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Jameson, M. (2002) On Paul Cartledge, “The political economy of Greek slavery”. In P. Cartledge, E. Cohen and L. Foxhall (eds) *Money, Labour and Land: Approaches to the Economies of Ancient Greece*. London: Routledge, pp. 156–166.
- Joly, R. (1969) Esclaves et médecins dans la Grèce antique. *Sudhoffs Archiv* 53: 1–14.
- Kempadoo, K. (1998) Globalizing sex workers’ rights. In K. Kempadoo and J. Doezema (eds) *Global Sex Workers: Rights, Resistance, and Redefinition*. New York: Routledge, pp. 1–28.
- Kennedy, R. (2014) *Immigrant Women in Athens: Gender, Ethnicity, and Citizenship in the Classical City*. New York: Routledge.
- Keuls, E. (1985) *The Reign of the Phallus: Sexual Politics in Ancient Athens*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Klees, H. (1998) *Sklavenleben im klassischen Griechenland* (H. Bellen (ed.) Vol. 30 of *Forschungen zur antiken Sklaverei*). Stuttgart, Germany: Franz Steiner Verlag.
- Knigge, U. (1991) *The Athenian Kerameikos* (tr. of *Der Kerameikos von Athens*, 1988). Berlin: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.
- Knigge, U. (2005) *Der Bau Z. Kerameikos* 17, pts. 1–2. Munich, Germany: Hirmer Verlag.
- Kudlien, F. (1968) *Die Sklaven in der griechischen Medezin der klassischen und hellenistischen Zeit*. Stuttgart, Germany: Franz Steiner

- Verlag.
- Labarre, G. (1998) Les metiers du textile en Grèce ancienne. *Topoi* 8: 791–814.
- Lacey, W. (1968) *The Family in Classical Greece*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Lanni, A. (2004) Arguing from precedent: Modern perspectives on Athenian practice. In E. Harris and L. Rubinstein (eds) *The Law and the Courts in Ancient Greece*. London: Duckworth, pp. 156–171.
- Lanni, A. (2010) The expressive effect of the Athenian prostitution laws. *Classical Antiquity* 29: 45–67.
- Lentakis, A. (1999) *Oi Etaires* Vol. 4 of *O erôtas stin Arkhaia Ellada*. Athens, Greece: Ekdoseis Kastaniotis.
- Lewis, S. (2002) *The Athenian Woman: An Iconographic Handbook*. London: Routledge.
- MacDowell, D. (1995) *Aristophanes and Athens*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- MacDowell, D. (2005) The Athenian procedure of Dokimasia of orators. In R. Wallace and M. Gagarin (eds) *Symposion 2001*. Vienna, Austria: Verlag der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, pp. 79–87.
- Masterson, M., Rabinowitz, N. and Robson, J. (2015) Introduction. In M. Masterson, N. Rabinowitz and J. Robson (eds) *Sex in Antiquity: Exploring Gender and Sexuality in the Ancient World*. London: Routledge, pp. 1–12.
- McClure, L. (2003) *Courtesans at Table: Gender and Greek Literary Culture in Athenaeus*. London: Routledge, pp. 1–12.
- Meyer, E. (2010) *Metics and the Athenian Phialai-Inscriptions*. Stuttgart, Germany: Franz Steiner Verlag.
- Millett, P. (1991) *Lending and Borrowing in Ancient Athens*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Millett, P. (2000) The economy. In R. Osborne (ed.) *Classical Greece*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 23–51.
- Modrzejewski, J. (1983) La structure juridique du mariage grec. In P. Dimakis (ed.) *Symposion 1979*. Cologne, Germany: Böhlau Verlag, pp. 39–71.
- Morris, I. (2001) Hard surfaces. In P. Cartledge, E. Cohen and L. Foxhall (eds) *Money, Labour and Land: Approaches to the Economies of Ancient Greece*. London: Routledge, pp. 8–43.
- Murnaghan, S. (1988) How a woman can be more like a man: The dialogue between Ischomachus and his wife in Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*. *Helios* 15: 9–22.

- Nafissi, M. (2004) Class, embeddedness, and the primitive modernity of Ancient Athens. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 46(2): 378–410.
- Neils, J. (2000) Others within the other: An intimate look at Hetairai and Maenads. In B. Cohen (ed.) *Not the Classical Ideal: Athens and the Construction of the Other in Greek Art*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 203–226.
- Nevett, L. (1999) *House and Society in the Ancient Greek World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Nutton, V. (2012) *Ancient Medicine*. Oxford, UK: Routledge.
- Omitowoju, R. (1997) Regulating rape: Soap operas and self-interest in the Athenian courts. In S. Deacy and K. Pierce (eds) *Rape in Antiquity: Sexual Violence in the Greek and Roman Worlds*. London, Duckworth, pp. 1–24.
- Picard, O. (2008) Le système athénien. In O. Picard (ed.) *Économies et sociétés en Grèce ancienne (478–88 av. J.-C.)*. Paris: Editions Sedes, pp. 111–159.
- Rahe, P. (1994 [1992]) *Republics Ancient and Modern: Classical Republicanism and American Revolution*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Reinsberg, C. (1993) *Ehe, Hetärentum und Knabenliebe im antiken Griechenland*. Munich, Germany: C. H. Beck.
- Richlin, A. (2015) Review of J. Robson, *Sex and Sexuality in Classical Athens*. In *Classical Journal Online*, 2015.03.04: 1–5.
- Rotroff, S. and Lamberton, R. (2006) *Women in the Athenian Agora*. Princeton, NJ: American School of Classical Studies at Athens.
- Scafuro, A. (1997) *The Forensic Stage: Settling Disputes in Graeco-Roman New Comedy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Schaps, D. (1979) *Economic Rights of Women in Ancient Greece*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.
- Schaps, D. (2008) What was money in Ancient Greece? In W. Harris (ed.) *The Monetary Systems of the Greeks and Romans*. Proceedings of the center for the Ancient Mediterranean, Columbia University. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 38–48.
- Sealey, R. (1990) *Women and Law in Classical Greece*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Sebesta, J. (2002). Visions of gleaming textiles and a clay core: Textiles, Greek women, and Pandora. In L. Llewellyn-Jones (ed.) *Women's Dress in the Ancient Greek World*. Swansea, Wales: Duckworth, pp. 125–142.
- Shipton, K. (2000) *Leasing and Lending: The Cash Economy in Fourth-century B.C. Athens*. London: University of London, Institute of

- Skinner, M. (2005) *Sexuality in Greek and Roman Culture*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers.
- Sourvinou-Inwood, C. (1995) Male and female, public and private, ancient and modern. In E. Reeder (ed.) *Pandora: Women in Classical Greece*. Princeton, NJ: Walters Art Gallery, pp. 111–120.
- Stocks, J. (1936) Scholê. *Classical Quarterly* 30: 177–187.
- Sutton, R. (2004) Family portraits: Recognizing the *Oikos* on attic red-figure pottery. In A. Chapin (ed.) *CHARIS: Essays in Honor of S. A. Immerwahr*. *Hesperia, Supplement* 33: 327–350.
- Thür, G. (2001) Recht im hellenistischen Athen (Ephebie. Kassel/Austin PCg, Adespota 1152. Basanos). In E. Cantarella and G. Thür (eds) *Symposion 1997*. Cologne, Germany: Böhlau Verlag, pp. 141–164.
- Todd, S. (1993) *The Shape of Athenian Law*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Tsakirgis, B. (2016) Whole cloth: Exploring the Greek economy through the evidence for textile manufacture and purchase in Greek houses. In E. Harris, D. Lewis and M. Woolmer (eds) *Beyond Self-Sufficiency: Markets, Households and City States in the Ancient Greek World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 166–186.
- Wolff, H. (1944) Marriage law and family organization in Ancient Athens. *Traditio* 2: 43–95. (Reprinted in *Beiträge zur Rechtsgeschichte Altgriechenlands und des hellenistisch-römischen Ägypten* [Weimar 1961], pp. 155–242.)
- Wrenhaven, K. (2009) The identity of the “wool-workers” in the attic manumissions. *Hesperia* 78: 367–386.
- Zelnick-Abramovitz, R. (2005) *Not Wholly Free: The Concept of Manumission and the Status of Manumitted Slaves in the Ancient Greek World*. Mnemosyne Supplement 266. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.

HELLENISTIC WOMEN AND THE LAW

Agency, identity, and community

Gillian Ramsey

Women's history of the Hellenistic period can be written as both micro-history of individuals and on the broad scale of regional comparisons. Greek colonial expansion in the east meant that the lives of Egyptian and Babylonian women were drawn into the ambit of Hellenistic society, producing a constellation of women's experiences shaped by ethnicity, economic status, and politics. Ordinary women of all ethnicities whose persons and stories would have in earlier centuries been obscured by the traditional Greek male construct of woman—slave and peasant woman a cipher, woman of status a foil for masculine performance—now appear more fully in the Hellenistic evidence with communities, occupations, and personal situations. This chapter compares women from the three main eastern Hellenistic regions—Egypt, Babylonia, and the Greek Aegean—which provide the best sources of evidence—papyri, cuneiform tablets, and inscriptions. For example, a fragmentary papyrus personnel roster for a wool workshop in late second- or first-century¹ Egypt lists textile workers and their roles: Arkadia, Demarion, Helenis, Ebenion, and Herakleia were ill and off-work; Gaza and Euthene specialized at beating in the weft or shaking the warp; Hermione at spinning; and Aristonike, Dianoia, and Theophila at carding. Appearing at the head of an alphabetized list, these women probably had 30 to 35 co-workers and, by their Greek names, would have been considered to have been slaves.² Their work was intensive, highly skilled, and communal.

The focus here is the legal activity of ordinary Hellenistic women, and what public and private records tell us about women's choices and concerns before the law. Traditionally, women's legal lives fall under the heading of family law, because the legal system of Classical Athens considered women's status to be derivative of men's and their

agency subject to the decisions of their male relatives,³ and because the Athenian system often serves as a benchmark for understanding the laws of other Hellenic communities. Over the course of the Hellenistic period women's status shifted, but differently across different cultural communities and for reasons connected to regional colonial experiences and changing political realities. Compared here are women's legal activities in several specific Hellenistic communities: the Fayum and Thebaid in Egypt, Uruk in Babylonia, and Delos in the Aegean. The examples of women in these places show that there was no single legal status making Hellenistic women subordinate to men and that two key factors affected all women's legal lives and shaped their decision-making: the role of family cooperation and the need to secure material resources.

Women's identity as legal agents

Based on the Athenian legal system, the study of most Greek women's legal status has concentrated on the involvement of the *kyrios*, a woman's legal guardian, who was usually her closest male relative. The typical assumption is that a girl remained under her father's guardianship (*kyreia*) until married, lived under her husband's until she was widowed, and then passed to her son's.⁴ For Hellenistic contexts, it is problematic to assume that the *kyreia* was the major determinant for a woman's legal status and agency, because the evidence for the period shows that the institution was not operating in the same way in all places. For example, both Egyptian and Babylonian women could traditionally act as principals in legal matters such as contracts. The fact that Babylonian women's names in Hellenistic Babylonian contracts, previously given with just their patronymics (the same as for men), now also included their husband's names, suggests that Hellenizing controls on traditional cuneiform bureaucracy altered the identity of women by expecting more male representation.⁵ At the same time, a few Hellene women married into native Babylonian families and enjoyed greater freedom for legal action.⁶ In Egypt also, while certain Egyptian women began naming their *kyrioi* in legal documents, some Hellene women were on a trajectory toward greater liberty thanks to the influence of non-Greek understandings of women's legal status.⁷

It is clear from the evidence that there was a wide range of possible individual reasons for why a woman acted with or without a male representative. One method for distinguishing between women has been to focus on very high-status women like queens and benefactresses whose status seemingly granted them independence

from male supervision, and who acted in the public eye and so attracted greater attention from contemporaries.⁸ Such women indeed provide one valuable way of understanding changes during the Hellenistic period, but the focus on them runs the risk of essentializing other women, who still acted with *kyrioi*, as though they all lacked agency under the same system of repressive male guardianship,⁹ and it glosses the complex colonial ‘entanglements’¹⁰ and inter-personal relationships shaping individual women’s scope for action.

The matter of kyreia

The subordination of women within patriarchal society was real, and the evidence shows women acting to achieve what they could within those circumstances. One example often presented to students of Hellenistic history as evidence of a woman’s role in perpetuating male guardianship is Nikaia’s petition to have the brother-in-law of her deceased husband recognized as her *kyrios*. She lived in the Fayum and wrote her petition in 218, seven years after being widowed and just days after the death of her husband’s son, who had served as executor for his father’s estate. Her concern was to secure continued possession of property bequeathed to her by her husband, and to prevent this property from being destroyed by some unspecified party. Instead of an authority figure, Nikaia understood her *kyrios* to be a guarantor for her rights of possession in an ongoing contest over the property, hence her desire to get a new *kyrios* recognized before the authorities as rapidly as possible.¹¹

Egypt

The motives behind shifting the gendering of legal action in the *kyreia* in a particular Hellenistic community related to the potential for social mobility and political success. After the Great Thebaid Revolt of 207–186, certain Egyptian women in the Thebaid appear in Greek-language legal papyri with male relatives as their *kyrioi*, denoted by the same formula as for Hellene women in the Fayum. Many of these Egyptian women have the designation *Persinē*, meaning that they enjoyed a hereditary and privileged socio-economic status resulting from their forebears’ service in the Ptolemaic army to re-establish control of Upper Egypt.¹² Serious political conflict in Upper Egypt had presented opportunities for the social mobility of this subaltern class, and many of these *Persinē* women also belonged to families with enough wealth to enjoy the social advantage of using Greek modes of legal representation.¹³ Sometimes the *Persinē* women used *kyrioi*, other

times not, and this reflects their community's tension between asserting native Egyptian conventions at the same time as acceding to Hellenic manners.

Uruk

Many women in legal texts at Uruk come from a similar situation, being participants in the ancient temple administration whose negotiation of power with their Hellenistic colonizers left certain cuneiform document types (property sales) in their control, while others (tax records) were the province of Greek scribes. While some Urukian families took on explicitly Hellenizing identities in order to build up social capital with the colonial governors,¹⁴ everyone benefitted from maintaining a vigorous property market as a means to retain what authority had been left them, and women were as valuable as men in this traffic.

Delos

Women on Delos during the Independence period (314–167) enjoyed their island's liberation from Athenian domination, and several belonging to wealthy, politically active families appear in the inscribed records of the *hieropoioi*, overseers of the Apollo temple banking system. Once the island was under their own administration, these families saw their personal fortunes increase in step with the Delian economy. As in Uruk at the same period, Delian economic vitality contributed to a successful performance of political strength, which was necessary to stave off foreign pressure amid the frequent wars in the Aegean. In each of these contexts, local women's legal status, whether or not they appeared with a *kyrios* or other male representative, and who he was, connected more to local record-keeping procedures, the desire for ensuring family cooperation, and the need to secure resources than to the existence of a single Hellenistic *kyreia* institution.

Women's business

Working women, even slaves, managed aspects of their own labor according to the same imperatives of securing resources and operating within established relationships. In June 257 at Memphis, Egypt, Bia, a wool-worker and probably a slave woman like Arkadia and company, asked her manager for the spare fleeces in her workshop in

order to meet her production quota.¹⁵ A month later, Bia was accused in a complaint by one of her co-workers of “committing outrages” (*hybrizousa*) and “making herself the master (*despozei*) of us and that man,” presumably their manager.¹⁶ The complainant was confused over what he wanted to say, since the scribe added and then partially erased an extra phrase about whom he blamed: “N did not permit me [to go] to Bia” was corrected to “Zenodoros . . . to him.”¹⁷ Clearly, he disliked Bia as an uppity woman, but from the manager’s perspective her forthright approach was acceptable.¹⁸ In 231 in the Fayum, the dancer Olympias established a contract with a flautist for one year’s service as her exclusive accompanist. Olympias was a young Athenian woman, and her *kyrios* was an older man of Galatian background, probably a soldier. The nature of their relationship and how his presence affected her entertainment business is completely unclear and could dramatically change how we interpret her control over her own career. The contract was described from the flautist’s perspective, not Olympias’, subsuming the relationships and circumstances affecting her agency under the terse Greek legal formula ‘with her *kyrios*’ (μετὰ κυρίου).¹⁹

Legal representation and family cooperation

Uruk

In 197/6 Ana-rabutišu’s son guaranteed her sale of her prebend to Antiochis, daughter of Diophantos and wife of Anu-uballit-Kephalon, head of the leading family at Uruk.²⁰ In addition to being a principal in this contract and a property owner, Antiochis happens also to be one of the few known Hellenes in Urukian society, meaning that here she enjoyed a greater legal ability than she would have in a traditional Greek context. For the seller Ana-rabutišu, however, the fact that her son stood in as guarantor may represent a loss of legal status, since earlier practices were to permit both women and men to guarantee their own sales by promising to clear any future claims on the sold property.²¹ Along with the addition of spouses to the practice of identifying women in legal texts, this requirement for a male guarantor seems like the result of Hellenistic colonial pressure to change legal practices. But male family members also had an interest in each other’s sales, not just those of female relatives, and a male seller might turn to his relatives to clear future claims on his sales. For example, Belessunu’s husband Mannu-ki-Dilbat sold the slave woman Ina-bani-Nana in 275 and turned to their son Kitu-Anu to be the clearer.²² When Ia (daughter of Nana-iddin, wife of Riḫat-Anu) bought an estate in 234, the seller and his brother shared responsibility to

clear any claims.²³ In 266 Ana-rabutika-Anu guaranteed his father's prebend sale, even sharing a signet ring with his uncle, one of the witnesses.²⁴

Ina ašābi clauses

The Urukeans maintained one traditional practice for recording the consent of women when their family members sold or gave away property to which they had a claim. The *ina ašābi* clause at the end of a contract applied specifically to women and stated that the scribe wrote "in the presence (*ina ašābi*) of ^fN," who might then also stamp her personal seal.²⁵ Thus Belessunu observed her husband sell Ina-bani-Nana (above).²⁶ Other examples include Ina-qibit-Nana, who in 279 observed her husband and his brother sell part of their property to Adešu-tabi (wife of Nana-iddin).²⁷ In 276, Belessunu (wife of Zeriya) observed her three sons sell property and added her seal to the contract.²⁸ In 234 Pu-nari added her seal for the *ina ašābi* clause in her son's sale of rights to temple incomes.²⁹ In 276 Nidintu-Nana observed her son sell a prebend; they then shared the same signet ring when they each stamped the tablet.³⁰ Around the same time, Belessunu (wife of Nidintu-Anu) observed her mother Ina-banat-Nana give a slave woman, Ana-rabišu, to Belessunu's brother.³¹ Ina-banat-Nana had four years earlier given this same woman to Belessunu as part of her dowry, and had included a standard clause renouncing her rights to the slave woman, and so when she decided to move Ana-rabišu to a different family member's household, Belessunu needed to give consent.³² In 151, Antu-bani-abi consented to her husband selling a small plot of uncultivated land.³³ A different phrase describes her action: *ina milki*, which in Late Babylonian legal contexts often means "with the consent of," but connoting the giving of advice and instruction.³⁴ Antu-bani-abi's interest in the sale is clear given that the sold land adjoined her own property and that the sale alienated from family land a plot which could be helpful if connected to hers in a future inheritance. Similarly, in 165 Kida consented to her son's sale of family property at Uruk.³⁵

The Delian hieropoioi inscriptions

A similar role is seen for some Delian women. The *hieropoioi* inscriptions group together several instances of women assenting to the mortgaging of family property in order to obtain loans. The lists employ the clause 'with N giving consent' and do not specify any *kyrioi*.³⁶ In 208 the inscriptions recorded Menekratia's consent to the

mortgaging of a house and staircase.³⁷ In 194 they recorded the consents given for mortgages by Mneso, Orthokles' mother, Epaino, Androdike, and by a woman whose name is a lacuna.³⁸ In 182 they recorded that Orthokles obtained another loan with the consent of his wife Hagneis and that Xenaino, Hegenassa, Aristophile, Archiourge, and Hormano all consented for their spouses.³⁹ Unlike these women, Arkoussa consented to her husband's loan with her *kyrios*, but lacunae prevent confirmation on whether he was one and the same man.⁴⁰ In comparison, on Amorgos, Eratokrate consented to her husband's mortgaging of their house and cellar, appearing with another man as her *kyrios*.⁴¹ A few Delian men served as consenters alongside women in these clauses, such as Hippon with Eritado the wife of the debtor.⁴² A record of 246 had Satyros mortgaging a house previously owned by his father, who consented alongside Satryos' wife Pantakleia.⁴³ Shared family concern for a loan is also seen with Epikrates, whose wife consented and whose son served as surety.⁴⁴

A number of Delian women also assisted family finances by paying the interest owing on loans or mortgages belonging to their male relatives. Many women pay for their fathers, interpreted as evidence that these women were heiresses, inheriting debts along with their estates.⁴⁵ Nikaia is one such, who with her *kyrios* made payment on a loan of her father's which had fallen to her; the formulaic phrase used here—'the loan which was payable by her'—typically indicates the next-of-kin and appears in the accounts with the masculine pronoun ('by him').⁴⁶ Nikaia made three interest payments in the year 218, two payments totalling at least 135 drachmas for her father's loans, and 5 drachmas for another male relative.⁴⁷ In doing so, she bore the same responsibilities as male neighbors, several of whom that year paid the interest on their own fathers' loans.⁴⁸

Egypt

certain *Persinē* women at Pathyris, just upriver of Thebes, made Greek-language contracts showing a similar pattern of family cooperation in representing shared interests before the law as the Urukean and Delian cases. In 107 the sisters Taous, Sennesis, and Siephmous jointly sold a plot of land with their shared *kyrios*, Taous' husband.⁴⁹ In 134 Nechouthis jointly with two male associates sold a plot of vacant land; her son was her *kyrios* and although listed with her as one of the brokers and guarantors of the sale, he was not a principal.⁵⁰ Pestman observed that certain documentary practices might disguise what was really occurring, citing the fictional purchase of land from her brother and *kyrios* by Sennesis of Pathyris in 104. She was actually his creditor

and the land security for his loan, and when he paid his debt to her in 103, she simply withdrew her offer on the property. She also changed her *kyrios* between the two documents, from her brother-debtor in the fictional purchase/loan to a member of her own household in the withdrawal.⁵¹ This raises the possibility that a woman might identify her *kyrios* based on his involvement in the matter at hand, not because he was a permanent fixture of her life. By contrast, in 172, Megisto from the Greek community at Philadelphia served as surety for her husband's loan of 18,780 drachmas, a very large sum, and, since he was also her *kyrios*, it is unclear if he simply listed her name in the loan agreement, or whether she assented to the responsibility. A later document reports that this loan extended past the deaths of both male principals, and Megisto bore the burden of making interest payments for an indeterminate and possibly long time.⁵²

Being a woman in an Egyptian Demotic context is typically considered to have supplied more power than in a Greek context, but not necessarily so. In 137 at Deir el-Medina Smanres bought a property and, for unspecified reasons, asked the seller to make out the contract as though his wife Tanouphis was the buyer, a point he only admitted four years later. Since the Demotic contract did not list him as Tanouphis' *kyrios*, Smanres was totally absent from the record, using his wife's agency before the law to avoid detection.⁵³ Two decades later, Tanouphis and Smanres' son engaged in a similar practice—handling his wife Tatehathyris' property in her name—in both Greek and Demotic documents—but probably with her cooperation.⁵⁴

For these cases, the line between women exercising agency by cooperating with their relatives and men doing what they wanted, but in a woman's name, is difficult to place. Where consent was required, it is clear that women were cooperating, and it is also clear that their consent was required because they had a claim on the property being sold or mortgaged. In the cases of Megisto being surety or Delian women handling inherited debts, women also cooperated with family aims by bearing responsibility before the law for financial obligations. As in the case of Sennesis and her brother, these women cooperated with family members in order to assist them toward certain objectives, often pertaining to financial security.

Patterns of inheritance

Delos

What slim evidence there is for Delian heiresses has been interpreted to mean that they were operating within a more traditional Greek system, wherein daughters inherited only in the absence of sons, although in the absence of further data on the families, it is difficult to prove this.⁵⁵ For example, in 207, the executors of Aristagore's inheritance sold wood to a temple building project, probably from her family's timber business.⁵⁶ Without her age or the names of those executors, it is difficult to assert that she is a traditional Greek heiress. Some women inherited debts, probably due to inheriting mortgaged properties, but that too does not confirm that heiresses could only be sole heirs.⁵⁷ In 182, Timonasa obtained a loan and mortgaged a house she had inherited from her father, and it seems possible that her brother served as surety.⁵⁸ If she had a brother, then she would traditionally be unable to inherit, and ought to have consented while her brother obtained the loan. A few other women also obtained loans by mortgaging properties and with male relatives or neighbors (lacunae make the relationships uncertain) serving as guarantors, in particular Arkousa, who in 190 mortgaged a property near the seashore with her *kyrios*, and Lyso, who mortgaged a house in 209.⁵⁹ As with Timonasa, it is unclear whether these women obtained their properties as heiresses in the absence of brothers. The way they used them to leverage financing, probably for small business ventures, was the same as male neighbors; this shows no hindrance on women's legal possession of property, and probably means that there was also a willingness to let daughters inherit in their own right.

Uruk

In Babylonia the traditional stance on women's inheritance of family property compared to that of Greek law: preserving the patrimony was most important, and women inherited in the absence of sons and often needed to marry paternal relatives as well.⁶⁰ As already seen, however, Babylonian women could own property, and combined with the desire to provide for all family members equitably, including daughters, by the Hellenistic period other strategies were common and created an improved situation for women. For example, inheritances might be discussed and planned with the heirs before death. After Dannat-Belti died, his two younger brothers and his three children (a son and two daughters) rearranged the family inheritance with the consent (*ina milki*) of their father and grandfather Šamaš-ittannu, who was still alive. They divided the property approximately evenly between the three men, with the important stipulation that they must jointly provide livelihoods and dowries for the two women or forfeit

their share.⁶¹

A common strategy was to distribute family resources to female relatives by deeds of gift, for example in 166 when the widow Amat-pia's sons gave her one-third of their shared domicile and its contents, likely to augment her dowry which did not provide enough income.⁶² Many such Urukian donations incorporated a sale, but unlike sales alienating family property, many of these indicate that families were organizing inheritances to provide female relatives with future resources. In the winter of 269/8 Ana-rabika-Ištar bought a plot of uncultivated land from her two brothers,⁶³ and in 232 Etirtu bought a similar plot from her brothers.⁶⁴ Etirtu was married, but Ana-rabika-Ištar was not, and her mother supervised the sale in the *ina ašābi* clause, possibly because she had supplied the money for the purchase.⁶⁵ In both cases, the sisters purchased small pieces of land adjoining their brothers' inherited properties, effectively subdivisions of the estate, but Etirtu's plot also adjoined her husband's property on two sides, which was doubly convenient.⁶⁶ The widow Linakushu purchased from her sons portions of their inherited prebends and property.⁶⁷ Ana-rabutišu likewise purchased a prebend from her son, probably because they were redispensing an inheritance in order to furnish her with an income, and a cousin of Ana-rabutišu's husband witnessed the sale, further supporting that this was a family arrangement after the husband's death.⁶⁸ A very common form of inheritance given by Babylonian women to their daughters was the gift of a slave upon marriage. This was the context for Ina-banat-Nana's gift to Belessunu (above), for Etirtu giving the slave woman Ina-banat-Nana to her daughter Adešu-tabi in 288,⁶⁹ and for Ina-bani-Nana giving the slave woman Attutu to her daughter Ina-qibit-Nana in 285.⁷⁰

Egypt

A community of Hellene military settlers in the Fayum left behind several wills, all written around the same time, which show the trend toward bequeathing property to female relatives. In 238/7 Axiothea's husband made out a will leaving her their Fayum house and a slave woman, in addition to specifying the amount of her dowry and that she was owed compensation for any missing items. Her stepson received a greater share—an apartment building in Alexandria and four slaves—but Axiothea retained possession of her own home.⁷¹ In the same year, Eirene's husband wrote a will leaving all his possessions to her and their daughter Demo.⁷² In 226/5 Artemidora's husband specified in his will that she was to receive control of all his

possessions (“Artemidora will be master of my property”) and that she, as part of her responsibilities toward their children, should allot from his estate dowries for their two daughters (“she will supply to the children . . . [food] and clothing” and she “will give our daughters . . . in marriage, providing as a dowry to each of them what she thinks appropriate from the estate”).⁷³ Artemidora was forbidden from alienating any of the property which she intended to pass on to the children. The will provided that, if Artemidora died before her daughters’ marriages, they would receive shares of the inheritance alongside their brothers.⁷⁴ Later in the mid-first century, Rhodokleia of Phebichis in the south Fayum inherited in her own right her father’s estate, having no brothers, and in the document where she describes this, she cites the Ptolemaic laws allowing women in such circumstances to inherit.⁷⁵

The practice of permitting Hellene women in Egypt to inherit in their own right, improve upon family properties, and share in the responsibility of organizing future inheritances can be attributed to Egyptian influence. This influence extended also to men’s inheritances, since it was customary for the eldest son to receive a greater share.⁷⁶ We see this shift in the will of Artemidora’s husband, which specified that their eldest son receive half of the family vineyard in addition to an even share of the remaining estate.⁷⁷ This Egyptian approach to women’s inheritance is seen also at Pathyris, in the mixed Macedonian-Egyptian family of Dryton who in his third and final will of 126 bequeathed half his property to his son and the remaining half to his five daughters. His wife, Apollonia-Senmouthis, received a monthly income for four years which was tied to her care of their younger, unmarried daughters, but she needed no portion of the estate since she possessed her own properties and income sources, some previously inherited from her father, an Egyptianized Hellene émigré, and some acquired during her marriage.⁷⁸

In Egypt, women as well as men used deeds of gift to secure the transmission of certain properties to the next generation.⁷⁹ In these cases, the family cooperation to secure access to resources and the maintenance of shared family property and income is more explicit. In 305/4 at Memphis, Taous-Heribastis gave her niece Hedjenpaouni, daughter of her elder brother, portions of necropolis attendant (*choachytes*) prebends and income sources inherited from her parents and paternal grandmother, along with a small enclosure of family land, while Taous’ son was guarantor for his mother’s bequest to his cousin.⁸⁰ Taous was equipping her niece with a share in the family grave-tending business as well as fulfilling her responsibilities to pass on certain inheritances from female ancestors. In 109 in Pathyris,

Sebtitis drew up a 'cession' agreement, at the Greek magistrate's office, giving her daughter Nahomsis the rights to a small plot of agricultural land.⁸¹ Nahomsis was 45 years old (Sebtitis was 60) and already managing incomes from other properties in her possession, as seen in a series of loans she made to female and male neighbors between 113 and 106.⁸² Sebtitis acted with her elder son from a first husband as her *kyrios*, while Nahomsis acted with another man as *kyrios*, possibly her spouse although this is not stated; he makes no other appearances with her.⁸³

Conclusion

Nahomsis provides a good example of a woman walking the line between her community's native traditions and the new Hellenistic expectations, in conjunction with family members' wishes and aims. Nahomsis gave her mother, who was following Hellene conventions, the name of a *kyrios* to include in her deed of gift, but she did not bother to appear before the Greek clerk with a *kyrios* to handle her own business. On the whole, however, most of the *Persinē* women at Pathyris opted to set aside the legal freedoms possible in the Demotic system in exchange for increased social status through participation in the Hellene community, marked by attending Greek records offices with *kyrioi*.⁸⁴ Antiochis of Uruk enjoyed greater legal freedom by participating in the native community there, marked by her marriage into a Babylonian family who in turn through her enjoyed access to Hellene social status and prestige. The several instances of Delian women who handled property in their own right may indicate that in the Hellenistic Aegean conventions were also shifting toward ascribing greater legal agency to women during the rebound from Athenian imperialism. Although the Delian experience was one of reprieve from colonialism, while it was newly arrived at Uruk and Pathyris, changing political situations meant that social mobility was tied to how well a family managed its own interests, including the distribution of resources to female members, while navigating broader forces for change.

The *kyreia* remained a defining institution for Hellenistic women's appearances in many legal matters, but having a *kyrios* present for one's dealings with the authorities spoke more to the immediate documentary context and family decisions about sharing responsibilities for liability or consent. It is likely that had Greek papyri from Uruk survived, we would see women appearing as did those in the Egyptian examples: operating with a *kyrios* when the performance of Hellene standards seemed socially advantageous

according to family strategizing and community experience. Women had a say in how to make family property generate income and opportunities, and they shared in the handling of legal matters arising from this. From the Hellene perspective, increasing value was placed on women's input to this work, reflected in the inclusion of daughters and widows in inheritances and the various means employed to provide female relatives with livelihoods in their own right. That women themselves participated in this provision of resources to female relatives reinforces the role of their agency within family life. It shows that the shift toward a more substantial legal identity for Hellenistic women was not something granted to them by a changed *kyreia*, but something negotiated in the midst of their different communities in keeping with their own traditions and in response to changing circumstances.

List of abbreviations

Abbreviations of Near Eastern sources (Greek sources are abbreviated according to *L'Année Philologique* and the *Checklist of Editions of Greek Latin, Demotic, and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*, library.duke.edu/rubenstein/scriptorium/papyrus/texts/clist.html).

BRM 2 = Clay, Albert T. 1913. *Babylonian Records in the Library of J. Pierpont Morgan. Part II: Legal Documents from Erech dated in the Seleucid Era (312–65 B. C.)*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

OECT 9 = Mcewan, Gilbert J. P. 1982. *Texts from Hellenistic Babylon in the Ashmolean Museum*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

TCL 13 = Contenau, G. 1929. *Contrats Néo-Babyloniens II, Achéménides et Séleucides. Textes Cunéiformes, Tome XIII*. Paris: P. Geuthner.

VS 15 = Schroeder, Otto. 1916. *Vorderasiatische Schriftdenkmäler der Königlichen Museen zu Berlin, Heft XV: Kontrakte der Seleukidenzeit aus Warka*. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs.

YOS 20 = Doty, L. Timothy and Ronald Wallenfels. 2012. *Cuneiform Documents from Hellenistic Uruk*. Yale Oriental Series. Babylonian Texts, Vol. 20. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Notes

1 All dates are BC.

2 BGU 10.1942; Rowlandson 1998: n. 203; Bingen 1967: 228; Lewis 1974: 49; Pomeroy 1984: 170–171. For shaking the weft techniques, see Edmunds 2012 “Picturing Homeric weaving.”

3 Cf. Just 1989: 27–28.

- 4 Schaps 1979 passim; Just 1989: 26ff; Cantarella 2005: 245–248.
- 5 *OECT* 9, p. 8; Mcewan 1995: 25.
- 6 Langin-Hooper and Pierce 2014: 195–197.
- 7 Cf. Cantarella 1987: 90–92; Van Bremen 1996: 217–222; Modrzejewski 2005: 352.
- 8 Cf. Pomeroy 1975: 120, 125–126; Van Bremen 1996: 208ff.; Levick 2012: 97.
- 9 Cf. Pomeroy 1975: 126–127; Schaps 1979: 66–67.
- 10 See Langin-Hooper and Pierce 2014: 188.
- 11 (218 BC) *P.enteux*. 22; Rowlandson 1998: n. 122; Bagnall and Derow 2004: n. 146.
- 12 La’da 1994; Clarysse and Thompson 2006: 157–158; Vandorpe 2008.
- 13 Cf. Pestman 1995: 83.
- 14 Cf. the families of Anu-uballit-Nikarchos and Anu-uballit-Kephalon. Doty 1988; Langin-Hooper and Pierce 2014: 195–199.
- 15 *P.Mich.* I 16; Rowlandson 1998: n. 200. Edgar (commentary) suggested that Bia was one of the slavewomen in the wool working operation in Memphis, referring to *P.Cair.Zen.* 2.59142: 2, 8.
- 16 *P.Cair.Zen.* 1.59080: 8.
- 17 Ibid: 3. Cf. *P.Mich.* 1.19.
- 18 Thompson 2012: 49, goes further, suggesting that Bia was ‘spokesman’ for the other slave women in the wool workshop.
- 19 *CPR* 18,1; Rowlandson 1998: n. 215; Bagnall and Derow 2004: n. 151. See also Van Bremen 1996: 212, 222. Two other female dancers are known for the 250–230s in the Fayum, who seem to have formed a household with their flautist, and their status is unclear, *P.Count.* 23: 62–64; cf. Clarysse and Thompson 2006: 202, 262–263, 301–303.
- 20 *YOS* 20,54.
- 21 *OECT* 9, p. 8. Cf. *OECT* 9, 28: 11–15: Etirtu shares the guaranteeing of her prebend sale with her husband.
- 22 *BRM* 2,10.
- 23 *BRM* 2,23.
- 24 Wallenfels 1994: 144, n. 29; *BRM* 2, 11.
- 25 *CAD* A s.v. *ašābu* 7,b; Wallenfels 1994: 147; Mcewan 1995: 26.
- 26 *BRM* 2,10; Doty 1979: 196; Mcewan 1982: 51; Wallenfels 1994: n. 929.
- 27 *OECT* 9,7: 44, for the *ina ašābi* clause.
- 28 *YOS* 20,17; Wallenfels 1994: n. 431, seal: a “human-headed, winged quadruped.”
- 29 *YOS* 20,39.
- 30 Wallenfels 1994: 70 and 144, n. 455: a recumbent dragon; *BRM* 2,8: Nidintu-Nana’s seal: Lower edge 4, son Anu-aḥḥe-iddin’s mark: Right edge 1.
- 31 *BRM* 2,6 and 7 (a duplicate), translation pp. 34–35; Wallenfels 1994: n. 262 (Belessunu’s seal) and n. 973 (Ina-Banat-Nana’s seal).
- 32 *BRM* 2,5; Wallenfels 1994: n. 903; Mcewan 1995: 26. Cf. Langin-Hooper and Pierce 2014: 195–196 for Antiochis’ Greek identity and affines.
- 33 *TCL* 246: 2; Moore 1935: n. 246.
- 34 *CAD* M s.v. *milku* 3.

- 35 YOS 20,73: 2.
- 36 συνεπαινούσης (used in the third century) /συνεπιχωρούσης (used in the second century) καὶ τῆς γυναικὸς/μητρὸς Ν; cf. Vial 1984: 69 n. 82, also the table p. 70. See also Reger 1992: 325 for discussion of the mortgage language.
- 37 ID 365: 22.
- 38 ID 396 A: 47 (Mneso), 50 (N, Othokles' mother), 53 (Epaino), 56 (Androdike), 60–61 (N, for Aristoboulos).
- 39 ID 407: 23 (Archionurge, with συνεπαινούσης), 25 (Hagneis), 28 (Xenaino), 31 (Hegenassa), 32 (Aristophile), 34 (Hormano). See also ID 406 B: 32 for Kritole (c.190 BC) and ID 449 A: 36 for Melissa (175 BC).
- 40 ID 442 A 213, 179 BC.
- 41 IG XII,7 58. See also Vial 1984: 79.
- 42 ID 407: 30, συνεπιχωροῦντος. This is apparently the only epigraphic instance of the masculine usage.
- 43 ID 290: 131–133.
- 44 ID 298: 186–187.
- 45 Vial 1984: 62–64.
- 46 LSJ s.v. ἐπιβάλλω 6.
- 47 Cf. ID 354: 24–25 (5 + dr.), 41 (130 + dr.), 52 (5 dr.); in the last payment Nikaia appears without her *kyrios*. See also Vial 1984: 53–54, 62–64.
- 48 ID 354: 26 (Phillis for Timagenes), 40 (Theorylos for Diaktorides), 47 (Achaïos for Zelomenes), 50 (Polykrates for his brother Antigonos).
- 49 *P.Grenf.* 2,23; *Sel.Pap.* 1, 27; Rowlandson 1998: n. 166.
- 50 *P.Adl.* 1: col. ii, 7, for the guarantor clause.
- 51 Pestman 1995: 79, 82–84; 104 BC: *P.Lips.* 1.1; 103 BC: *P.Grenf.* 2.28: 3–5.
- 52 *P.Mich.* 3,190.
- 53 Pestman 1995: 85; *P.Tor.Botti* 8 and 9.
- 54 *P.Batav.* 3 = *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* 19,3; Rowlandson 1998: n. 165b; *P.Tor.Botti* 30, 37, 43 = *P.Batav.* 1; Pestman 1995: 84–85.
- 55 Vial 1984: 64, 74. Cf. Modrzejewski 2005: 353.
- 56 ID 366 A: 39; Vial 1984: 63.
- 57 Van Bremen 1996: 253.
- 58 ID 407: 40–41: Timonasa daughter of Telemnestos, with her surety Peisikrates son of Te[lemnestos?].
- 59 Arkousa: ID 406 A:25–27, 49–51. Lyso: ID 362 B: 11, 399 A: 112–115. Cf. Vial 1984: 77 (table).
- 60 Cf. Ben-Barak 1980; Mcewan 1984.
- 61 *OECT* 9,63; cf. Mcewan 1984: 218.
- 62 *BRM* 2,50; Mcewan 1995: 22–23.
- 63 *TCL* 13,235; Moore 1935: n. 235.
- 64 *TCL* 13,239; Moore 1935: n. 239; Van der Spek 1995: 213–218.
- 65 Mcewan 1995: 21.
- 66 *TCL* 13,239: 4–10.
- 67 *OECT* 9,51; Mcewan 1995: 23–4.
- 68 VS 15,11; Pirngruber and Waerzeggers 2011: 116–117; Doty 1978: 77, 90.

- 69 OECT 9,4.
- 70 YOS 20,15.
- 71 *P.Petr.* 2 1,13; Bagnall and Derow 2004: n. 148.
- 72 *P.Petr.* 2 1,14.
- 73 *P.Petr.* 2 1,25: 18–20, 25–57.
- 74 *P.Petr.* 2 1,25, also p. 240; Kreller 1919: 142ff, 363.
- 75 *SB* 8,9790; Rowlandson 1998: n. 167.
- 76 Kreller 1919: 149ff.
- 77 Ibid; cf. Clarysse 1995: 93.
- 78 *P.Dryton* 4; Rowlandson 1998: n. 86; Vandorpe 2002: 332, 335.
- 79 Cf. Clarysse 1995: 94–95.
- 80 Rowlandson 1998: no. 30; Pezin 1987; Clarysse 1995: 95, for Sebitis being at the end of her life.
- 81 *P.Grenf.* 1,27.
- 82 *P.Amh.* 2.46 and 47 (113); *P.Batav.* 6 = *Pap.Lugd.Bat.* 19,6; Rowlandson 1998: n. 184; *P.Amh.* 2.48 (106).
- 83 La'da 2002: nn. E1992 and E2265.
- 84 Cf. Vandorpe 2002: 335.

References

- Bagnall, R. S. and Derow, P. (2004) *The Hellenistic Period: Historical Sources in Translation*. Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell.
- Ben-Barak, Z. (1980) Inheritance by daughters in the Ancient Near East. *Journal of Semitic Studies* 25(1): 22–33.
- Bingen, J. (1967) Papyrus littéraires et documents: W. Müller, *Sklaven in der Textilindustrie des Ptolemäischen Ägypten*. *Chronique d'Égypte* 42: 228.
- Cantarella, E. (1987) *Pandora's Daughters: The Role and Status of Women in Greek and Roman Antiquity*. Trans. M. B. Fant. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Cantarella, E. (2005) Gender, sexuality, and law. In M. Gagarin and D. Cohen (eds) *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Greek Law*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 236–253.
- Clarysse, W. (1995) Ptolemaic wills. In M. J. Geller and H. Maehler (eds) *Legal Documents of the Hellenistic World*. London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, pp. 88–105.
- Clarysse, W. and Thompson, D. J. (2006) *Counting the People in Hellenistic Egypt, Vol. 2: Historical Studies*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Doty, L. T. (1978) The archive of the Nanâ-iddin family from Uruk. *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 30(2): 65–90.

- Doty, L. T. (1979) An official seal of the Seleucid period. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 38(3): 195–197.
- Doty, L. T. (1988) Nikarchos and Kephalon. In E. Leichty, M. de J. Ellis, P. Gerardi (eds) *A Scientific Humanist: Studies in Memory of Abraham Sachs*. Philadelphia, PA: The University Museum, pp. 96–118.
- Edmunds, S. T. (2012) Picturing Homeric weaving. In V. Bers *et al.* (eds) *Donum natalicium digitaliter confectum Gregorio Nagy septuagenario a discipulis collegis familiaribus oblatum*. center for Hellenic Studies. Available at chs.harvard.edu/CHS/article/display/4843 (accessed January 9, 2015).
- Just, R. (1989) *Women in Athenian Law and Life*. London: Routledge.
- Kreller, H. (1919) *Erbrechtliche Untersuchungen auf Grund der gräko-ägyptischen Papyrusurkunden*. Stuttgart, Germany: Teubner.
- La'da, C. (1994) Ethnicity, occupation and tax-status in Ptolemaic Egypt. *Egitto e Vicino Oriente* 17 (Acta Demotica: Acts of the Fifth International Conference for Demotists, Pisa, 4th–8th September 1993.), pp. 183–189.
- La'da, C. A. (2002) *Prosopographia Ptolemaica, Volume X: Foreign Ethnic in Hellenistic Egypt*. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters.
- Langin-Hooper, S. M. and Pierce, L. (2014) Mammonymy, maternal-line names, and cultural identification: Clues from the Onomasticon of Hellenistic Uruk. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 134: 185–202.
- Levick, B. (2012) Women and law. In S. L. James and S. Dillon (eds) *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*. London and New York: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 96–106.
- Lewis, N. (1974) Notationes Legentis. *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 11(2/4): 44–59.
- Mcewan, G. J. P. (1982) An official Seleucid seal reconsidered. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 41(1): 51–53.
- Mcewan, G. J. P. (1984) Inheritance in Seleucid Babylonia. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 47(2): 211–227.
- Mcewan, G. J. P. (1995) Family law in Hellenistic Babylonia. In M. J. Geller and H. Maehler (eds) *Legal Documents of the Hellenistic World*. London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, pp. 20–36.
- Modrzejewski, J. M. (2005) Greek law in the Hellenistic Period: Family and marriage. In M. Gagarin and D. Cohen (eds) *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Greek Law*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 343–354.
- Moore, E. W. (1935) *Neo-Babylonian Business and Administrative Documents*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

- Pestman, P. W. (1995) Appearance and reality in written contracts: Evidence from bilingual family archives. In M. J. Geller and H. Maehler, (eds) *Legal Documents of the Hellenistic World*. London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, pp. 79–87.
- Pezin, M. (1987) Un contrat memphitique de partage de revenus liturgiques: P. BN 226 a + P. Louvre 2412. *BIFAO* 87: 269–273.
- Pirngruber, R. and Waerzeggers, C. (2011) Prebend prices in first-millennium B.C. Babylonia. *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 63: 111–144.
- Pomeroy, S. B. (1975) *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Pomeroy, S. B. (1984) *Women in Hellenistic Egypt from Alexander to Cleopatra*. New York: Schocken.
- Reger, G. (1992) Private property and private loans on independent delos (314–167 B.C.). *Phoenix* 46(4): 322–341.
- Thompson, D. J. (2012) *Memphis under the Ptolemies*, second edition. Princeton, NJ and Oxford, UK: Princeton University Press.
- Van Bremen, R. (1996) *The Limits of Participation: Women and Civic Life in the Greek East in the Hellenistic and Roman periods*. Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben.
- Van der Spek, R. J. (1995) Land ownership in Babylonian cuneiform documents. In M. J. Geller and H. Maehler (eds) *Legal Documents of the Hellenistic World*. London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, pp. 173–245.
- Vandorpe, K. (2002) Apollonia, a businesswoman in a multicultural society (Pathyris, 2nd–1st centuries B.C.). In H. Melaerts and L. Mooren (eds) *Le Rôle et le Statut de la Femme en Égypte Hellénistique, Romaine et Byzantine*. Paris and Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 325–336.
- Vandorpe, K. (2008) Persian soldiers and Persians of the Epigone. Social mobility of soldiers-herdsmen in Upper Egypt. *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und Verwandte Gebiete* 54(1): 87–108.
- Vial, C. (1984) *Délos Indépendante (314–167 avant J.-C.). Étude d'une communauté civique et de ses institutions*. Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique, Supplement X. Athens, Greece: École Française d'Athènes.
- Wallenfels, R. (1994) *Uruk: Hellenistic Seal Impressions in the Yale Babylonian Collection. I. Cuneiform Tablets*. Ausgrabungen in Uruk-Warke Endberichte, 19. Mainz, Germany: Verlag Philipp von Zabern.

PART VII

Etruria and the Italian archipelago

Introduction

Human occupation of Italy and the adjacent islands may be traced as far back as the Paleolithic, while evidence for the lives of women becomes accessible as early as the Neolithic period, when Sardinia, Sicily, and peninsular Italy were already in regular contact, although different languages and material cultures prevailed in each region. The successive cultural phases of the island of Sardinia are known by the names of typical sites.

Sardinia

Middle Neolithic (4000–3200 BCE):

- Bonu Ighinu culture (4000 – 3400 BCE) characterized by small pastoral settlements with distinctive incised pottery; Sardinian obsidian widely distributed.
- San Ciriaco culture (3400 – 3200 BCE).

Late Neolithic/Ozieri culture (3200–2700 BCE):

- Extensive settlement of the island with villages constructing monumental burial complexes, the *Domus de Janas*, and cultic use of female “idols,” small sculptures of abstract form.

Eneolithic/Chalcolithic (Copper-Age) (2700–1800 BCE):

- Abelazu-Filigosa culture (2700 – 2400 BCE) angular and flask-shaped vases, first copper objects, continued construction of megalithic dolmens and menhirs.
- Monte Claro culture (2400 – 2100 BCE)

- Bell Beaker culture (2100 – 1800 BCE): distinctive bell-shaped pottery, megalithic constructions, early metal objects including weapons.

Early Bronze Age/Bonnanaro culture (phase A) (1800–1600 BCE):

- “Giants’ Tombs” megalithic communal tombs.

Middle Bronze Age/Bonnanaro B or Sa Turricula phase (1600–1300 BCE).

Late Bronze Age (1300–900 BCE):

- During the Middle-Late Bronze Age the Nuragic civilization of Sardinia is evident, characterized by simple pottery, with beaked jugs that circulated widely; bronze statuettes for votive use; the first stone sculptures; and the first *nuraghi* (*nuraghe* = Sardinian for “building”) megalithic structures that appear as large stone platforms, sometimes called *protonuraghi* or “corridor *nuraghi*.” There followed (c.1500) the canonical *nuraghi* that grace many plateaus, the imposing single-towers (*monotorri*). The *nuraghi* initially were not for defense but for the display of status of those who could control the labor force to build such a high tower, visible to all the neighbors. By the ninth to eighth centuries, however, towers were adapted with bow-slits, etc., for defense against the onslaught of Phoenician colonization. The Late Bronze Age saw concerted exchange with the Mycenaean Aegean and Cypriot cultures, as Sardinia was a prime source of copper.

Iron Age Nuragic culture and the era of Phoenician domination (900–535 BCE):

- Phoenician colonies on the western and southern coasts are the start of the great cities: *Karalis* (modern Cagliari), *Sulky* (Sulcis/Sant’Antioco), *Nora*, *Bithia*, *Tharros* (Oristano). Stone statues of Phoenician inspiration; bronze boat models, intensive exchange with Etruria, Phoenicia, Iberia. The east and the mountainous interior remained native strongholds.

Carthaginian occupation 535 to 238 BCE took over the Phoenician cities, which prospered until Rome seized the island at the end of the First Punic War; Sardinia remained restive under Roman rule, especially during the Second Punic War and its aftermath. The grain-

production and commercial ties of the island became essential links in the Roman economy. Nuragic and Punic cults were assimilated by Rome, as the province was gradually integrated into Imperial Rome's commercial network and urban systems.

Etruria

The historical era of Etruria is conventionally divided into the same chronological periods used for Greek art, which Etruscans consciously, although never slavishly, imitated.

Peninsular Italy, with reference to Etruria

1200–1000	Final Bronze Age—(“Protovillanovan culture”)
1000–750/700	Iron Age—(“Villanovan culture”)
750/700–600/580	Orientalizing Phase
600–475/450	Archaic Period
475/450–300	Classical Period (ends with the conquests of Alexander of Macedon, 331–323 BCE)
300–1st century BCE	Hellenistic Period (ends with defeat at Actium of last Macedonian ruler, Cleopatra VII of Egypt)

Etruscan history suffers from the complete loss of indigenous literature and the negative attitudes of authors among their Greek and Roman rivals. Scholars have refrained from using the term “Etruscan” until the period when we can verify the use of their unique language, thus the later eighth century BCE when Etruscan cities acquired the alphabet and left written records. The traits of incipient Etruscan culture, however, are all evident by the last centuries of the Bronze Age (“Final Bronze Age”) in the regions of Italy that would see the historic Etruscan cities, roughly the Tyrrhenian (western) side of the peninsula from the Arno River that flows through Pisa and Florence to the Tiber of Rome, with closely related cultural regions on the Adriatic (Verucchio, near later Rimini and Ravenna) and northern interior (Felsina-Bologna), and pockets of similar culture around the Bay of Naples (especially Capua). In fact, many aspects of material culture and agrarian and agricultural lifestyle can be traced back perhaps even into the Neolithic period (fourth to third millennia BCE).

By 1200 BCE, central Italy held many enclaves of hut villages already coalescing into proto-cities, with some shared facilities (drainage, corrals, communal ovens, as at Sorgenti della Nova near the future Vulci), transport networks, and relatively sophisticated metallurgy. At about that time, a change takes place, with the rapid

adoption, in the future Etruria, of the new funerary traditions developed in the “Urnfields cultures” of central Europe: a change to cremation and ritual burial in a biconical urn, with a standardized set of funerary offerings. This was not an influx of a new population (though obviously people carried the new ideas back and forth) but seems to have been an ideological development.

Progress in metallurgy and pyrotechnology led to improved utilization of metal resources, and to the Iron Age phase labeled “Villanovan” after an archaeological site, a necropolis of urn burials discovered in the nineteenth century at Villanova di Castenaso near Bologna. (The arbitrary name then was adapted to *Protovillanovan* to explain a subsequently identified earlier phase.) Men were distinguished in burial as warriors with offerings of arms and armor, while women received the tools of their daily spinning and weaving activities, and perhaps jewelry. Over time, some burials were richer than others, emblematic of a deepening social hierarchy. In the course of the eighth to seventh centuries, intensive contacts, possibly including exogamy, are seen between Etruscan cities (Vetulonia, Vulci) and Nuragic Sardinia. Phoenician/Punic Sardinia in the seventh to sixth centuries also maintained commercial and social contacts with Etruria. Finds of Villanovan and Orientalizing bronzes, weapons, armor, horse bronzes, vessels, and personal ornaments attest to the early activity of the Etruscans in the eastern Mediterranean and Aegean, including dedications of fibulae (once displayed on national costumes) from Etruscan women in major sanctuaries (Delphi, Olympia, Samian Heraion, etc.).

The cultures of the eastern Mediterranean and Near East, relatively poor in metal resources, especially iron, soon made their way to the Villanovan centers, leaving luxury goods and painted pottery in their wake. Their “eastern” styles and decorative fashions, as well as new materials such as gold, ivory, and glass, stimulated a new artistic movement, the so-called Orientalizing phase, again, an artistic and technical development, not a migration of peoples. Nevertheless, such ornate goods in the hands of the Etruscan ruling classes probably helped to foster the view of some ancient Greek and Latin authors that the Etruscan people had come from the east—Lydia, some said, with Herodotus publishing an imaginative tale of royal colonization in a time of famine. Other authors, however, like Dionysios of Halikarnassos, were critical, maintaining the autochthonous (native) origins of the group. Modern DNA studies purport to identify Etruscan ancestry in Asia Minor but remain highly controversial; archaeological and linguistic evidence imply the entrance of Etruscan ancestors into Italy well before the arrival of Indo-European speakers, namely the

Italic tribes.

The formal aspects of Etruscan culture were evident during the ninth to eighth centuries, which also saw the beginning of urbanization at the sites of all major Etruscan and Italic cities. (The traditional date of the founding of Rome by Romulus and Remus, 753 BCE, fits in this period of urbanization and consolidation of ethnic identities and architectures.) Growing involvement in the greater Mediterranean world was stimulated by such phenomena as the early eighth-century colony/*emporion* of Pithekoussai, a joint settlement of artisans and traders from several Greek cities (those of Euboea, also Corinth), Phoenicia and North Syria, and Etruscans and Italic persons from as far as Daunia in southwestern Italy. (Daunians were one of several Italic peoples of peninsular Italy, speaking languages similar to Latin; their contacts with Greeks would greatly inform art and pottery styles and technology, although conflict often occurred with Greek colonies, and later, with Rome.) The other Greek foundations would have a different, more difficult relationship with Etruria as a commercial and naval rival, while the Phoenicians' successor, Carthage, would maintain close diplomatic, treaty relations with some Etruscan cities. The great gift of the eastern neighbors, the alphabet, invented by the Phoenicians and passed on to Etruria through early Greek colonists, enables us to call the ethnic group Etruscans—once we find written examples of their unique, non-Indo-European language. So much has been lost with the disappearance of Etruscan literature that we must rely on sparse epigraphic data to reconstruct much of its social (and even political) history. The seventh century BCE attests the flourishing of Etruscan technology and commercial ties in the so-called “era of princely tombs”—many of which were actually the burials of “princesses,” women of the ruling class who not only displayed luxury but also were proudly distinguished by literacy. All the major Etruscan cities are attested by this period: Veii, Caere, Tarquinia, Vulci, *Volsinii*-Orvieto, Chiusi, Cortona, Rusellae, Perugia (with strong Umbrian presence), Arezzo, Vetulonia, Populonia.

In the middle of this era, historical events and personalities begin to appear, through the filter of Greek and Latin authors. Around 650 BCE, the exiled Demaratus, fleeing the expulsion of the royal family from Corinth, settled in Etruscan Tarquinia where he already had commercial ties. His marriage to an Etruscan “princess” (according to ancient authors) resulted in a son, who would be known as Lucius Tarquinius after he took office as the king of Rome (c.615 BCE), becoming Tarquinius Priscus in the words of Roman historians. The later seventh century seems to have been an era of *condottieri*, noblemen trained at arms and following an itinerant lifestyle, and

Roman early history has accounts of some of their adventures. Demaratus' retinue was said to include artisans who brought new trends of Greek art to Etruria, and also the invention of terracotta roof tiles, which spurred a revolution in Etruscan architecture.

The Archaic phase of Etruscan art (late seventh to early fifth centuries) is characterized by colorful terracotta statuary, fine works of bronze casting, goldsmithing, and stone sculpture, generally utilizing the volcanic stones of Italy. The Etruscan dynasty of Rome fostered similar sophistication there, under the mysterious Servius Tullius (or Mastarna as Etruscans called him) and the last of the kings, Tarquinius Superbus. Etruscan political domination of Rome ended with the revolution of 510/509 BCE and the installation of paired consuls and a republican government, necessitating the renegotiation of treaties with Carthage (much to Rome's detriment, paving the way to the Punic Wars). For Etruria, conflicts with Rome would ever after be losing propositions. It appears that many Etruscan cities were evolving into oligarchies or other non-monarchical forms, with a few startling exceptions. In the fifth century Veii would revert to monarchy (and pay a high price for it when other cities refused aid against Rome). The gold plaques discovered in 1965 at Pyrgi, one of the ports of the great city of *Cisry*/Caere (cerveteri), betray the existence of one Thefarie Velianas, called MLK "king" of Caere in the Phoenician-language text, but "*zilath*" in the Etruscan paraphrase—high magistrate or *praetor*; he may have been a dictator and soon disappeared. It should be emphasized that each Etruscan city with its agricultural hinterland was autonomous, and citizens would have seen themselves as "Caeretans," "Volsinians," etc.

Intensive maritime trade flourished between Etruria and the eastern and western Mediterranean during the seventh and sixth centuries, despite Greek competition and outright piracy. Around 535 BCE, Etruscan fleets, allied with Carthage, fought a naval battle with the colonists of Alalia in Corsica who had been preying upon Etruscan and Punic shipping. The Caeretans, given custody of the Greek prisoners, stoned them to death; a plague followed that only ended after expiation was performed following the directions of the oracle of Delphi. Etruscan foreign commerce seems to decline over the course of the fifth century, punctuated by events like the naval Battle of Cumae in 474 BCE, the first known defeat of an Etruscan fleet by a coalition of Italics and Greeks spearheaded by the Greek city of Syracuse. Helmets from the Etruscan marines were displayed in a trophy at Olympia.

The fifth to fourth centuries saw artistic trends paralleling those of Greek "Classical" art, but foreign alliances and local conflicts all

seemed to go awry. In 415–413 BCE, some Etruscan cities (Tarquinia) participated with the Athenians in the disastrous “Sicilian Expedition,” a failed attack on Syracuse. At the beginning of the fourth century, following years of famine in Europe, tribes of Gauls invaded Etruria, sacked Rome, and destroyed such sites as the Etruscan town of Marzabotto (*Kainua*), a planned colony with orthogonal streets and zoning plan established in the second half of the sixth century, long before Hippodamos of Miletus would be credited with such developments. The Gauls would be a disruptive presence in Italy for generations thereafter, sometimes settling peaceably, other times allying with warring Italic or Etruscan factions. In 396 BCE, the great city of Veii would fall to Rome after a long siege, its citizens enslaved, and cartloads of bronze statuary carried off to Rome (the common pattern for the next generations). Among other conflicts of the fourth century, Dionysios, king of Syracuse, would raid and plunder the ports and seaside sanctuaries of Tyrrhenian Etruria—his avowed purpose to end *Etruscan* piracy(!). His sac of Pyrgi in 384/383 BCE is evident in damaged and repaired art works at the temple of the goddess Uni-Astarte. Rome picked wars with nearby Etruscan cities, such as the conflict with Tarquinii and its Faliscan allies (358–351 BCE) and others with Caere, which led to their assimilation by Rome and a diminution of citizens’ rights. The fourth to third centuries were affected by slave revolts (Arezzo) and conflicts with Rome or its Latin/Italic allies.

The late fourth to first centuries BCE constitute the “Late period” of Etruscan culture, witnessing subtle changes in Etruscan religion, society, politics, and economy, culminating in gradual takeover by Rome. In 295 BCE, at the battle of Sentinum, Rome defeated an alliance of Etruscan and Italic cities and Gauls. In 273 BCE began the pacification of Etruria (and much of Italy) with the Roman tradition of foundation of a colony of military veterans established at Cosa as a link in a system of Roman control.

Internal troubles in Etruscan cities such as *Volsinii* (Orvieto) were caused by slavery and its subsequent developments: the freed slaves of *Volsinii* demanded and received standing in city government, then executed or exiled all the freeborn men and proceeded to control the city, including practicing *droit de seigneur* with the Etruscan noblewomen. The desperate Etruscan housewives called upon Rome which in 264 BCE sent an army, wiped out the rebels and relocated the Volsinians to Lake Bolsena, a beautiful site but completely indefensible in contrast to the fortress-like Orvieto.

In the era of the Late Roman Republic, Etruria was considered a hotbed of Dionysiac worship (the god Fufluns in Etruscan), including

many women, and leading to purges by Rome (probably more for political purposes than moral probity) such as the *Senatus Consultum de Bacchanalibus* issued in 186, leading to the execution of initiates, causing worship to go underground (literally, as a basement chapel in a house at Bolsena shows).

In 241 BCE the Roman destruction of the city of *Falerii* (Civita Castellana) meant the loss of the Etruscans' strong Faliscan ally; while 225 brought the final defeat of the Gauls in Italy by Romans at Talamone on the Etruscan coast. Rome's conflict with Carthage brought the Hannibalic (Second Punic) War and invasion of Italy by Punic troops and the disastrous battle of 217 at Lake Trasimene. Throughout the Punic Wars, Etruria tended to be a potential fifth column with more sympathy for its old treaty partner than for the Roman overlords, to the extent that the Etruscan cities were not required to send troops but were assessed hefty payments of war material such as sailcloth from Tarquinia and armor from the great foundries of Arezzo to support Scipio's campaign in 205. In the years between 191 and 83 BCE, Rome established a series of colonies in old Etruscan enclaves including Pyrgi, Graviscae, and Pisa on the Tyrrhenian, Bologna in the Adriatic north, and Capua near the Bay of Naples.

In 83–82 BCE, during an era of Roman unrest, Etruria was in turmoil; Sulla's campaigns against the pro-Marius northern Etruscan cities led to the exile of some Etruscans to North Africa, where there was a need for agriculture to replace that eliminated by the destruction of Carthage. By the first century BCE, smart Etruscan families took up options of senatorial rank in Rome or consolidated large agricultural holdings for trade in surplus foodstuffs like wine. Some men advanced in society or politics through offices held in Etruscan religious cults, respected among Roman religious officials. Although things had been rocky during the rise of Augustus to power (as in the siege of Perugia), during his reign as emperor, a number of Etruscans held power, either economic, political, or intellectual, such as Maecenas, the Etruscan patron of Augustus, Virgil and Horace, who claimed descent from the distant *Cilnii* family of the kings of Arezzo. Augustus' great nephew, Claudius (CE 41–54), was briefly married to an Etruscan noblewoman, Urgulanilla, and wrote in Greek a treatise, *Tyrrhenika*, (now lost) on the Etruscan language.

Italic cultures

Numerous Indo-European languages came into the peninsula with the

Italic tribes such as the Latins, Oscans, Umbrians, Piceni *et al.* (Oscans were found around the Bay of Naples, Umbrians in the region of modern Perugia, Veneti in the northern Adriatic). Among these groups, the Faliscans, based just east of Rome at Narce and *Falerii* (modern Civita Castellana) were the closest neighbors and, usually, allies of Etruscan states such as Veii. Epigraphic, artistic, and architectural evidence show that Faliscans intermarried and shared cult sanctuaries with Etruscans, and the languages (as also Latin) shared some expressions by the historical period at least. The Etruscan alphabet and numerals were adopted and developed by Italic neighbors. The Italic cultures had distinctive types of pottery and weaponry, also funerary traditions contrasting with those of Etruria, as in the *Fossa*-grave cultures around Rome which practiced inhumation when Villanovan culture had adopted cremation and urn burial. The Daunian (or Apulian) peoples of the southern Adriatic coast are known from the sixth century on for their painted, imaginative vase forms and distinctive stone grave stelai depicting ornately costumed women and armed warriors. Over the course of the first millennium, Rome gradually dominated all the Italic peoples, although they often put up remarkable resistance, and their regions always retained a noticeable ethnic flavor.

Rome

753 BCE	Legendary foundation
753(?)–510/509 BCE	Regal Period
509–27 BCE	Republic
27 BCE	Augustus declared Emperor
27 BCE – CE 476	Roman Empire (continuing in the Byzantine Empire to CE 1453)

Rising from Iron Age roots as a hut village, Rome seems to have followed an agenda for the takeover of the peninsula, which in the later first millennium BCE proceeded in tandem with aggression abroad (which led to slave revolts and fierce conflicts with Carthage, native Iberia, Gaul, and Britain, and with the successors of Alexander, the kings and queens of Macedonia, Pontus, Mesopotamia, and Egypt). By the last century BCE, most of the Mediterranean littoral had been incorporated into the Roman Republic. During the final century of the millennium, Rome often turned to civil wars and interethnic strife, leading to the eventual takeover of the entire state and its dependencies by Octavian, nephew of Julius Caesar, who in 27 BCE became emperor of Rome. A succession of good and bad emperors

marked the Imperial age of Rome punctuated by conquests in Gaul, Germany, Pannonia, Dacia, etc., bringing Roman culture and technology to northern and western Europe as well as the regions of Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and North Africa. The accession to the throne of Constantine in CE 312 brought the tolerance of Christianity, and by 330 the empire had grown so large that a second ruler and seat of power was established at Constantinople. This division would lead to the separation of the Byzantine Empire which survived until the destruction of Constantinople/Byzantium by the Turks in 1453.

A few landmarks of Roman history:

1000–630 BCE	Iron Age Latial culture in the region of Rome, Alban Hills, <i>Latium Vetus</i>
753 BCE	Traditional date of founding of Rome by Romulus and Remus
753–510/9 BCE	Rome ruled by series of selected kings
c.600 BCE	King Tarquinius Priscus, following a military victory, vows a temple to Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline Hill
510/9 BCE	Revolution throws out last (Etruscan) king, under the new Republic, consuls and <i>pontifex maximus</i> dedicate the Capitoline Temple vowed by Tarquinius Priscus
509–27 BCE	Roman Republic
508 BCE	Rome signs first treaty with Carthage; legend of Horatius at the bridge (battle with Etruscan forces); Rome will enter into conflicts with neighboring peoples during the coming centuries
458	Cincinnatus summoned from the plow to be dictator of Roman army
396	Rome conquers Veii
390	Gauls sack Rome; “Servian Wall” fortification erected 378 BCE
358	<i>Tarquinii</i> defeats Rome, sacrifices 307 Roman captives; coalition of Tarquinians, Caeretans, and Faliscans skirmishes with Rome

353	Roman victory results in brutal sacrifice of 358 Tarquinian prisoners; coalition eventually accepts long-term truce conditions
348	Second treaty with Carthage
4th to 3rd centuries BCE	Samnite Wars end in Roman control of peninsula (290 BCE final alliance with Samnites)
264–241, 218–201, 149–146	Punic Wars: Third Punic War ends in destruction of Carthage
215	<i>Lex Oppia</i> passed limiting women's ornamentation, costumes
214	Beginning of series of wars with Macedonian kingdom
211	Roman conquest of Syracuse
195	<i>Lex Oppia</i> repealed
168	Battle of Pydna ends wars with Macedonian kings
112–105	Wars with Numidian kingdom in Africa
90–88	Social war with Rome's allies
89–63	Wars with Mithradates kingdom of Pontus
88–82	Civil war at Rome between Sulla and Marius
73–71	Slave revolt led by Spartacus
55–54	Caesar's invasion of Britain
44	Assassination of Julius Caesar; Rome enters into civil wars 44–30 BCE
41–40	Perusine War – revolt against Octavian ends in siege, conquest of Etruscan city of Perugia
31	Octavian becomes sole ruler (emperor) of Rome after victory over Marcus Antonius and Cleopatra VI, last Ptolemaic ruler of Egypt
27 BCE–CE 14	Augustus first emperor of Rome
27 BCE–CE 476	Imperial Age of Roman Empire
CE 43	Claudius invades Britain
CE 60	Boudiccan revolt in Britain
CE 64	Great Fire of Rome (Nero)
CE 69–79	Vespasian, conquest of Judaea
CE 79	Eruption of Vesuvius (Pompeii, Herculaneum destroyed)
CE 80	Colosseum dedicated
CE 98–117	Trajan
CE 117–138	Hadrian
CE 138–161	Antoninus Pius
CE 161–180	Marcus Aurelius
CE 284–305	Diocletian
CE 306–324	Constantine emperor (Christianity the state religion)
CE 476–1453	Eastern (Byzantine) Empire
CE 527–565	Rule of Justinian (Constantinople)

Further reading

Etruria

The Etruscan World (ed. J. M. Turfa). London: Routledge, 2013.

Haynes, S. (2000) *Etruscan Civilization. A Cultural History*. Los Angeles, CA: J. Paul Getty Museum.

Smith, C. (2014) *The Etruscans. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Sardinia

Dyson, S. L. and Rowland, R. R. Jr. (2007) *Shepherds, Sailors, and Conquerors: Archaeology and History in Sardinia from the Stone Age to the Middle Ages*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Museum.

Italic, Roman Italy

Adkins, L. and Adkins, R. A. (1994) *Handbook to Life in Ancient Rome*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Hoyos, D. (ed.) (2011) *A Companion to the Punic Wars*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

O'Connell, R. L. (2011) *The Ghosts of Cannae: Hannibal and the Darkest Hour of the Roman Republic*. New York: Random House.

THE NURAGIC WOMEN

Facts and hypotheses

Fulvia Lo Schiavo and Matteo Milletti

Introduction

In this society of men – body and soul – woman brings a note of kindness and grace but also of dignity and severe composure, sometimes of a silent and solemn tragic nature: as she still is today, the Sardinian woman.

(Lilliu 1963: 309)

In the 1960s, Giovanni Lilliu, one of the founders of Sardinian archaeology, intended to summarize with these words, not without a note of lyricism, the role of women in the society of proto-historic Sardinia, establishing a parallel with contemporary Sardinia.¹ The reference to the female condition was part of a broader discussion of Nuragic society, characterized by manifest separatist ideals, to whose fragmentation into cantonal units the author intended to trace the harmful seeds of a division between the island nations that through the centuries has hindered the birth of a consciousness and a “national” Sardinian state. The local tradition of archaeological studies, continuing to cultivate ties with these issues and then projecting into the past the anxieties and expectations of the present, has thus ended by essentially putting the emphasis on patriarchal prerogatives and on warriors, thus on the men of the Nuragic peoples. These connotations, which became the sole pattern of Sardinian civilization even in later periods, were perfectly embodied in the romantic figure of the shepherd of the mountainous Barbagia region and in the myth of a Sardinia forever “tough and rebellious”.

Therefore little attention has developed for the recognition of female gender identity between the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Early Iron Age, and the same male prerogatives remain tied to a

vision that, although apparently sustained on an archaeological basis, remains highly stereotyped, and even today never the subject of critical studies. References in the literature to the female sphere are also quite few (Lo Schiavo 1981: 330, 339; Contu 2006), almost always intended as the antithesis of the male situation (Lilliu 1963: 641), if not entirely neglected in many reconstructions of Nuragic society and, from this point of view, attention is lacking for all actual issues of gender archaeology.

In a special volume dedicated to the study of figurative bronzes through the analysis of female representations, Elizabetta Alba treats the topic only in a tangential fashion, but in stressing the significant uncertainties and gaps in the documentation she places emphasis for the first time on the need to investigate the role of women through establishing a more comprehensive view of the Sardinian communities in the centuries at the turn of the first millennium BC (Alba 2005). On the other hand, the past lack of interest in scientific research ended up being partially filled by so many local scholars and antiquarians, with claims of an alleged matriarchy in the island's society, often nothing but feminist reactions to the previous reading, perceived as a manifestation of male chauvinism.

This presumed matriarchal structure, perpetuated in a manner unspecified but implied over the centuries, thus dates back to the Neolithic period and seems to be attested in the cult of the Mother Goddesses, well represented in the small-scale stone statuary, a reading which clearly refers to the classic dichotomy between a Neolithic of peaceful agriculturalists and a Bronze Age of bellicose pastoralists. Even amid considerable uncertainty related to the unsatisfactory archaeological record, it is now necessary to try to frame the role of women in Nuragic society within a better defined cultural milieu, starting with some hard data offered mainly from physical anthropology and from archaeological research in general, stripping it of the ideological superstructures accumulated mainly during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, without any claim to exhaust the subject, but in order to provide the foundation for future in-depth research.

Matteo Milletti

The evidence of physical anthropology

Mortuary documentary sources, consisting of both the skeletal remains and the associated grave goods from the tombs, are almost entirely

lacking in Sardinia. The earliest burials in caves and in rock-cut tombs were abandoned about the end of the Early Bronze Age, with the exception of a few sporadic intrusions, giving way to the monumental Giant's Tombs (*Tombe dei Giganti*), but leaving the tradition of numerous inhumations piled up in the same place almost without grave goods.

In 1995, what has been called by Ercole Contu “a true *summa* of Sardinian pre- and proto-historic anthropology” (Contu 1995: 10) was written by Franco Germanà (Germanà 1995), who not only collected his own former studies, but also added the research of other anthropologists who in the last century dealt with Sardinia, beginning with the Palaeolithic and ending with the Nuragic period. Here we consider all the references to female skeletons, from the Bonnanaro B or Sa Turracula phase (beginning of the Middle Bronze Age, MBA 1, nineteenth to seventeenth centuries BC) to the Late Bronze Age, a broad chronological span, considering how scanty the evidence is.

The Giant's Tombs are the typical funerary monuments of Nuragic Sardinia, with different architectonic shapes throughout the Bronze Age, but as a general rule they are chamber tombs, from a few metres long up to 25–30 m, used for collective burials, in some cases many hundreds of them. They consist of an elongated and often paved burial chamber, the burial mound contained by a stone plinth, with an apsidal rear part and a ritual area opposite defined by a semi-circular structure (*exedra*); and a large monolith or stele in the centre, in some cases reaching the spectacular height of 4 m, with a small symbolic entrance (*portello*) at its base. The inhumations were introduced from the top, by raising the cover slabs and removing the former burials. In this situation, where the human bones, already dislodged in ancient times to make way for subsequent inhumations, are again scattered and destroyed by modern looters, it is difficult to have an idea of the Minimal Number of Individuals (MNI) of whatever age and sex, and it is difficult to say anything about the presence/absence of females. That is why even the slightest threads of evidence are precious for an historical reconstruction.

Skeletons of female individuals were identified and studied in the so-called *domus con prospetto architettonico*, that is tombs carved in the soft sandstone with huge stelae – characteristic also of the earliest Giant's Tombs – sculpted on the front. The collective burials are almost without grave goods, except for scarce pottery sherds and a few awls and pins used to fasten the shroud. That was the case at Oridda-Sennori (Sassari) (Germanà 1995: 136–138) and at S'Iscia sas Piras-Usini (Sassari) (Germanà 1995: 138–139).

Maria Luisa Ferrarese ceruti has dated the famous “Tomb of the Witch” of Sisaia Cave-Dorgali (Nuoro = NU) to the Bonnanaro B-Sa Turricula period, consisting of a rare – in fact up to now unique – case of a primary undisturbed inhumation of an adult female, half-curved up on one side, in a small natural cavity opened in the steep limestone side of Lanaittu Valley. Her personal grave goods near the body included an impasto (hand-made coarse clay) pan and bowl, a granite grindstone and the remains of burned branches of an earthplace where wood fires were frequently lit and the ashes allowed to collect over time; remains of animal bones were also present (Ferrarese ceruti and Germanà 1978; Germanà 1995, 139–140). The name of the site is “Sisaia” or “S’Isaia”, which means “the she-ancestor”, “the foremother”, “the witch”, as if the place were known and the name given when the body was not buried but simply laid down on the ground at the beginning of the second millennium BC, and from that time, never more visited or disturbed. The story may seem an invention, but from the results of the anthropological and palaeopathological analyses the woman had a spinal arthrosis (osteoarthritis), a large tumour on the sacrum and the left shoulder-blade, ulna and humerus were broken and badly healed from a traumatic episode (possibly a violent blow and a consequent fending-fracture). Moreover, a series of Harris lines on the tibiae and femurs show that the growth during her infancy and childhood was not continuous and healthy; her height, about 150 cm, is below average for the Bonnanaro B period. The woman never gave birth to a child and, according to modern parameters, she was quite ugly because of a strong dental prognathism (the teeth were in very bad condition). Most significantly, she had undergone trepanation of the skull, the small round piece of bone cut from her skull then replaced in a successful case of Bronze Age autografting. It is no fantasy to believe that after such a dramatic story, when she died – for causes that are impossible to detect, and after having embodied an almost supernatural resistance to the worst possible occurrences – the people of her tribe found a far-away place to lay down the body, exceptionally with grave goods and food (in order to deter her spirit from going haunting for food and offerings?), and never more did anyone dare to disturb her.²

From other burials in small natural caves in Seulo (NU) district and at Capo Pecora-Arbus (Cagliari = CA), female skulls and other scattered bones were recovered and studied.

In the *poliandro* tombs, that is “corridor” (a stone slab chamber) collective burials, at Ena ‘e Muros-Ossi (Bonnanaro B) and in a second one at Mtrox’e Bois-Usellus (Oristano = OR) (about beginning Final

Bronze Age, FBA, 1200: Contu, pers. com. in Germanà 1995: 178) female cranial remains and other bones were discovered.

In the Nuragic period, in Gallura, the north-east region of Sassari province, there is no difference in gender and age to the access to the grave, to the burial rituals and to the lack of grave goods between the *tafoni* (small natural caves in the granite) and the contemporary and nearby Giant's Tombs. Referring just to the *tafoni* and the Giant's Tomb in which female remains were found, there are the Balaiana-Luogosanto Tomb 1, the Malchittu-Arzachena Tomb 1 and the Li Muri-Arzachena *tafoni*, and the Giant's Tombs of Lu Brandali (Germanà 1995, 169–171) and of La Testa (Antona 1990, 2005; Tedde 1993) (between Recent Bronze Age, RBA, and FBA), both in S. Teresa di Gallura district.

A second and recent summing up of the data of physical anthropology in Nuragic Sardinia is due to a specialist, Ornella Fonzo (Fonzo forthcoming). She excavated and studied individuals of both sexes found in Tomb A and B at the site of Sedda 'e Sa Caudeba-Collinas (CA) (final phases of the MBA and RBA), in Grave 4 from the site of Is Lapeddhas in Gonnosnò (OR) (Ugas 1990a) (RBA layers), in the Nuragic Tomb of Su Fraigu near San Sperate (CA) (Ugas 1993), the so-called "The Three Hundreds' Burial" (in fact 292 MNI) (end RBA – beginning FBA), and in the Giant's Tomb Arrubiu 1-Orroli (Fonzo forthcoming).

From other burials in small natural caves in Seùlo (Nuoro) district, 9 males (Germanà 1995: 140–151) and 2 female skulls and other scattered bones were studied; in a natural cave at Capo Pecora-Arbus (Cagliari) (Germanà 1995: 151–152), among about 20 individuals, 6 male (1 juvenile, 2 adults and 3 senile, i.e. elderly) and 7 female (1 juvenile and 6 adults) skulls were selected and analysed; in the "*poliandro* tomb" (that is a "corridor tomb" where many individuals were inhumed) with some grave goods consisting of pottery and two copper daggers; at Ena 'Muros-Ossi (Germanà 1995: 152), 6 cranial remains, 3 males and 3 females, and 1 male and 2 female frontal bone fragments were studied.

To sum up the Bonnanaro B anthropological data, Germanà concludes that of about 30 cranial remains that could be measured – 18 males and 8 females – with only one exception, all were dolichomorphic (having a relatively long head). As to the postcranial remains, he notes a certain variability among the different regional groups and also between male and female skeletons, generally female bones were shorter and thinner. The average height of the males is

165.6 cm and the females 152.9 cm, both having increased since the prehistoric periods. The same tendency is noticed in the subsequent Nuragic period from the MBA to the end of the FBA.

For the Nuragic period (Ferrarese ceruti 1968), Ferrarese ceruti from the archaeological point of view and Germanà from the anthropological one, dedicated attention to a phenomenon that Gallura, the north-east region of Sassari province, has in common with south Corsica, that is the use of small natural caves in the granite, named *tafoni*, for numerous burials, again piled up and with no grave goods except a few fragments of impasto pottery. When the cavities were filled up, a rough stone wall was sometimes built up in front of them. To mention only the *tafoni* in which female remains were found, in the Balaiana-Luogosanto Tomb 1 there were an adult female and a senile one, together with an adult male; in Malchittu-Arzachena Tomb 1 there were two individuals, one of whom was female; from the Li Muri-Arzachena *tafone* an adult male and two females: an adult and a senile cranial remains and other postcranial bones, among which two female femurs were studied. What is most important is the observation that, as far as archaeology and anthropology could say at the time, there is no difference according to gender or age in an individual's access to a tomb, to the burial rituals or to the lack of grave goods between the *tafoni* and the contemporary and nearby Giant's Tombs.

The Giant's Tombs are the typical funerary monuments of Nuragic Sardinia, with different architectonic shapes throughout the Bronze Age, but as a general rule they are chamber tombs, from a few metres long up to 25/30 m, used for collective burials, in some cases many hundreds of them. They consist of an elongated and often paved burial chamber, the burial mound contained by a stone plinth, with an apsidal rear part and a ritual area opposite defined by a semi-circular structure (*exedra*); and a large monolith or stele in the centre, in some cases reaching the spectacular height of 4 m, with a small symbolic entrance (*portello*) at its base. The inhumations were introduced from the top, by raising the cover slabs and removing the former burials. In this situation, where the human bones, already dislodged in ancient times to make way for subsequent inhumations, are again scattered and destroyed by modern looters, it is difficult to have an idea of the MNI of whatever age and sex, and it is difficult to say anything about the presence/absence of females. That is why even the slightest threads of evidence are precious for a historical reconstruction.

In Gallura, as a comparison with the *tafoni* tombs, Germanà gives a preliminary reference to the Lu Brandali-S. Teresa di Gallura Giant's tomb (Germanà 1995, 169–171) where about 50 individuals were

identified; he measured 11 male and 10 female skulls, all of them dolichomorphic, with no morphometric difference in comparison to the *tafoni* material, both in the cranial and postcranial skeleton. The height average is 166.3 cm in males and 155.5 cm in females. In a second *poliandro* at Motrox'e Bois-Usellus (Oristano), dated from about the beginning of the FBA (1200 BC: Germanà 1995, 178 quoting E. Contu pers. com.), and associated with grave goods such as amber beads, bone beads and frogs, six bronze arm-rings and an iron dagger with steatite hilt, were the remains of about 20 individuals, of which a few skulls were recovered, including an adult and a senile female.

A second and recent summing up of the data of physical anthropology in Nuragic Sardinia is due to a specialist, Ornella Fonzo (Fonzo forthcoming). Through her courtesy, the results of her analyses and studies, in some cases in *équipe* with other physicians and physical anthropologists, are summarized here. Her synthesis demonstrates how rarely human bones were properly excavated or thoroughly studied. Of hundreds of Giant's Tombs, most of them destroyed by clandestine digging in the past, those properly excavated are few and even less were properly studied: Tombs A and B at Sedda 'e Sa Caudeba-Collinas (Cagliari), Grave 4 from the site of Is Lapedddas in Gonnosnò (Oristano), the so-called "Three Hundreds' Tomb" at Su Fraigu near San Sperate (Cagliari), the Giant's Tombs of Lu Brandali-S. Teresa di Gallura (Sassari) already mentioned here, of La Testa-S. Teresa di Gallura and of Nuraghe Arrubiu-Orroli. At the end of the Bronze Age/beginning of the Iron Age the first individual tombs appear, as the *a pozzetto* (small pit) tombs 1 and 3 at Antas-Fluminimaggiore (with one male adult: Ugas and Lucia 1987) and the *a pozzetto* and cist tombs at Mont'e Prama-Cabras (Oristano).

In the site of Sedda 'e Sa Caudeba-Collinas (Cagliari), the remains of two graves were found (Atzeni *et al.* 2012) dating to the final phases of the MBA and RBA. Clandestine excavations had emptied Grave A of most of its contents leaving bones highly fragmented. Analyses of teeth have yielded an MNI of 103 Individuals of both sexes, 25 of which belonged to children aged below 12, and at least another 25 to people who had reached adult age. From the study of Grave B, in which cranium remains of subadults were found in a stone cist by the entrance, analysis confirms the presence of at least 239 individuals. Both sexes were present, as attested by the numerous finds of mastoids and fragments of ischiatic incisure. The teeth indicate at least 73 children aged between a few months and 12 years, and 166 individuals over 12 years of age. Among the latter, 8 at least were below 16, and 60 had reached adult age. One can thus confirm that all the members of the community had access to burial although in

distinct sectors. The last 7 to be buried were 3 male adults and 1 of indeterminate sex, 2 subadults and 1 female of 18 years; they still retained bone-to-bone articulation, at least partially, and were lying on their backs, most with their heads oriented towards the back of the tomb and their feet towards the entrance; those from the deeper layers were more displaced. Grave 4 from the site of Is Lapeddhas at Gonnosnò (Oristano) (Ugas 1990a) also yielded information about the burial position. Here the RBA layer documented supine placement (Ugas 1990b). Unfortunately, no other information about the skeletal remains is available.

An exhaustive study of the Nuragic Tomb of Su Fraigu near San Sperate (Cagliari) (Ugas 1993), has not yet been conducted. The Tomb was called “The Three Hundreds’ Tomb” because of the number of skulls and portions of cranial vault, which would bring the MNI to 292. But since a calotte fragment is not equivalent to a cranium, the MNI would not exceed 271 bodies. All the skeletons, as determined during excavation, were in an extended rather than flexed position, and, contrary to the findings in other Giants’ Tombs, some were oriented with their head towards the back and feet facing the entrance whereas others were oriented in the opposite direction. Identification of partial articulation indicates that the bodies had been dismembered to make room for new burials when the small hand and foot bones were not yet totally disarticulated. Therefore, the time lapse between inhumations must not have been long. Out of 103 individuals to which an approximate age was attributed, 58 are mature or senile adults, 11 are young adults, 34 subadults, 24 of whom are infants. Funerary objects are very scant compared to the number of buried bodies and did not accompany them when dislodged. They consist of hundreds of glass beads equivalent to two necklaces and a worn-out Cypriot cylindrical olivine seal (*Fide* Ugas, the necklaces were around the necks of two female infants). Based on these objects, the burial can be dated to the end of the RBA and the beginning of the FBA.

Not too far from Lu Brandali (see Germanà 1995, mentioned above), there is the tomb of La Testa-S. Teresa di Gallura (Antona 1990, 2005; Tedde 1993), which was used between the RBA and the FBA. Despite the tampering that has occurred over the centuries and the presence of invasive roots, excavations have yielded 4,000 bone fragments belonging to about 80 bodies, lying in primary burial position regardless of sex and age. The average life expectancy ranged from medium to low, with noticeable infant and teen-age mortality, but the absence of foetal and neonatal bone material raises doubts on the use of the monument for infants (Fonzo forthcoming).

Recent excavations in Tomb 1 of Nuraghe Arrubiu-Orroli (2012–2013) discovered a typical “Giant’s Tomb”, plundered in the past, but with traces still preserved of the exedra and of the funerary chamber made out of orthostatic basalt slabs. The upper surface (*extrados*) of the tomb was originally built up in regular layers of small isodomic blocks, a typology dated between the end of MBA 3 and RBA. certainly the only pottery found (three bowls and a small jar) can be referred to RBA, as well as about 350 glass paste and *faiënce* beads, many small bronze sheet fragments, a drift, a complete votive sword (98 cm), two fragments of a second sword and two small fragments of the horns of a bronze deer figurine (Perra *et al.* forthcoming). Also in the Tomb Arrubiu 1-Orroli adults and young adults were inhumed, apparently regardless of sex and age, and there was also evidence of the same removal practices noted in the tombs mentioned above.

At the end of the Bronze Age/beginning of the Iron Age³ the first individual tombs appear, such as the *a pozzetto* and cist tombs at Mont’e Pramas-Cabras (Tronchetti *et al.* 1991; Bedini *et al.* 2012). The skeletal remains from Mont’e Prama, recently re-examined (Fonzo and Pacciani 2014), belong to 41 inhumed individuals, predominantly young adults and adolescents. Only one is certainly female and five probably female; infant and senile individuals are absent. The age was investigated on the basis of dental wear (Cameriere *et al.* 2014). The characteristics of the probably kindred group are an intense and repeated physical activity and a diet based on soft, protein-rich food, including fish (Lai *et al.* 2014). The bodies were deposited sitting on the bottom of each single *a pozzetto* tomb, with knees tightly bent to the chest and often crossed ankles, arms more or less bent to the elbows and hands to the chest. The skull leaned onto the chest and after decomposition fell between pelvis and thighs (Pacciani and Fonzo 2012, 2014; Fonzo forthcoming). The physical anthropological data are scarce indeed if we consider the large time span from the first quarter of the second millennium to the beginning of the first millennium BC; even if it is not universally considered already “Nuragic”, it seems reasonable to include the Bonnanaro B period for completeness (Lo Schiavo 2013). Therefore, on the basis of the physical anthropological data, we can conclude that:

1. women, from Bonnanaro B period and throughout the Nuragic period, had access to the same burial with the same ritual as the men, with no distinction of gender and age. Female skeletons were found in rock-cut tombs, in small natural caves, in *tafoni*, in all different shapes of Giant’s Tombs, in *domus a prospetto* tombs, in *poliandro* tombs and even in individual pit-graves, such as at

2. neither men nor women had any grave goods. At most, a few small pins and awls, similar to the Early Bronze Age ones, were used for fastening the shrouds, an effective way of annihilating any rank and individuality.⁴

Fulvia Lo Schiavo

Main sources of archaeological documentation

In other geographic and cultural contexts the main body of information on the field of gender in the prehistoric period has been deduced from analyses of burial contexts. But here, a collectivist and basically isonomic funerary ideology, combined with a chronic lack of contextualizing data, with burials found already disturbed in antiquity in order to make way for later depositions as well as those tampered with in recent times, prevents one from using this type of approach in an equally profitable manner to analyse the society of Nuragic Sardinia. Funerary archaeology, in the present state of research, thus does not seem to offer any resolution of issues but only, as we shall see, clues that are more negative than positive which must be verified on a broader scale. In light of these considerations, it therefore seems essential in addition to comparison with the contemporary realities of the nearby Italian Peninsula, to use the rich iconographic repertoire offered by Sardinian bronze small-scale sculptures. Female subjects represent a distinctly minor portion of the *corpus*, less than a fifth of the total, with a figurative repertoire that is also much more restricted and stereotyped than that of male subjects. Although about two-thirds of the female statuettes repeat, with few variations, the theme of the orant (praying figure)/offering-maker, the bronzes still constitute an essential source of information, to be assessed, obviously, with caution in consideration of the ideological filter underpinning their iconography.

Indicators of gender and of role

Clothing and jewellery

As far as the world of men is concerned, the scarce data tend to confirm the tendency, at least in figural representations, to observe the role of the warrior, multiplying the image in the bronze figurines, and also in the statues of Mont'e Prama, Cabras. Such a practice seems

to have been diffused only during the FBA, at the same time as the ceremonial area disappeared from in front of the Giants' Tombs and benches were installed in the *atria* of the temples, and in the *sacella* (shrines/small sacred structures) of sanctuaries and villages and in the *Capanne delle Riunioni* ("Meeting Huts").

Distinctive elements of female status might be found in the clothing, and there exists a rich bibliography which emphasizes the exceptional character of the garments, probably ceremonial dress, represented on the bronzes (Lo Schiavo 1981: 269–271; Alba 2005: 75–84 with references). Nonetheless, the care taken in rendering the clothing never approaches the level of detail reserved for male equipment. It is limited to depicting in summary fashion the decoration of the cloth and the drapery folds, and even if socially eminent female (bronze) figures are not lacking, like some wearing long dresses that reach the ankle, none of these seems highly distinctive, neither do they recur with particular frequency or seem to rise to the level of an absolute symbol. If then within the corpus of female statuettes it is reasonable to propose a "vertical" distinction among the women represented on the basis of their clothing, it is more difficult to recognize a dimension of absolute rank, as was made quite explicit in the case of the *Capotribù*, who bears more than one distinctive attribute. The use of the stole may have had a specific value: in the female bronzes it encircles the neck and falls over the chest, but is attested in only two bronzes (Figure 52.1) and in association with a conical hat (Alba 2005: 83–84), elements which have led to the hypothesis that the personages represented may have been cult officiants belonging to a true priestly class or, as seems more likely, simply individuals – whether men or women – perhaps of elevated rank who have taken over this function. On the peninsula, forked implements used for tablet-weaving, designed to produce straight bands and stoles, seem to be attested essentially only in the contexts of the highest rank, once again stressing the ideological bond between the finest specialization of weaving and the rank of the deceased woman (Gleba 2012: 229).

For a clearer understanding of what is and is not represented in the female bronzes, we might compare them with those of men. Here, once again, there is a strident contrast with the masculine sphere, for which some weapons have been recognized, for example, the votive swords (Lo Schiavo 2014 with bibliography), or the so-called "*batons of command*" (Campus *et al.* 2003: 27–28), both often depicted in the hands of bronze figurines of warriors or personages known, simply because of this, as *Capitribù* ("tribal chiefs"). The close similarity of these representations to actual objects, with exceptional care taken in the rendering of the most representative and recognizable details of

the weapons, as for example the bilobate hilt of the votive swords, attests a high ideological value.

It seems reasonable to ascribe to personal ornamentation a part, indeed a major part, in the female sphere, even if it is difficult to explain which categories or specific types pertain. Some depositions, for example the tomb at Motrox'e Bois, Usellus-OR (Usai 2007a with bibliography), have in fact furnished rich *parures* (sets of jewellery) with elements in bronze, bone and amber, but the collective burial ritual does not allow us to definitely attribute these objects to women. In contrast, the *man* in Tomb 3 at Antas was buried with, among other things, some beads of rock crystal, glass paste, silver and amber (Usai 2007b with bibliography), confirmation that in Sardinia also construction of the personal social image by exhibition and combination of necklaces need not have been an exclusively female custom (Treherne 1995). In this regard, in fact, it appears to reflect the lack of *representation* of jewellery, and in general of all accessories, on the female bronze figurines, just as in Nuragic society no particular value as indicators of gender was assigned to them. On the other hand, even in the sanctuaries and sacred springs, armlets (Figure 52.2, 3–10), rings, beaded necklaces and various bronze pendants of Nuragic production, some frequently recurring, never represent a major or relevant portion of the offerings (Lo Schiavo 1991), which consist mainly of bronze statuettes, pins/stillettos and daggers (Lo Schiavo 2003). Even the incidence of ornaments in other materials, such as beads in amber or glass paste, is negligible, with a few considerable concentrations as, for example, in *megaron* Temple B of Su Romanzesu at Bitti, Nuoro (Fadda 2002).



Figure 52.1 Bronze statuette from Ogliastra. (Lilliu 1966.)

Among the various categories of pendants, probably used as amulets, it is still difficult to establish relation to gender: if those in the shape of little daggers with gamma-shaped hilts must be unequivocally attributed to the masculine sphere, because they are reproduced on the chests of male bronzes, perhaps we may, with caution, assign to the female sphere the pendants in the shape of pilgrim flasks (Lo Schiavo 2012: 23–24). The original vessel shape, that of the Egyptian “New Year’s Flask” which held Nile Water, is closely associated with the theme of fertility (Bagnasco Gianni 2006 with bibliography). Nonetheless, the symbolism of the *pilgrim’s flask* in the course of centuries has undergone numerous renegotiations of meaning, reappearing, for example, in the peninsula mainly in the context of armed warriors and worked in repoussé in sheet bronze (Marzoli 1998), although this attribution must be considered uncertain.

A missing link: Nuragic women and textiles

As for the indicators of the *mundus muliebris* (“women’s world”), textile tools, even though paradigmatic in the civilization of peninsular Italy, are not deposited in the sanctuaries, where the offerings usually denote a strong connotation of identity and the ethnopoietic character of the objects, and they are practically absent even in the collective burials, except for a few and uncertain claims such as Tomb II of Sa Figù, Ittiri (Melis 2011: 112, fig. 4.17). In habitation contexts instead, spindle whorls are a frequent find, while the absence of spindles and distaffs can be attributed to the fact that these were made exclusively in perishable materials and not, as sometimes on the peninsula, in more expensive and valuable versions in bronze or other prized materials, further proof of the lesser ideological value assigned to these objects in Sardinia.

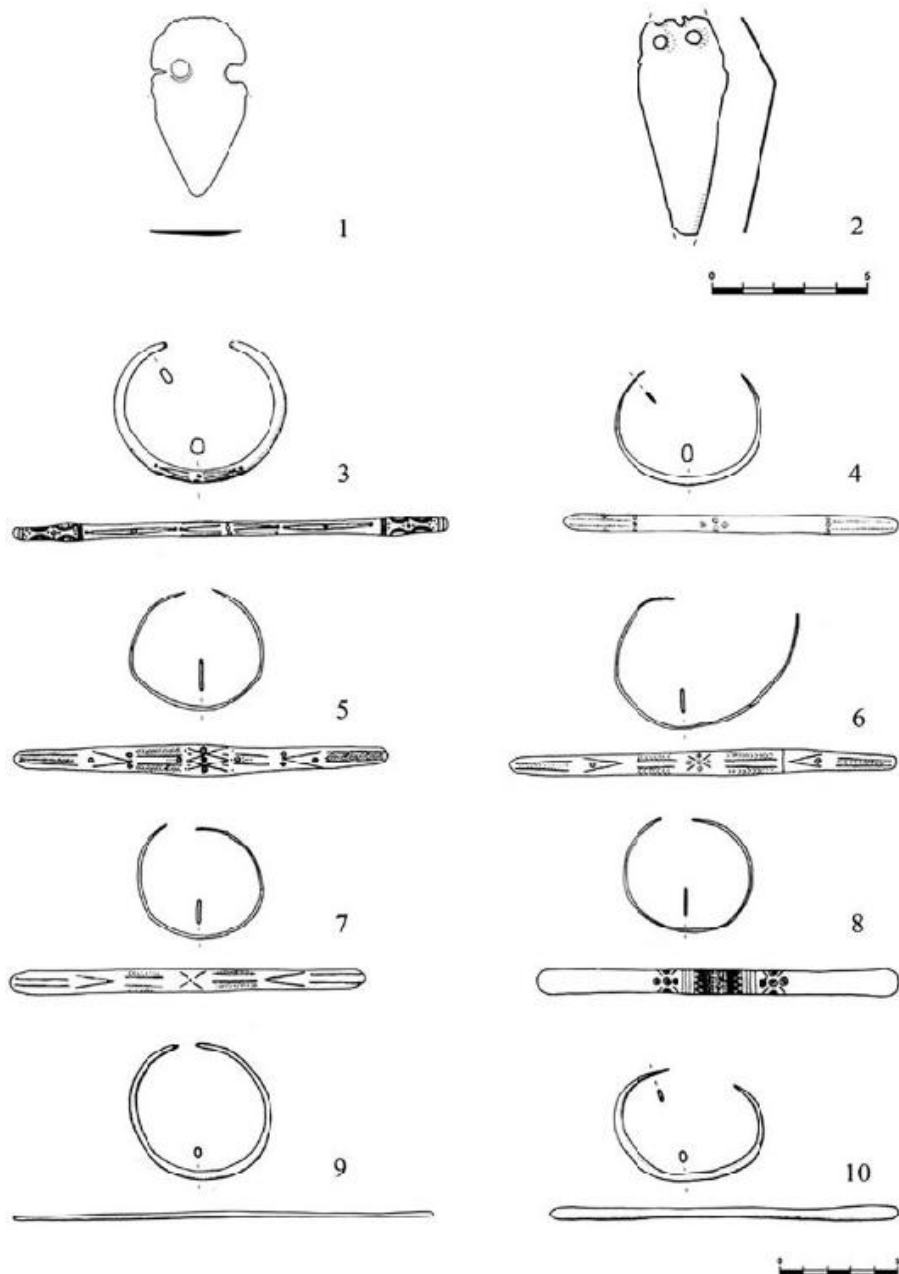


Figure 52.2 1, 2: Daggers from Populonia (Piombino-Livorno), Tomb 8/1915 at Piano delle Granate and from Tarquinia (Viterbo), Tomb 99 Selciatello Sopra (Milletti 2012); 3–10: Bracelets from the village of Serra Orrios, Dorgali (Nuoro) (Lo Schiavo 1980).

In relation to specific textile tools, the general absence of *rocchetti*

(“spools” or “bobbins”) and of ceramic loom weights, not only in tombs but also in the villages, remains an unsolved problem, perhaps explained by the use of analogous lithic products, which nevertheless have never been found among excavated finds, or with the use of some type of loom different from the vertical warp-weighted loom. Moreover, the opinion is widespread in the literature (Bartoloni 2003: 120) that some daggers of reduced dimensions (Milletti 2012: A4–5, 114–115) may have been used by women in activities related to textile manufacture (Figure 52.2, 1–2), similar to the case of the elegant small bronze knives in all the female depositions of Madonna del Piano (Bernabò Brea *et al.* 1969). Such a suggestive hypothesis is nonetheless based exclusively on the discovery of two examples in as many female Villanovan (Iron Age proto-Etruscan) tombs at Populonia and Tarquinia and one cannot exclude, as an alternative, that we are actually dealing with small men’s razors (Lo Schiavo *et al.* 2014: 44–45).

In Sardinia, at least during the Bronze Age and the first phase of the Iron Age, one of the few constants in the prerogatives of gender amassed by all the principal cultures of peninsular Italy seems to be lacking here. Obviously, that does not mean that no spinning occurred among women’s tasks, but simply seems to imply that in Nuragic society this practice was not perceived as representative of women’s world. On the other hand, other activities that, for the same reasons we would consider specifically female, also of relevance for the household economy, such as preparation and cooking of meals, simply do not seem to have taken on an ideological meaning in Nuragic culture, nor to have done so among the other peninsular cultures either (Pitzalis 2011: 209).

Marriage and Motherhood

Exogamy

Even if it is difficult to find archaeological comparisons, it is hard not to imagine that in Nuragic culture, as in the greater number of ancient communities, the two main roles reserved for women independent of their status would have been those of wife and mother. With regard to the marriage bond, we have no clue either to the way in which it was contracted or to the rituals associated with it, neither to the roles of the spouses within the family. It seems reasonable, though, to suppose that the custom also allowed exogamy, marriage of members of different communities whether in the long or short range. Some objects of Sardinian provenance deposited in peninsular funerary

contexts have been interpreted in this sense. It has long been said, for example, in explanation of the so-called Tomb of the Sardinian Bronzes in the Cavalupo necropolis of Vulci that a Sardinian woman came to marry a local ruler. The interpretation of this context, always controversial, has been replaced by a recent re-reading of the evidence (Arancio *et al.* 2010). But on the other hand, of the Sardinian bronzes found in Villanovan tombs, nearly all that are well enough identified to be considered indicators of provenance come from female contexts, so Sardinia would not seem to be excluded from the gift-giving practice of the *dono gentile* (Milletti 2012: 229–233 with references). The “exotic” character of the bronzes would have been evident in Etruria, as is shown in the frequent deposition of multiple Sardinian objects in Villanovan tombs and, in consequence, it is logical to ask if a portion of the fibulae found in Sardinia could have constituted the personal property of foreigners transplanted to the island.

Maternity

References to the theme of maternity are rare also. We have already referred to the theme of fertility expressed in relation to the *pilgrim's flask*, which nonetheless represents a negligible part of the regime of Nuragic votive offerings. Funerary archaeology does not seem to offer useful evidence in this sense, but there is still one case in which it seems possible to perceive a reference to that aspect of the female sphere. The one figural model in the corpus of the bronze statuettes that is exclusively female, apart from one major variant on the theme of the offering-maker/orant, occurs in a group of three sculptures representing a woman, wrapped in a long mantle and with a long skirt, with her right arm raised and the palm of her hand open, in the posture of prayer, seated on a stool. She holds on her knee and clasps with her left hand at shoulder height a figure of male sex. This male figure is always smaller than the female, but his age seems to vary: in the bronze of Sa Domu ‘e S’Orku, Urzulei (NU) the presence of a dagger with gamma-shaped hilt makes him appear to be at least a young adult, but the distinctly reduced dimensions of the male in the group from S. Vittoria di Serri (Figure 52.3) are perhaps better suited to a child.

In general, though, it is not possible to exclude the fact that such a distortion is due to the greater importance of the female figure. The suggestion is certainly strong that these bronzes portray a mother–son group in which the son is deceased, as occurs sometimes in literature, but this remains only a conjecture (Lilliu 1981: 214). If one accepts this interpretation as relevant to our inquiry, even setting aside the

possible divine nature of the pair, which is difficult to prove (Contu 1998: 205–206) and not visible elsewhere in the archaeological evidence, it is the wish to also celebrate in the Nuragic culture that bond of parentage that lies at the root of social structure and perpetuates it, and in which the woman is in every case the protagonist.

To conclude: *par condicio* (“equality of treatment”)

From the archaeological point of view, as well as from the anthropological one, there is no trace of any kind of discrimination against women, not only in material culture but also in symbology. It is so extreme that, as we have seen, it is not easy to ascribe to women even the most traditional of feminine tasks, namely spinning and weaving.

On the other hand, spinning, weaving, sewing and embroidering are indisputably documented in most of the female bronze figurines. An interesting study on Nuragic fashion in the modern sense of the word (Demontis 2005: 141–177) (Figure 52.4) shows long tunics with a *plissé* flounce, apparently made of light textiles such as linen, heavier cloth surcoats, richly embroidered and fringed woollen mantles and scarves, and a thin veil covering, in some cases, an elegant *coiffure* consisting of a mass of thin braids (Lilliu 1963: nn. 68–72), no different from a modern hairstyle for young women (Figure 52.5). It is not rare that such an important and complex dress – Lilliu called the women in this attire *Sacerdotesse* (Priestesses) – was completed by a high *a tutulus* (conical) hat.

Other archaeological evidence for Nuragic female activities is meagre: one single fingerprint on the interior of an *impasto* pan made when the coarse clay was still moist at Nuraghe S. Pietro, Torpè (NU) (Lo Schiavo 1976 tav. XIII) is the only document of possible domestic and female pottery production. Bread-making and baking, traditionally attributed to women, now form part of a more solid hypothesis after the discovery in the 2014 excavations of Nuraghe Arrubiu-Orroli of two clay baking plates and an earthplace. In the same Tower C many grindstones and pestles were found, together with many spindle whorls, stressing the designation of the room for feminine activities. On the other hand, not only anthropological parallels but also commonsense tend to assign building activity to men, considering the huge dimensions of all the Nuragic monuments. On a votive bronze boat of unknown provenance, now in Turin (Lilliu 1966: n. 289) a “nobleman” leads a pair of oxen: it is therefore

possible that hunting and cattle-breeding were not open to women, though there is no reason to exclude them from barnyard animal breeding (roosters, doves and ducks are represented among the bronze figurines) or from any other activity of food preparation, and farming and pastoral activities not implying the use of muscular strength.

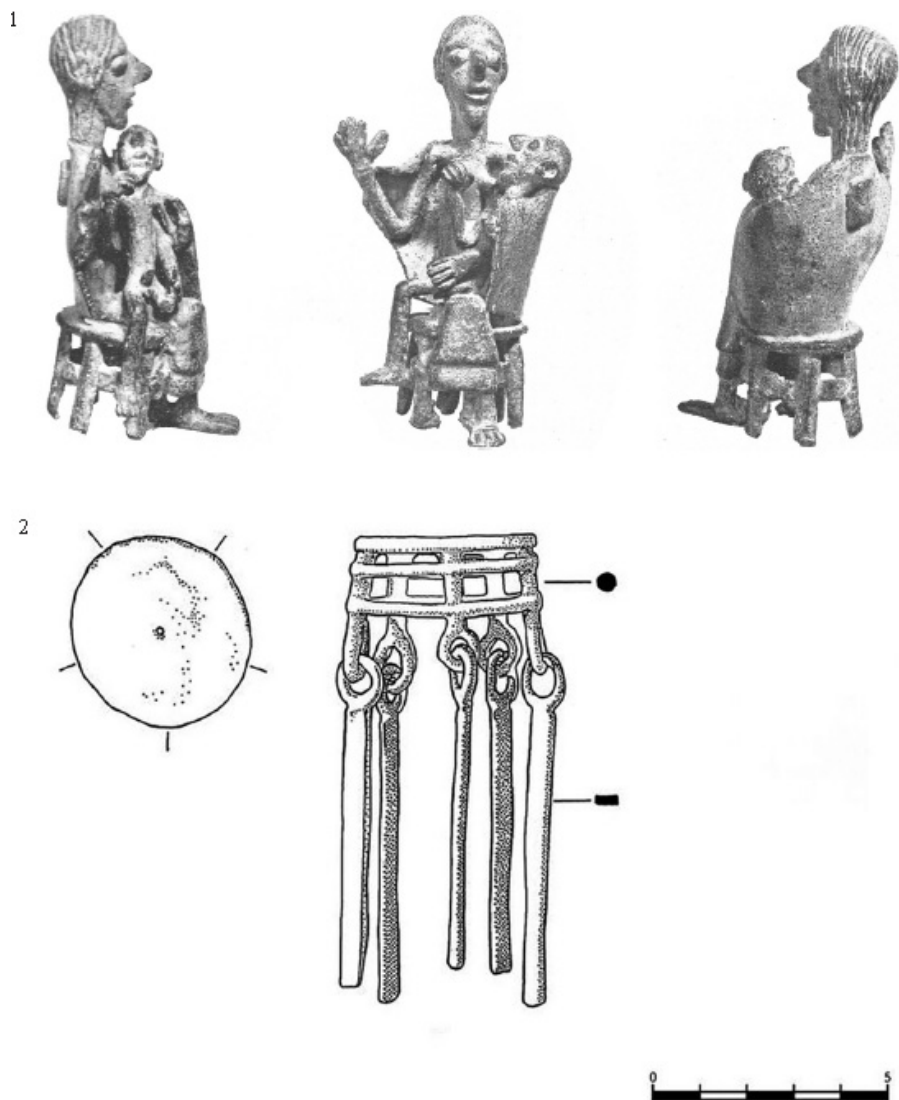


Figure 52.3 1: Bronze statuette from the sanctuary of Santa Vittoria di Serri, Cagliari (Lilliu 1966); 2: Rattle/wind-chime from S. Maria in Paùlis-Ittiri, Sassari (Macnamara, Ridgway, Serra Ridgway 1984).

Figure 52.4 1: Bronze statuette from Bonorva, Sassari (Lilliu 1966); 2: “Model” of Nuragic women’s clothing (Demontis 2005).

1



2



Figure 52.5 1: Head of a female bronze statuette from Aidomaggiore, Oristano (Lilliu 1966); 2: “Mela Ruja”: artist’s reconstruction of a female figure, with amber necklace

from the Nuraghe Mela Ruja, Sassari. (After drawing in Corni 2001, elaborated by Lo Schiavo.)

In Nuragic society giving birth, nursing and raising children must have been considered so basic and essential as to have no need either to be represented or to be symbolized. As we have seen, the four bronze figurines traditionally called “The Mothers” hold and embrace in three cases adult males, apparently dead, wounded or diseased; there is only one, The Mother from S. Vittoria-Serri (Lilliu 1966: n. 124), the most rigid, hieratic, un-motherly figure one can imagine: the child is sitting on her lap almost without even touching the breast, supported by her left arm, while her right hand is raised in the formal gesture of greeting (see [Figure 52.3](#)).

The three “Mothers” sit on a wooden stool, often reproduced in bronze, with or without a central rod and long pendants, thus becoming a (baby?) rattle; the most imposing reproduction is a limestone life-size decorated stool, inside the great “Reunion Hall” in the Palmavera-Alghero Nuragic village (Moravetti 1980; Caputa 2012), in the centre of which is a model of a Nuragic tower. It is an attractive theory to interpret the stool as a distinguished seat for “The Mother”, for this reason transformed into a rattle for a newborn child. But the theory is not well enough supported, first of all because among the bronze figurines there is also a male figure sitting on the same kind of stool (Lilliu 1966: n. 66), and second because there are rattles that cannot have been used as such, but only suspended on a string as a wind-chime (Macnamara *et al.* 1984: 14–15, table VI. 138–139, VII. 136–137; Lo Schiavo 2011: 141–144) (see [Figure 52.3](#)).

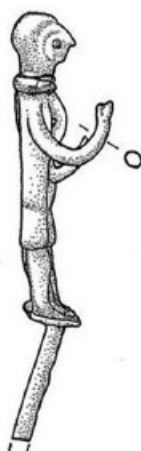
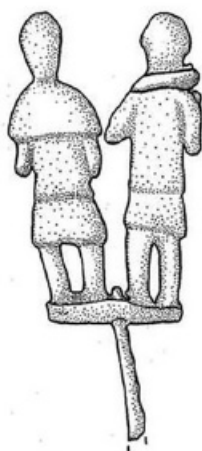


Figure 52.6 “La Coppietta” from Su Tempiesu, Orune (Nuoro). (Fadda, Lo Schiavo 1992.)

The lack of exclusivity also concerns the embroidered cloak of the “Priestesses”: there is now a Chief-of-the-Tribe from the Sinis peninsula with a mantle more richly decorated both inside and out (Lilliu 1953, 56–57, table VII, 2), and also the *tutulus* hat can be found on the head of the *Sacerdote-pugilatore* (“Priest-boxer”) from the Cavalupo-Vulci Tomb;⁵ furthermore the basket with cover, suggested as a *trousseau* container, on the contrary is represented in different shapes in Nuragic sanctuaries and in peninsular male as well as female tombs.

In conclusion, if the meaning of Nuragic “matriarchy” is the evident “equal treatment” of women in life and death, of a level and a quality almost unique in the ancient world, then this is indisputably the case

(Figure 52.6). *Equal treatment* and isonomy seem to be the secret of Nuragic welfare, a situation inconceivable with the Phoenicians and the Carthaginians, and therefore a *status* that could not survive in the Iron Age. This explains one of the main reasons, together with the dramatic change of the economy from the copper and tin trade and bronze production to the widespread use of iron, why the Nuragic society disappeared in the Iron Age and the imposing Nuragic priestesses, according to marriage politics, blended into rich Etruscan noblewomen, leaving only a few extraordinary documents as an admirable heritage of their time.

Notes

- 1 Nuragic is the term used for the indigenous civilization of Bronze Age Sardinia, derived from the Sardinian-language term *nuraghe*. The culture ended at the end of the second millennium BC with the transition to the Iron Age and the arrival of Phoenician colonies on the island, although its distinctive heritage continued in ancient Sardinian customs and language.
- 2 The main interest of Franco Germanà was the palaeopathology, that is the study of the traces left on the skeletal remains of ancient diseases and of rare and important cases of ancient medical or surgical treatments and the study of skull trepanations, among which the case of S'Isaia is one of his great achievements. The book dedicated to this exceptional inhumation is also a stepping stone from the archaeological point of view, because Maria Luisa Ferrarese Ceruti, taking the two vases as a starting point, built up a full-scale and highly documented reconstruction of the Bonnanaro B archaeological *facies* (see also Ferrarese Ceruti 1981).
- 3 The absolute chronology is now ascertained by C14 dating: see the thorough presentation in Lai *et al.* 2014.
- 4 Food offerings were deposited, in some cases at the entrance of the tomb, inside containers found close to the doorposts (Perra *et al.* forthcoming). According to the result of the archaeological excavations, most of the ceremonies took place outside the monumental Giant's Tomb, in the semicircular area in front of the big stele (exedra), or in the Nuragic tombs without stele, in front of the *façade*.
- 5 The same *tutulus* hat covers the head of a newly discovered statue representing a "Priest-Boxer" at Mont'e Prama (courtesy of R. Zucca).

References

- Aa. Vv. (1981) *Ichnussa. La Sardegna dalle Origini all'Età Classica*. Milan, Italy: Scheiwiller.
- Alba, E. (2005) *La Donna Nuragica*. Roma: Carocci.
- Antona, A. (1990) Santa Teresa di Gallura. Loc. La Testa. Tomba di giganti. *Bollettino di Archeologia* 4: 115–117.
- Antona, A. (2005) *Il Complesso Nuragico di Lu Brandali e i Monumenti*

- Archeologici di Santa Teresa di Gallura*. Sardegna Archeologica, Guide e Itinerari n. 37. Sassari, Italy: Carlo Delfino editore.
- Arancio, M. L., Moretti Sgubini A. M. and Pellegrini, E. (2010) Corredi funerari femminili di rango a Vulci nella prima età del Ferro: Il caso della tomba dei Bronzetti Sardi. In N. Negroni Catacchio (ed.) *L'Alba dell'Etruria. Fenomeni di Continuità e Trasformazione nei Secoli XII-VIII a.C. Ricerche e Scavi*, Atti del IX Incontro di Studi di Preistoria e Protostoria (Valetano, Pitigliano 2008). Milan, Italy: centro Studi di Preistoria e Archeologia, pp. 321–334.
- Atzeni, E., Usai, A., Bellintani, P., Fonzo, O., Lai, L., Tykot, R., Setzer, T. J., Congiu, R. and Simbula, S. (2012) Le tombe megalitiche nuragiche di Sa Sedda 'e sa Caudeba (Collinas-CA). In *La Preistoria e la Protostoria della Sardegna*, Atti della XLIV Riunione Scientifica dell'Istituto Italiano di Preistoria e Protostoria (Cagliari, Barumini, Sassari 23–28 novembre 2009), Vol. II. Florence, Italy: Istituto Italiano di Preistoria e Protostoria, pp. 665–670.
- Bagnasco G. G. (2006) A proposito della forma della funzione della fiaschetta da Poggio Sommarvillia. In E. Herring, I. Lemos, F. Lo Schiavo, L. Vagnetti, R. Whitehouse and J. Wilkins (eds) *Across Frontiers. Etruscans, Greeks, Phoenicians and Cypriots, Studi in Onore di David Ridgway e Francesca Serra Ridgway*. London: Accordia Research Institute, pp. 359–369.
- Bartoloni, G. (2003) *Le Società dell'Italia Primitiva. Lo Studio delle Necropoli e la Nascita delle Aristocrazie*. Rome: Carocci.
- Bedini, A., Tronchetti, C., Ugas, G. and Zucca, R. (2012) *Giganti di Pietra. Monte Prama, l'Heroon che cambia la storia della Sardegna e del Mediterraneo*. Cagliari, Italy: Fabula.
- Bernabò Brea, L., Militello, E. and La Piana, S. (1969) Mineo (Catania). La necropoli detta del Molino della Badia: Nuove tombe in contrada Madonna del Piano. *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità*, pp. 210–276.
- Cameriere, R., De Luca, S., Basile, D., Croci, D., Fonzo, O. and Pacciani, E. (2014) L'età dei defunti di Mont'e Prama: Un aspetto interessante e cruciale. In M. Minoja and A. Usai (eds) *Le Sculture di Mont'e Prama. Contesto, Scavi e Materiali*. Rome: Gangemi editore, pp. 201–206.
- Campus, F., Guido, F., Leonelli, V., Lo Schiavo, F. and Puddu, M. G. (2003) Rotonda di Corona Arrubia (Genoni, Nuoro). Un nuovo tipo di tempio nuragico. *Bollettino di Archeologia* 43/45: 1–36.
- Caputa, G. (2012) Alghero. Il nuraghe Palmavera. In F. Campus and V. Leonelli (eds) *Simbolo di un Simbolo. Modelli di Nuraghe*, catalogo della mostra (Ittireddu 2012). Florence, Italy: Ara edizioni, pp. 137–142.

- Contu, E. (1995) Il parere dell'archeologo. In F. Germanà (ed.) *L'uomo in Sardegna dal Paleolitico all'Età nuragica*. Sassari, Italy: Carlo Delfino editore, pp. 9–10.
- Contu, E. (1998) Datazione e significato della scultura in pietra e dei bronzetti figurati della Sardegna Nuragica. In M. S. Balmuth and R. H. Tykot (eds) *Sardinian and Aegean Chronology. Towards the Resolution of Relative and Absolute Dating in the Mediterranean*, Proceedings of the International Colloquium (Medford 1995). Oxford, UK: Oxbow Books, pp. 203–216.
- Contu, E. (2006) *La Sardegna Preistorica e Nuragica*. Sassari, Italy: Carlo Delfino editore.
- Corni, F. (2001) F. Lo Schiavo and G. M. Demartis (eds.) *La Sardegna Antica nei disegni di Francesco Corni*. Piedimonte Matese, Italy: Imago media editrice.
- Demontis, A. (2005) *Il Popolo di Bronzo. Abiti, armi e attrezzature dei bronzetti sardi in 100 schede illustrate*. Cagliari, Italy: Condaghes.
- Fadda, M. A. (2002) Nuove Acquisizioni dell'architettura culturale della Sardegna nuragica. In *Etruria e Sardegna centro-Settentrionale tra l'Età del Bronzo Finale e l'Arcaismo*, Atti del XXI Convegno di Studi Etruschi ed Italici (Sassari 1998). Roem and Pisa, Italy: Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali, pp. 311–332.
- Fadda, M. A. and Lo Schiavo, F. (1992) *Su Tempiesu di Orune. Fonte Sacra Nuragica*. Ozieri, Italy: Il Torchietto.
- Ferrarese ceruti, M. L. (1968) Tombe in tafoni della Gallura. *Bullettino di Paletnologia Italiana* LXII: 93–163.
- Ferrarese ceruti, M. L. (1981) La cultura di Bonnànnaro. In Aa.Vv. 1981, LXVII–LXXVII.
- Ferrarese ceruti, M. L. and Germanà, F. (eds) (1978) Sisaia, una deposizione in grotta della cultura di Bonnannaro. Quaderni della Soprintendenza Archeologica per le province di Sassari e Nuoro 6. Sassari, Italy: Dessì.
- Fonzo, O. (forthcoming) Osteological data. In Perra *et al.* (forthcoming).
- Fonzo, O. and Pacciani, E. (2014) Studio antropologico degli inumati nella necropoli di Mont'e Prama. In M. Minoja and A. Usai (eds) *Le Sculture di Mont'e Prama. Contesto, Scavi e Materiali*. Rome: Gangemi editore, pp. 175–200.
- Germanà, F. (1995) *L'Uomo in Sardegna dal Paleolitico all'Età Nuragica*. Sassari, Italy: Carlo Delfino editore.
- Gleba, M. (2012) Italy: Iron Age. In M. Gleba and U. Mannering (eds) *Textiles and Textile Production in Europe from Prehistory to A.D. 400*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow Press, pp. 215–241.

- Lai, L., Fonzo, O., Pacciani, E., O'Connell, T. and Robb, J. (2014) Isotopi stabili e radioattivi: Primi dati su dieta degli inumati e cronologia assoluta delle sepolture di Mont'e Prama. In M. Minoja and A. Usai (eds) *Le Sculture di Mont'e Prama. Contesto, Scavi e Materiali*. Rome: Gangemi editore, pp. 207–218.
- Lilliu, G. (1953) Bronzetti nuragici da Terralba. *Annali della Facoltà di Lettere, Filosofia e Magistero dell'Università di Cagliari* XXI(I): 3–94.
- Lilliu, G. (1963) *La Civiltà dei Sardi. Dal Paleolitico all'Età dei Nuraghi*. Rome: Eri.
- Lilliu, G. (1966) *Sculture della Sardegna Nuragica*. Verona, Italy: La Zattera.
- Lilliu, G. (1981) Bronzetti e statuaria nella civiltà nuragica. In Aa. Vv. 1981, pp. 179–251.
- Lo Schiavo, F. (1976) Nuraghe “S. Pietro” (Torpè, Nuoro). In *Nuove testimonianze archeologiche della Sardegna centro-settentrionale*. Sassari, Italy: Dessì, pp. 51–61.
- Lo Schiavo, F. (1980) Il villaggio nuragico di Serra Orrios: I bronzi. In *Dorgali. Documenti Archeologici*. Sassari, Italy: Dessì, pp. 145–154.
- Lo Schiavo, F. (1981) Economia e società nell'età dei Nuraghi. In Aa. Vv. 1981, pp. 255–347.
- Lo Schiavo, F. (1991) Per uno studio sulle offerte nei santuari della Sardegna nuragica. *Scienze dell'Antichità* 3/4 (1989–1990), pp. 535–549.
- Lo Schiavo, F. (2003) Uomini e Dei: ripostigli e offerte nella Sardegna nuragica. *Rendiconti della Pontifica Accademia Romana di Archeologia* LXXV (2002–2003), pp. 3–32.
- Lo Schiavo, F. (2011) Musica e canto nella Sardegna nuragica. *Erentzias* I: 135–149.
- Lo Schiavo, F. (2012) Immagini e simboli al di là del Mare. In F. Lo Schiavo, M. Milletti, S. Rafanelli, P. Bernardini and R. Zucca (eds) *Navi di bronzo. Dai santuari nuragici ai tumuli etruschi di Vetulonia*, catalogo della mostra (Oristano luglio 2012). Sassari, Italy: Carlo Delfino editore, pp. 19–26.
- Lo Schiavo, F. (2013) The Bronze Age in Sardinia. In H. Fokkens and A. Harding (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of the European Bronze Age*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 668–691.
- Lo Schiavo, F. (2014) Il tesoro della spade votive: Su Scusorgiu di Villasor. *Quaderni della Soprintendenza Archeologica per le Province di Cagliari e Oristano* 25: 133–172.
- Lo Schiavo, F., Milletti, M. and Toms Parry, J. (2014) Le tombe 33, 91, 99 e 202 della necropoli di Selciatello Sopra e l'eredità nuragica a Tarquinia. In M. D. Gentili and L. Maneschi (eds) *Studi e Ricerche a*

- Tarquinia ed in Etruria*, Atti del Simposio Internazionale in ricordo di Francesca Romana Serra Ridgway (Tarquinia 2010), *Mediterranea* X/2013 (2014). Rome: Fabrizio Serra, pp. 19–70.
- Macnamara, E., Ridgway, D. and Serra Ridgway, F. R. (1984) *The Bronze Hoard from S. Maria in Paulis, Sardinia*, British Museum Occasional Papers 45. London: British Museum.
- Marzoli, D. (1998) Bronzene Feldflaschen aus hervorragenden Gräbern der italischen Eisenzeit. In *Archäologische Untersuchungen zu den Beziehungen zwischen Altitalien und der Zone nordwärts der Alpen während der frühen Eisenzeit Alteuropas. Ergebnisse eines Kolloquiums in Regensburg (November 1994)*. Regensburg, Germany: Universitätsverlag, pp. 69–82.
- Mastino, A., Spanu, P. G., Usai, A. and Zucca R. (eds) (2011) *Tharros Felix 4*. Rome: Carocci.
- Melis, P. (2011) Lo scavo della Tomba II nella necropoli dell'Età del Bronzo di Sa Figu (Ittiri-SS). *Erentzias* I: 101–117.
- Milletti, M. (2012) *Cimeli d'Identità. Tra Etruria e Sardegna nella Prima Età del Ferro (Officina Etruscologia 6)*. Rome: Officina edizioni.
- Moravetti, A. (1980) Nuovi modellini di torri nuragiche. *Bollettino d'Arte* 7: 65–84.
- Pacciani, E. and Fonzo, O. (2012) Gli inumati nella necropoli di Mont'e Prama. In *La Preistoria e la Protostoria della Sardegna*, Atti della XLIV Riunione Scientifica dell'Istituto Italiano di Preistoria e Protostoria (Cagliari, Barumini e Sassari 23–28 novembre 2009), Vol. II. Florence, Italy: Istituto Italiano di Preistoria e di Preistoria, pp. 1023–1029.
- Perra, M., Fonzo, O. and Lo Schiavo, F. (forthcoming) Guerra e aristocrazia nella Sardegna nuragica. In *Guerra e Aristocrazia nell'Italia dell'Età del Bronzo: Archeologia e Antropologia (Warfare and Aristocracy in Bronze Age Italy: Archaeology and Anthropology)*. Padua 13–15 October 2009.
- Pitzalis, F. (2011) *La Volontà Meno Apparente. Donne e Società nell'Italia centrale Tirrenica tra VIII e VII secolo a.C.* Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
- Tedde, G. (1993) Santa Teresa di Gallura (Sassari). Località La Testa. Tomba di giganti. *Bollettino d'Archeologia* 19/21: 159–160.
- Treherne, P. (1995) The warrior's beauty: The masculine body and self-identity in Bronze Age Europe. *Journal of European Archaeology* 3(1): 105–144.
- Tronchetti, C., Mallegni, F. and Bartoli, F. (1991) Gli inumati di Monte Prama. *Quaderni della Soprintendenza Archeologica per le Province di Cagliari e Oristano* 8: 119–131.

- Ugas, G. (1990a) Gonnosnò (OR). Loc. Is Lapededdas. *Bollettino di Archeologia* 3: 142–144.
- Ugas, G. (1990b) *La tomba dei guerrieri di Decimoputzu*. Cagliari, Italy: Edizioni Della Torre.
- Ugas, G. (1993) *San Sperate dalle origini ai baroni*. Cagliari, Italy: Edizioni Della Torre.
- Ugas, G. and Lucia, G. (1987) Primi scavi nel sepolcreto nuragico di Antas. In *La Sardegna nel Mediterraneo tra il secondo e il primo millennio a.C.*, Atti del II Convegno di studi, *Un millennio di relazioni fra la Sardegna e i Paesi del Mediterraneo* (Selargius, Cagliari 27–30 novembre 1986). Cagliari, Italy: Edizioni della Torre, pp. 255–277.
- Usai, A. (2007a) La tomba collettiva di Motrox'e Bois, Usellus. In M. L. Nava and A. Salerno (eds) *Ambre. trasparenze dall'antico*, catalogo della mostra (Napoli 2007). Verona, Italy: Electa, pp. 100–101.
- Usai, A. (2007b) La tomba individuale 3 di Antas, Fluminimaggiore. In M. L. Nava and A. Salerno (eds) *Ambre. trasparenze dall'antico*, catalogo della mostra (Napoli 2007). Verona, Italy: Electa, p. 102.

SEIANTI HANUNIA TLESNASE

An Etruscan aristocrat

Judith Swaddling

Somewhere between about 200 and 150 BC, an Etruscan noblewoman named Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa came to the end of her life and was buried in a single-chambered tomb near to Chiusi, an important city in northern Etruria. Neither she nor her contemporaries could have possibly realised that some 2,000 years later her tomb would be re-opened, and that her remains, her sarcophagus and the goods with which she was buried would soon be on their way to a country of which she may never have heard, to be on public display in a museum where she was to become an unofficial ambassador for her Etruscan compatriots ([Figure 53.1](#)).¹



Figure 53.1 The painted terracotta sarcophagus of Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa, second century BC. British Museum 1887,0402.1. (© Trustees of the British Museum.)

The Etruscans and Chiusi²

Situated in the hilly country of northern Etruria, Chiusi was one of Etruria's oldest areas of habitation. By Seianti's time, many small Roman settlements had appeared in the territory of the city, dedicated to agriculture and administered by ex-soldiers. Seianti would therefore have been familiar with the presence of Romans in her Etruscan homeland. Even after the defeat of the Etruscan cities by Rome, some Etruscans continued to hold high office in government and Seianti's family apparently continued to flourish.³

Seianti's name and family history

It was important in the afterlife that you should retain your identity, and many sarcophagi have the name of the deceased inscribed or painted on them. The names Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa are incised right to left, as was common for Etruscan script, across the base of her sarcophagus. The presence of the lettering may imply that Seianti herself was literate, and names of women on their possessions, for example on mirrors and vessels, though not many in number, and lettering on loom weights (spinning and weaving were aristocratic female activities) suggest that at least some Etruscan female aristocrats could read and write, whether more so than men, we simply do not know.⁴

The inscription in fact lacks Seianti's first name, which we shall never know, and this was not unusual in tomb inscriptions. 'Seianti' should be pronounced with an initial soft 'sh' sound, according to north Etruscan dialect. Seianti and Hanunia are family and clan names, and Tlesnasa indicates that she was the wife of Tlesna.⁵ Both she and her husband were of families which had long dominated Etruscan society in Chiusi, Roman Clusium, home of the famous Lars Porsenna who attacked and captured Rome in the early years of the Republic. Rome and Chiusi, however, were not always enemies, and in 387 BC, as a result of Rome's support for Chiusi on the occasion of a Gallic invasion, Rome itself was captured and sacked by the Gauls. It has been suggested that Seianti's family may originally have hailed from Sentinum in the adjacent region of Umbria, but had been displaced following the battle of Sentinum in 295 BC. Several

generations of Seianti's family are however known from the locality of Chiusi and the migration of the family, if indeed there was one, may have pre-dated the battle. What is interesting is that a mother's name is often given in the case of both Etruscan men's and women's tomb inscriptions, evidencing the importance of the matriarchal line.

Seianti's sarcophagus and tomb

Seianti, the simple name by which we now know her, offers a major focal point in the Etruscan gallery at the British Museum, her likeness present in the form of a reclining figure on the lid of her magnificent painted terracotta sarcophagus.⁶ It is not made of marble, as we have come to expect of such tomb monuments, because the Etruscans had virtually no access to marble, the nearest quarries at Carrara only being opened up in the first century BC. In Etruria different types of local stone were employed for building and for cinerary urns and sarcophagi (the choice of cremation or inhumation seems to have been purely a personal matter), but, apart from the alabaster mainly found in the region of Volterra, they were hard to carve and render in any detail. Terracotta was the Etruscan preferred material for the elaborate sculptures with which they decorated their stone and wood temples, while public statues, almost all of which have long disappeared, were very often of bronze.

The Etruscans were known in antiquity for their exquisite metalwork in bronze, silver and gold – vessels and utensils often with figured decoration – and their jewellery.⁷ Etruscan women took delight in adorning themselves with opulent displays of gold and gems, as evidently did Seianti herself, a subject to which we shall return. Although sarcophagi of terracotta are common in Etruria, there are only two very elaborate examples known, one of which is Seianti's and the other that of an apparent relation, Larthia Seianti, who was buried in a multiple-chambered tomb a few miles away from Seianti's burial place.⁸ Larthia's sarcophagus is now in the National Archaeological Museum in Florence.⁹ The figures of the deceased on terracotta sarcophagi are normally far more rudimentary, the chests have much simpler decoration and there is far less evidence of polychromy than on the two Seiante family sarcophagi. Many plainer examples have been found in the vicinity of Tuscania, south of Lake Bolsena.¹⁰ We tend to forget that in antiquity pigments were harder to come by than nowadays and that the rarer ones, like Egyptian blue, found for example on the representation of the mirror which Seianti holds, were quite expensive.¹¹ In fact, the manufacture of Seianti's sarcophagus as a whole required great skill. The weight of the clay

would have needed support to prevent it from collapsing before firing, which is why some of even the simpler figures of the deceased on sarcophagi have intricate gridworks of clay walls within them.¹² To counteract the risk, Seianti's figure appears to have been propped up with wooden struts until the clay became leather-hard. In addition, the sarcophagus was made in five parts, two for the figure, with the split across the upper legs, two for the slab which formed the actual lid of the chest on which the figure reclines, while the chest itself was made in one piece.¹³ The rarity and grandeur of the monument, attesting access to the best craftsmen, are only two of the factors which bear testimony to the wealth and high status of this Etruscan aristocrat. The sarcophagus is stunning now, but was even more so in antiquity, being originally coated in a stark white slip, imitating marble, and brilliant with colour. The tomb was reached by a narrow subterranean *dromos* or passageway, and as we know that in Etruria descendants visited the tombs of their ancestors for rites and offerings, we can imagine the impact that the monument would have had when it was suddenly illuminated by their torches. In the small chamber, the structure almost reached the roof and filled the back wall of the tomb. Fortunately for us, the conditions inside the tomb were such that Seianti's skeleton remained virtually intact (Figure 53.2).

Etruscan women were renowned in antiquity for the status and freedom which they enjoyed, and it is tempting to think that Seianti must have been of considerable rank to merit a tomb of her own, when most families and even clans shared multiple-chambered tombs. Single tombs do however survive, probably located originally on personal estates. For a modern parallel one has only to think of the burial of Diana Princess of Wales in the grounds of the Spencer family home at Althorp Park, Lincolnshire.

Seianti's silver tomb goods

Despite all that we have learned about Seianti from multi-disciplinary studies, there are still questions which we shall never be able to answer, such as why her burial goods were so frugal in comparison with those of her relative, Larthia.¹⁴ Seianti had a simple set of silverware (Figure 53.3),¹⁵ all associated with toiletry, including a mirror, a round *pyxis* or small lidded casket, an *aryballos*, which would have been used for oil, probably perfumed, and a strigil, an instrument with a curved blade used in the Classical world normally by athletes for scraping sweat, dust and sand from their oiled skin.¹⁶ In the Classical world athletics was an almost entirely male-dominated field, but in Etruria there is ample evidence that strigils were used by

women,¹⁷ presumably for cleansing, but some have suggested that strigils may also have been used for depilation. Whether they were regularly employed by women in Etruria it is impossible to say: the limited evidence includes a large bronze strigil in the British Museum, with the handle in the form of a naked girl herself holding a strigil.¹⁸ The Greek historian, Theopompus, writing in the fourth century BC, tells us that Etruscan women took special care of their bodies and exercised often, sometimes along with the men, and sometimes by themselves. He adds that, very much opposed to custom in Greek and Roman society, it was not a disgrace for Etruscan women to be seen naked.¹⁹



Figure 53.2 The skeleton preserved within Seianti's sarcophagus. British Museum 1887,02402.2. (© Trustees of the British Museum.)

It has been claimed that in Etruria tomb goods encapsulate the various stages of the person's life, so perhaps strigils found in tombs refer back to an energetic youth. Sadly, the only visual evidence that we have for Seianti's silver is an old black and white photograph, as the objects themselves disappeared during the evacuation of the British Museum in the Second World War. From what we can tell,

Seianti's silverware was made of thin sheet metal and probably non-functional, made specifically for the grave, a not unusual practice. The items were nailed to one of the tomb walls. Larthia's tomb goods, on the other hand, were certainly fit for use in life.²⁰ They included various small silver vessels, tweezers, bronze and alabaster oil flasks and glass jewellery, and also, found within the sarcophagus itself, a coin, a Roman *as*, presumably the fare for Charon (Etruscan Charun) to ferry her to the underworld. Despite her modest tomb goods, we cannot imagine that Seianti was anything other than wealthy, and the information we have gained about her throws light almost exclusively on aristocratic Etruscan women rather than their poorer counterparts, about whom we know relatively little. Indeed the mass of information which we have about Etruscan daily life still comes from the burials and necropoleis of the well-to-do, since it was here that they attempted to preserve or recreate their favoured lifestyles.



Figure 53.3 Silver objects found in Seianti's tomb. British Museum 1887,0402.3–7. (© Trustees of the British Museum.)

A fashionable cosmopolitan

Seianti's dress and jewellery are further indications of her wealth. She has a parure typical of jewellery in fashion around the Mediterranean at the time, and Seianti thereby reveals herself to be a fashionable cosmopolitan lady. Etruria had always been captivated by the artistic production of Greece since some four to five centuries earlier when it was at the height of its trade relations with the Greeks. With the far-reaching conquests of Alexander the Great, culture and artistic production all began to follow similar trends over a widespread area. Moreover, all the jewellery can be paralleled by surviving examples.²¹ The gold snake bracelet is of a type favoured over a long period, between the fourth century BC and first century AD, with a particularly close example from Cumae near Naples, and others from Pompeii. Higher up Seianti's arm is an armband, ribbed and beaded, which may also have terminated in snakes' heads on the other side. Both the diadem, or tiara, and so-called strap necklace, often with pendants in the form of miniature amphoras or beech nuts, can be paralleled from elsewhere, with very close examples coming from the Kyme Treasure on the coast of Asia Minor.

Seianti's earrings are a more local product, with discs and inverted pyramid pendants, in reality consisting of gold and garnets, of a type popular in central Italy and likely to have been made there. Beneath her bust is a gold belt, particularly favoured in the Hellenistic period, which is the period following the death of Alexander in 323 BC up until the first century BC. Such belts had the effect of elongating the figure as was fashionable at the time. It is noteworthy that, on her left hand, Seianti has no fewer than six gold rings, on various segments of her fingers and the thumb. The fact that she has none on her right hand may reflect the custom of dining while reclining on couches, with the right hand being used for eating, and thus the risk of getting particles of food in the rings was avoided. Seianti wears a Greek style of dress, a *chiton* or tunic, with a *himation* or veil drawn over her head.²² Yet for all this she is essentially an Etruscan, with an Etruscan name, written in Etruscan, buried in a characteristically Etruscan manner, in a sarcophagus within an underground tomb, yet in an area under Roman control. This is testimony to the freedom and independence which many Etruscans still enjoyed, and to the interesting times in which Seianti lived.

Mortuary practice

What else can we learn about Seianti? Her skeleton has revealed a great deal (Figure 53.2). It is the most complete Etruscan skeleton in existence, for although many skeletons survived in the tombs their

significance and potential was not realised until well into the twentieth century, long after the majority of the best preserved tombs had been opened up and the bones discarded. In addition, conditions within the tombs have not always been favourable for the preservation of human remains.²³ One of the reasons that Seianti's skeleton was preserved so well seems to have been that the bones were placed in the sarcophagus completely clean and dry. So far, Seianti's remains are the only archaeological evidence from the ancient world that we have for this kind of mortuary practice, though there is literary evidence from various periods (and various cultures) for the washing of cremated bones, with instances from Homer's *Iliad* and Virgil's *Aeneid*.²⁴

Identification of the manner of deposition of the bones was just one of the results of the multi-disciplinary 'Seianti project', which studied the many aspects of the tomb, the sarcophagus and human remains, culminating in the publication of the findings in 2002.²⁵ The evidence from the staining on the bones indicates that the body was drained of fluids, in a seated position, before the bones were somehow defleshed: we do not know how but it was not mechanically as there is no sign of tooling on the bones, and it has been suggested that wrapping the body in cloth soaked in volcanic clay, as found in the neighbourhood of Chiusi, may have accelerated the process.

Great care was taken in collecting the bones as virtually all are present apart from the *sternum* (breast bone) and *patellae* (knee-caps). Removal of the sternum may have had something to do with the draining process. It is possible that the bones were not placed in the sarcophagus until many years after Seianti's death, and for all we know the process may have resembled one continued down into modern times in the area of Naples, where descendants have periodically visited the tomb, unwrapped the bones of the deceased, powdered them in volcanic earth and re-wrapped them until eventually they are bare. Over time, this presents the risk that some of the tiniest finger or toe bones are lost, as in the case of Seianti.

Doubt had been expressed about whether a more recent skeleton might have been placed in the sarcophagus to increase its appeal to a purchaser, since during the nineteenth century, even when the archaeological importance of the bones was not routinely acknowledged, the appeal of skeletons as evocative elements in public exhibits recreating the tombs certainly was.²⁶ Radiocarbon analysis, however, confirmed the probability that the individual died between the mid-third and end of the first centuries BC, which is entirely consistent with the dating of Seianti's sarcophagus and tomb.²⁷ The

size of the corridor leading to the tomb suggests that the large, weighty sarcophagus (about three quarters of a ton) would have been carried into the chamber in sections and then assembled once there, with the bones either transported in the chest or installed once it was in situ.

Seianti in life: a traumatic accident

Study of Seianti's skeleton has revealed fascinating details about events that happened to our Etruscan, inevitably with tantalising lacunae, but enough to make her a tangible human being with whom we can connect across the intervening two millennia. She died at the age of around of 50 to 55 years, though it is not possible to ascertain the cause.²⁸ Studies have shown that Etruscans often lived considerably longer.²⁹ Seianti was of average height, just 153.7 cm (5 ft. 2 in.) tall, and though well-built, not nearly as monumental as the sarcophagus lid implies: the portrait figure is shown semi-reclining so that its full height, if able to stand, would be nearing 2 metres.³⁰ Pathological evidence reveals that she bore one child.³¹ Seianti suffered from arthritis, dental abscesses and slight curvature of the spine (*scoliosis*). The main cause for speculation, however, was the presence of damage to the joints down Seianti's right side, along with loss of teeth also on the right, and a fracture to the orbital bone beneath the right eye. From the nature of the trauma, it appeared that the injuries had been sustained, probably all at the same time, when she was no more than 15 to 20 years old; no bones had been broken, and although the pain would have been acute for some time, she would have made a fair recovery, apart from reduced mobility in the pelvic area (right sacro-iliac joint and right hip).

The small osteophytes or bony nodules which materialised over time across the surfaces of the affected joints, the result of tissue damage, may not have caused arthritic pain until a short period before Seianti's death. The tooth loss is consistent with a fall on to a hard object, conceivably a stone or log, and what would have particularly plagued her throughout her life following the injuries described was damage to the right temporomandibular joint. The lower jaw had become recessed inside the top one, resulting in restricted movement and opening of the jaws on that side, perhaps painful and at least stiff, so that she could only eat soft or liquid foods and possibly had a little difficulty in speaking. Nonetheless, it seems that Seianti was well-nourished and presumably in her aristocratic position was well-looked after. She was probably fairly active until some years before her death, and we can only guess at how her decreasing mobility, arthritis and

long-term dental problems, including the abscesses, may have affected her lifestyle and temperament. Increasing pain, decreasing mobility and bad breath from her dental problems may have made her a difficult patient for more reasons than one.

A keen horsewoman?

The pathologist who worked on her remains, Dr Bob Stoddart, used other evidence, this time from the leg bones, to deduce a possible scenario for the major accident which Seianti had suffered.³² Her upper leg bones display extremely strong muscle attachment, of a type usually associated only with horse riders. The injuries would be consistent with an accident in which the horse fell, partially trapping the leg and hip of the rider on the side on which it landed, and producing joint damage very much of the kind we have seen.

The dental and jaw injuries could have been caused by Seianti striking the side of her head on some object as she fell. It is a very plausible theory for the damage, but one of course which we can never substantiate. If we could, it would be important evidence for Etruscan women horse-riding, which is indeed unattested elsewhere. But even though such a pastime is not documented or illustrated, it might be difficult to stop a healthy teenage girl from pursuing an activity popular among the male youth of her time. What we frequently observe in the surviving representations, mainly scenes on cinerary urns, are high-society women being driven around in little high-wheeled carts, protected from the sun by parasols.³³ Perhaps this was a pastime that Seianti herself enjoyed. From Greece, there is rare evidence that women owned chariots which they entered in races at the Olympic Games,³⁴ and though in earlier centuries chariots are found in the rich graves of some Etruscan women (20 per cent of the known Etruscan chariot burials), these are ceremonial war chariots which presumably had some hereditary or power-based significance.³⁵

Reconstructing the face of Seianti

We have seen that the figure on Seianti's sarcophagus gives a deceptive impression of her physique. The depiction of her face, however, is a very different matter (cf. Prag, this volume).³⁶ From the 'air-brushed' woman of an uncertain age that we see represented in the terracotta portrait, we can now turn to a naturalistic reconstruction of how she looked at around 50 to 55 years old shortly before she died, based on her actual skull (Figure 53.4). The technique

employed in facial reconstruction is now fairly well-known: in simple terms a cast is taken from the skull and gradually layers of clay are added, according to the thicknesses of skin and muscle in consideration of the person's age and health.³⁷ Computer-generated virtual reconstruction is now an alternative method of making a 3D model. What made this particular exercise so important was the unique ability to use the ancient portrait as a control. Although one is instantly struck by the prettifying of the ancient image to make Seianti look younger, the photo comparison highlights consistencies between the two faces. The size of the features and the relationship between them is markedly similar. With very close observation, there is even a slight asymmetry, perhaps hinting at her facial injuries, which may have been in any case only mildly evident.

The difference in age of Seianti as represented in the terracotta portrait and in the reconstruction raises intriguing questions. Did Seianti herself have her portrait commissioned in life-time, in which case did it sit in storage until her burial? Or did her relations commission the sarcophagus and the craftsman base his study on a painted portrait of her in her younger days? Did he use his knowledge of her in life, or his imagination of what she must have looked like in earlier days? We shall never know the answers to these questions. As often, advances in technology satisfy one set of questions and pose a whole series of new ones.



Figure 53.4 Photocomparison of the clay reconstruction of the head and the portrait on the terracotta sarcophagus, showing the morphological similarities and differences. Reconstruction: Richard Neave. (Imaging © Richard Neave.)

Our research made Seianti's representation the first verifiable attempt at realistic portraiture in western art, ahead of Greek art which was still obsessed with perfection and idealism.³⁸ Other details shown in depictions of the dead on Etruscan sarcophagi and cinerary

urns, such as lines, wrinkles and sagging skin, show that the Etruscans did not shy away from imperfections and embraced the concept of the individual rather than the ideal. Seianti's self-esteem or the preference of her relatives may not have permitted such down-to-earth realism, but she nonetheless comes across as an imposing character.

A reunion?

The glamorising of Seianti's appearance may have had a significant purpose. The jewellery which she wears and her finery, as has already been remarked, are typical of sets and outfits from around the Mediterranean. Could they symbolise a particular event, a wedding perhaps? One recalls the practice of Victorian women being buried in their bridal wear.³⁹ As you approach, Seianti seems to glance up from her compact mirror, pulling her veil aside. Perhaps she is expecting someone: a loved one, her husband? Recent research has shown that what used to be interpreted as farewell scenes in tomb paintings are actually greetings, those already in the underworld coming to welcome the new arrivals.⁴⁰ The possibility of this further human interest is another element that transcends the centuries, yet another way Seianti offers us an inroad into Etruscan culture and beliefs.

Notes

- 1 See Swaddling 2002a.
- 2 For a comprehensive study of the Etruscans, Haynes 2000 and 2005, and more recently MacIntosh Turfa 2013. For daily life, Bonfante 1986 and Heurgon 1964. See also Stoddart 2009.
- 3 On Chiusi: Swaddling 2002b; Haynes 1985: 99–105; Boitani *et al.* 1975. On Romanization of Etruria: Jolivet 2013; Haynes 2000 and 2005: 327–333.
- 4 For Etruscan writing, see Agostiniani 2013; Bonfante and Bonfante 2002; Wallace 2008. For textile production, Gleba 2013a, 2013b and 2008; Haynes 1989.
- 5 Ginge 2002: 13–14.
- 6 British Museum 1887,0402.1. Excavated at Poggio Cantarello, Chiusi, in 1886.
- 7 Bronzes: Haynes 1985; Cristofani 1985; Gaultier 2013.
- 8 Haynes 2000 and 2005: 335–340.
- 9 Ginge 2002: 12–13.
- 10 Gentili 1994; Moretti and Sgubini Moretti 1983.
- 11 Joyner 2002; Gage 1999.
- 12 E.g. British Museum 1838,0608.10; 1838,0608.11. All objects referred to in the British Museum can be found in the British Museum's Collections Online database.
- 13 Barlow *et al.* 2002.

- 14 Florence, Museo Archeologico 70968–70987.
- 15 British Museum 1887.0402.3–7.
- 16 Miller 2004a: 15–16, 2004b: 20–21; Swaddling 2011: 43, 48.
- 17 Serra Ridgway 1996.
- 18 British Museum 1873,0820.2, Haynes 1985: 312–313, n. 176.
- 19 Theopompus, *Histories* 115 *FGrHist* F204 = Athenaeus 517d–518a.
- 20 Ginge 2002: 12–13.
- 21 Swaddling 2002b: 6.
- 22 For Etruscan women’s dress, see Bonfante 2003.
- 23 For a survey of other Etruscan human remains, see MacIntosh Turfa, “Health and medicine for Etruscan women” this volume, and MacIntosh Turfa and Becker 2013.
- 24 Stoddart 2002; bones of Hector, Homer, *Iliad* Bk XXIV: 764–804, and bones of Patroclus, Bk XXIII: 108–191 (trans E. V. Rieu, Penguin, Harmondsworth 1950); bones of Misenus, Virgil, *Aeneid*, pp. 215–235, trans N. Horsfall, Virgil, “*Aeneid*” 6, *A Commentary*, De Gruyter, Berlin, 2013.
- 25 The study was led by Judith Swaddling (British Museum) and John Prag (University of Manchester): see Swaddling and Prag (eds) 2002.
- 26 Cf. papers by J. Swaddling and L. Haumesser, forthcoming, in J. Swaddling (ed.) *An Etruscan Affair: The Impact of Early Etruscan Discoveries on European Culture* (British Museum Research Publication no. 211).
- 27 Ambers 2002.
- 28 Becker 2002; Stoddart 2002; Whittaker 2002; Lilley 2002. On health and life expectancy in Etruria: MacIntosh Turfa and Becker 2013; Kron 2013.
- 29 See MacIntosh Turfa, this volume.
- 30 The chest of the sarcophagus is 180 cm long and that of the figure 152 cm.
- 31 Stoddart 2002.
- 32 Stoddart 2002.
- 33 Haynes 2000 and 2005: 287–289; Emiliozzi 2013.
- 34 Swaddling 2011: 41; Reese and Vallera-Rickerson 2003: 58–61.
- 35 Stoddart 2009: 216–217.
- 36 Neave and Prag 2002; Prag 2002.
- 37 Prag and Neave 1997.
- 38 Neave and Prag 2002; Carpino 2013.
- 39 In the Netherlands, brides to be would make themselves a special nightshirt for the wedding night and then it would be put aside and stored for their burials.
- 40 Serra Ridgway 2000.

References

- Agostiniani, L. (2013) The Etruscan language. In J. MacIntosh Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London: Routledge, pp. 457–477.
- Ambers, J. (2002) Radiocarbon analysis of the skeleton. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an*

- Etruscan Noblewoman*. British Museum Occasional Paper no. 100. London: British Museum Press, p. 39.
- Barlow, A., Barlow, M., Brodrick, A. and Quinton, J. (2002) A technical investigation of the life-sized painted figure. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. British Museum Occasional Paper no. 100. London: British Museum Press, pp. 41–48.
- Becker, M. J. (2002) Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: A re-evaluation of her skeleton in the British Museum. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. British Museum Occasional Paper no. 100. London: British Museum Press, pp. 17–22.
- Boitani, F. M., Cataldi, M. and Pasquinucci, M. (1975) *Etruscan Cities*. New York: Putnam.
- Bonfante, G. and Bonfante L. (2002) *The Etruscan Language: An Introduction*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- Bonfante, L. (ed.) (1986) *Etruscan Life and Afterlife: A Handbook of Etruscan Studies*. Warminster, UK: Aris and Phillips (esp. Bonfante, L. ‘Daily life and afterlife’, pp. 252–278).
- Bonfante, L. (2003) *Etruscan Dress*. Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Carpino, A. (2013) Portraiture. In J. MacIntosh Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London: Routledge, pp. 1007–1016.
- Cristofani, M. (1985) *I Bronzi degli Etruschi*. Novara, Italy: Istituto Geografico de Agostini.
- Emiliozzi, A. (2013) Princely chariots and carts. In J. MacIntosh Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London: Routledge, pp. 778–797.
- Gage, J. (1999) The Classical inheritance. [Chapter 1](#) in *Color and Culture: Practice and Meaning from Antiquity to Abstraction*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, pp. 9–28.
- Gaultier, F. (2013) Jewelry. In J. MacIntosh Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London: Routledge, pp. 914–927.
- Gentili, M. D. (1994) *I Sarcofagi Etruschi in Terracotta di Età Recente*. *Archaeologica* 108, *Tyrrhenica* 4. Rome: G. Bretschneider.
- Ginge, B. (2002) The sarcophagus, the tomb and the Seiante family in their archaeological context. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. British Museum Occasional Paper no. 100. London: British Museum Press, pp. 11–16.
- Gleba, M. (2008) *Textile Production in pre-Roman Italy*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow Books.
- Gleba, M. (2013a) The world of Etruscan textiles. In J. MacIntosh

- Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London: Routledge, pp. 798–811.
- Gleba, M. (2013b) Textile making in central Tyrrhenian Italy: Questions related to age, rank and status. In M. Gleba and J. Pásztkai-Szeőke (eds) *Making Textiles in pre-Roman and Roman Times: People, Places, Identities*. Ancient textiles series, no. 13. Oxford, UK: Oxbow Books.
- Haynes, S. (1985) *Etruscan Bronzes*. New York: Sotheby's Publications, Harper and Row.
- Haynes, S. (1989) *Muliebris certaminis Laus*: Bronze documents of a changing ethos. In G. Maetzke et al. (eds) *Atti del Secondo Congresso Internazionale Etrusco*, Vol. 3 (Proceedings of a conference, Florence 1985). Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider, pp. 1395–1405.
- Haynes, S. (2000 and 2005) *Etruscan Civilization: A Cultural History*. London: British Museum Press, 2000 and California: J. Paul Getty Trust Publications, 2005.
- Heurgon, J. (1964) *Daily Life of the Etruscans*, trans. J. Kirkup. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
- Jolivet, V. (2013) 'A long twilight': Romanization of Etruria. In J. MacIntosh Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London: Routledge, pp. 151–179.
- Joyner, L. (2002) Scientific examination of the pigments and ceramic fabric of the sarcophagus of Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. British Museum Occasional Paper no. 100. London: British Museum Press, pp. 49–52.
- Kron, G. (2013) Fleshing out the demography of Etruria. In J. MacIntosh Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London: Routledge, pp. 56–75.
- Lilley, J. D. (2002) Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: Some observations on the dental features. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. British Museum Occasional Paper no. 100. London: British Museum Press, pp. 23–26.
- MacIntosh Turfa, J. (2013) *The Etruscan World*. London: Routledge.
- MacIntosh Turfa, J. and Becker, M. J. (2013) Health and medicine in Etruria. In J. MacIntosh Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London: Routledge, pp. 855–884.
- Miller, S. G. (2004a) Women and athletics. In *Ancient Greek Athletics*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, pp. 150–159.
- Miller, S. G. (2004b) *Arete: Greek Sport from Ancient Sources*. Oakland, CA: University of California.
- Moretti, M. and Sgubini Moretti, A. M. (eds) (1983) *I Curunas di*

- Tuscania*. Rome: De Luca.
- Neave, R. A. H. and Prag, A. J. N. W. (2002) The face of Seianti: The reconstruction and the portrait. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. British Museum Occasional Paper no. 100. London: British Museum Press, pp. 53–58.
- Prag, A. J. N. W. (2002) Seianti and Etruscan portraiture. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. British Museum Occasional Paper no. 100. London: British Museum Press, pp. 59–66.
- Prag, J. and Neave, R. (1997) *Making Faces: Using Forensic and Archaeological Evidence*. London: British Museum Press.
- Reese, A. and Vallera-Rickerson, I. (2003) *Athletries: The Untold History of Ancient Greek Women Athletes*. Oklahoma City, OK: Nightowl Publications.
- Serra Ridgway, F. (1996) *I Corredi del Fondo Scataglini a Tarquinia*. Milan, Italy: Comune di Milano, Settore cultura e spettacolo, Raccolte archeologiche e numismatiche, 295 with refs (On Etruscan women's use of strigils).
- Serra Ridgway, F. (2000) The tomb of the Anina family: Some motifs in late Tarquinian painting. In D. Ridgway, F. R. Serra Ridgway, M. Pearce, E. Herring, R. Whitehouse and J. Wilkins (eds) *Ancient Italy in Its Mediterranean Setting. Studies in Honour of Ellen Macnamara, Specialist Studies on the Mediterranean* 4. London: Accordia Research Institute, pp. 301–316.
- Stoddart, R. W. (2002) Remains from the sarcophagus of Seianti Hanunia Tlesnas: Pathological evidence and its implications. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. British Museum Occasional Paper no. 100. London: British Museum Press, pp. 29–38.
- Stoddart, S. K. F. (2009) *Historical Dictionary of the Etruscans (Historical Dictionaries of Ancient Civilizations and Historical Eras)*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.
- Swaddling, J. (2002a) The Seianti project. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. British Museum Occasional Paper no. 100. London: British Museum Press, pp. 1–2.
- Swaddling, J. (2002b) The world Seianti knew. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. British Museum Occasional Paper no. 100. London: British Museum Press, pp. 3–10.
- Swaddling, J. (2011) 'Women at Olympia' and 'The Games of Hera' in

- The Ancient Olympic Games*, fourth edition. London: British Museum Press, pp. 40–43.
- Swaddling, J. and Prag, J. (eds) (2002) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. British Museum Occasional Paper no. 100. London: British Museum Press.
- Wallace, R. (2008) *Zikh Rasna. A Manual of the Etruscan Language and Inscriptions*. Ann Arbor, MI: Beech Stave Press.
- Whittaker, D. K. (2002) Seianti's age at death: Determination by microscopic methods. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. British Museum Occasional Paper no. 100. London: British Museum Press, p. 27.

MOTHERHOOD IN ETRURIA

Larissa Bonfante

The evidence

The plentiful archaeological and iconographic material available for a study of Etruscan motherhood makes up for the absence of literary evidence. Though the Etruscans were very literate, very little of their writing survives from which we can learn of their customs, beliefs, and histories. As for their neighbors and contemporaries, the Greeks and Romans, they rarely wrote of Etruscan matters, and when they did, their reports were negative and showed a lack of understanding of a culture so different from theirs. In the absence of the words of the living, the tombs, grave monuments, epitaphs, and votive gifts of the dead provide important evidence for the study of gender in general and motherhood in particular. There is also a great deal we can learn from the iconography, if we know how to read it, for just as the Etruscans adapted the Greek alphabet to write in their own language, they used Greek myths and classical images to express their own ideas, customs, and realities.

Greek myth, which had demoted goddesses in favor of male gods and put the supreme power in the hands of Zeus, even attributed to him the childbearing function that normally belonged to the female, and constituted her power. Women bearing children and nursing in the real world belonged to a different domain, evidently considered private, or even shameful, and they were neither represented in art nor discussed in public. Greeks preferred to see the event applied to males giving birth as a metaphor for the man's creative mind: the idea of male pregnancy was used by Greek thinkers to think through intellectual problems.¹

In Etruscan mythological iconography, on the other hand, the role of the female was central, and mothers are portrayed realistically. Birth scenes in general are much more popular in Etruscan than in

Greek art, and unlike Greek babies, Etruscan babies tended not to be abandoned.² And while divine conceptions and births in Greek myth are uniformly unnatural,³ Etruscan art brings out their more practical, realistic aspects. So for example when Tinia, the Etruscan equivalent of Zeus, appears on a mirror as he gives birth to a large, fully armed Menerva, two midwives stand by him, comforting him and bandaging his aching head (Figure 54.1).⁴

Often, particularly Etruscan touches and details are included, or scenes that are unknown in Greek art. The divine conception that led to the birth of Dionysos is illustrated on a vase and two bronze mirrors showing the sexual union between Tinia (Zeus) and the mortal Semele, something not so far found in Greek art.⁵



Figure 54.1 The birth of Menerva (Athena) from the head of Tinia

(Zeus), attended by two winged, divine midwives, Thanr and Ethausva. Back of bronze mirror from Praeneste, British Museum, c.450–425 BC. (Drawing.)

The preference of Etruscan art for natural childbirth accounts for two surprising representations of a baby actually emerging from the mother's body. The first, a tiny seal impression on a seventh-century bucchero fragment excavated at the Etruscan site of Poggio Colla, in the Mugello, in northern Tuscany, shows a birth scene of a type previously unknown (Figure 54.2).⁶ The crouching mother is portrayed with knees and one arm raised, giving birth to a rather indistinct baby. Her body is frontal, but her face is shown in profile, her hair in the long back braid typical of the seventh century.

We are left to wonder at the original object that was used to make this seal impression, and the possible significance of this realistic representation of childbirth. If it was a local symbol, it might refer to a local sanctuary whose divinity was related to fertility. A relief-decorated panel of a *lastrone a scala* of Tarquinia, which also shows a crouching female figure with legs outspread, maybe preparing to give birth, does not, however, show the baby being born.⁷

Equally remarkable is the birth scene on a newly-discovered situla—a bronze bucket used in the Alpine regions of the north as a crater to hold wine at a banquet. Here, the whole story leading up to the birth is told in narrative form, as a *bande dessinée* or comic strip (Figure 54.3). The situla, excavated from a tomb at Pieve d'Alpago, in the Veneto, is decorated in three registers. The top two have rows of identical figures of men dressed in three-quarter length mantles and Basque berets; they are decorative friezes, not formal processions, and might refer to the power of the chieftain who has so many men at his orders.⁸



Figure 54.2 Birth scene, seal on bucchero fragment from Poggio Colla, in the Mugello c.500 BC.

The lower frieze illustrates a series of scenes featuring the same characters, as in a cartoon strip, reading from right to left, like an Etruscan inscription. A youthful male figure and a girl meet. In the next scene, she accepts him, and shows her affection with a chin chuck. The next four scenes show the couple having intercourse in a variety of positions, with the girl holding on to the wall or a chair as they engage in energetic love making; he is naked, she wears the mantle over her head. In the fourth scene, they are lying down in bed, making love in the missionary position, boy on top. The whole of the iconography is new and different, primitively realistic and at the same time deeply sophisticated in its rendition of the courtship, marriage, and birth that the *symplegma* scenes imply. The last scene shows the natural result of all this love making—the birth of a child. The woman gives birth standing up, supported by two midwives who hold her up on either side as the baby appears between her legs, realistically

flailing its little arms as it emerges from the mother.

Other possible birth scenes have been recognized. A tiny amber figurine from Vetulonia may show a childbirth, but some have seen the figure between the woman's legs as a monkey.⁹ None of these provides the same amount of detail, or the context in which the birth takes place, as this new *situla*.

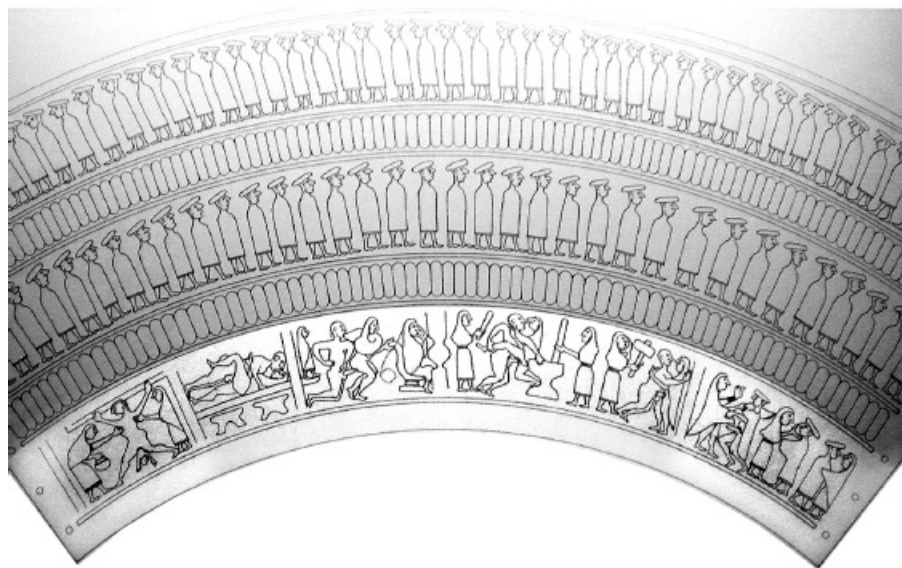


Figure 54.3 Erotic scenes and birth scene on situla from a tomb at Pieve d'Alpago (Veneto). Fifth century BC. (Drawing.)

Related to childbirth is another recent find that has been recognized as a stone birthing chair. It comes from an area that may be a sanctuary devoted to fertility in what is now an archaeological park in the Apennine Mountains near Carrara, and consists of a seat carved out of a cube-shaped stone with a Y-shaped hole on top, perhaps to catch the amniotic liquids.¹⁰ It would have been used like the chair pictured on a relief from Ostia on which the expectant mother is seated, with a woman, evidently a midwife, shown standing in front of her, and another seated behind her. During the birth, the pregnant woman would be seated on the chair with a midwife in front of her ready to take up the baby, and another behind her in case restraint should be necessary. On the mirror with Zeus or Tinia giving birth to Minerva, the god is assisted by midwives as he sits on his throne, which in this instance has become a birthing chair (Figure 54.1).¹¹

The importance of midwives in assisting successful births is confirmed by their appearance in folklore. A recent study surveys myths and superstitions about birth in antiquity reflecting the concerns of pregnant women, who attribute their difficulties in delivery to the curses and hostile actions of childbirth goddesses, and seek help in magic and gifts to the gods. Though midwives and godmothers are trusted to bring assistance and relief, they are involved in the frightening experience of childbirth, and arouse ambivalent, often hostile feelings.¹²

Etruscan midwives were experienced and knowledgeable about medical matters including the use of medicinal herbs related to pregnancy and childbirth; Etruscans were known for their learning about herbal medicine, some of which has come down to us, in the form of the names of herbs that appear as glosses—Etruscan words explained in Greek or Latin texts.¹³ Among the few Etruscan words that we know are over fifty glosses, synonyms of Greek and Latin words contained within the manuscript tradition of ancient authors. Thirteen of these are plant names preserved in Dioscorides' *De Materia Medica*, a first-century CE compendium of the pharmacological uses of plants, minerals, and animal products.¹⁴ Dioscorides notes that one of these, rough bindweed (*Smilax aspera*), glossed as *rhadia*, is an antidote for poison: if the plant is rubbed on a newborn baby, that child will be immune to poisons (4.142). Olive oil, which was regularly used for gynecological problems associated with childbirth by the Romans, was no doubt used by the Etruscans as well.

Etruscan anatomical votive models of human body parts—pregnant uteri, penises, and breasts—also testify to an interest in the medical aspects of conception and childbirth, and some knowledge about obstetrical and gynecological diagnoses and care of pregnancies. The many models of uteri deposited at healing sanctuaries, although highly stylized, represent malformations, tumors, and scars found on an actual uterus, and wave-like ridges that are characteristic of the third stage of labor contractions (see Turfa, this volume). These models were not medically precise; they were designed to remind the gods of the dangers faced by the pregnant votary. The variety of styles and quality of these votive gifts for the gods show that women at all levels of society left them in sanctuaries, as thank offerings for successful births or prayers in hopes of a easy labor and a healthy child.¹⁵

In Rome, Caesarean sections were performed post mortem on women to extract the baby from the dead or dying mother, in accordance with an early burial regulation, a *lex regia* of Numa, which

forbade burial of a pregnant woman, and stipulates that the offspring must first be cut out of her body, in case there was a chance of its survival. Several gods and heroes, including Dionysos and Asklepius, were believed to have been born by Caesarean birth, and there is a tradition that Julius Caesar's name comes from the Latin word for "cut," *caedo*, *caesus*.¹⁶

An intriguing recent interpretation of otherwise mysterious objects relates them to childbirth. Large bronze circles or flat rings, sometimes decorated with a geometric pattern, have been found in wealthy graves of the seventh century, on or near the stomach of important Etruscan women. The appearance of such a ring on the Vix Princess, in the Loire valley in France, looks like one more sign of Etruscan influence in celtic Europe. Their position on the belly of these women, who have been given splendid burials, suggests that they had given birth to princes (see Bartoloni and Pitzalis, this volume). Such symbols of childbirth further attest to the importance of childbearing and children in the world of early Italy, in order to have extra hands at work for the poorer people, and for the aristocracy, to ensure family continuity and inheritance of property.¹⁷

Assistance in childbirth is sought from many quarters, from amulets and magic to religious prayers in particular circumstances. In a polytheistic religion, it is always important to know what gods should be called on in particular circumstance. Greek women called on Artemis, or Eileithyia, the goddess of childbirth, for help in loosening the knots that held back the birth; Roman women looked to Juno Lucina for help. Thanr and Thalna, who appear on mirrors as divine midwives of myth, are also cult figures. Two votive uteri are dedicated to Vei: this may be the name of the statue of the naked goddess found in a sanctuary in the necropolis of Cannicella in Orvieto, if the bronze plaque found nearby refers to this cult image.¹⁸ Different divinities appear on the votive images of children deposited in sanctuaries (Tec (Tecum), or Thanr). Thalna, Ethausva, and Thanr function as birth goddesses, and the purely Etruscan names show that they are native divinities who receive cult.¹⁹ A mother, Fasti, dedicated a bronze statuette of Aplu (Apollo) to Aritimi in thanks for her son, but more often, the gods and goddesses of cult are different from the mythological divinities represented in the iconography.²⁰

Infant mortality and death in childbirth

In ancient times, and more recently too, many men and women died between their twentieth or thirtieth year, in war or childbirth. Death

in childbirth was a normal event for a high proportion of women until the mid-nineteenth century, and is still a fact of life in many parts of the world. As for the baby, many died before the end of their first year. The average Roman woman had between four and six children; of these, between 30–35 percent of newborns did not survive past the first month, and less than 50 percent reached age 15.²¹ Etruscan statistics are not too different. Recent studies of infant and child mortality, based on analysis of the skeletons from elite burials at the necropoleis of Verucchio and Tarquinia, show that approximately 10 percent of the population died between the ages of 5 and a half and 16 and a half years.²² Among the Romans and other peoples of antiquity, an extremely high mortality rate for children meant that parents had to grapple with their children's deaths on a regular basis, and that families with many offspring were the exception, since the number of surviving children remained low despite an apparently high rate of pregnancies.

Even if an infant survived, parents could decide, for a variety of reasons, not to raise it; in the absence of a father, or with his permission, it was legitimate to expose it. Scholars today argue about the prevalence of infanticide among the Greeks and Romans.²³ Because of the danger or difficulty of contraception and abortion, there is no doubt that exposure of children, ending in death or a life of slavery, must have been the most commonly practiced type of population control in all cultures, for reasons of poverty, or a desire to limit the number of children in order not to divide the property, or to be able to better provide for them.

Greek attitudes in the classical period concerning the exposure of children at birth differed from those of the Etruscans and other non-Greek barbarians. Jews and Egyptians were said to rear every child that was born to them. The Germans did not limit the number of children and considered it shameful to expose them to die.²⁴ Etruscan wealth and resources would have allowed them to indulge a love of children and avoid resorting to exposure of newborn babies, as was the custom for ancient Greeks during much of their history.

A biased and skewed, but nonetheless valuable account by the Greek fourth-century author, Theopompus of Chios, describes Etruscan customs and Etruscan women in particular.²⁵ Much of what he says could in fact be based on first-hand, or at least eyewitness accounts, for example, his description of the luxurious banquets where men and women recline on couches together. The statement that women could raise any of their children on their own could likewise be based on a real situation.²⁶ Of the Etruscans, Theopompus said that they brought

up all the babies, “even if they did not know the father.” This statement, which implies that women could raise their children on their own, could be based on a real situation which might have allowed Etruscan women to bring up their own children regardless of the status of the father, a situation Greek and Roman laws did not permit. In both Greece and Rome, it was the father who decided whether a child should be brought up or be exposed to die or at best, raised as a slave. An Etruscan upper-class woman might have been able to pass on her status—and her property—to her children.²⁷ A different legal and social situation for Etruscan women seems to be reflected by the use of matronymics in Etruscan epitaphs. Though not as frequent as patronymics, they are nevertheless part of the name system and attest to the continuing importance of the mother and the mother’s family in the lives of grown children. Then, too, Etruscan women had their own names—Tanaquil, Ramtha, Thana—in contrast to the daughters of their patriarchal neighbors, the Romans, who were under the *manus* or authority of their fathers, and simply took the feminine form of their fathers’ surnames: Cornelia, Lucretia, and Julia were respectively the daughters of Cornelius, Lucretius, and Julius.²⁸

Nursing mothers and kourotrophoi

Swaddled babies frequently appear as votive statuettes, asking for the birth or health of the babies.²⁹ Such votive offerings functioned as either a plea to the goddess for protection and healing, or in gratitude for favors granted. A series of large-scale seated stone statues of mothers from Capua show babies in their mothers’ laps, either singly or several of them together, and a majestic stone statue from Chiusi, the so-called Mater Matuta, represent either the votary or the goddess to whom the prayer is addressed. Many of these swaddled infants are being nursed by *kourotrophoi*, either their mothers or nurses.

Both language and art reflect the different situations in Greece and Italy. In Greece, the term *kourotrophos* refers to nurses or caretakers of any kind, and babies are rarely shown nursing at the breast.³⁰ In Latin, in contrast, the term *nutrix* refers to a wet nurse. Roman babies are frequently represented nursing at the breast of their mothers or the woman who took her place, and Roman women were often praised for the fact that they nursed their children themselves.³¹

Nursing mothers were not shown in classical times on the Greek mainland for a number of possible reasons. These could range from issues of privacy—even today, in some Mediterranean countries, it is considered bad taste for a man to talk about his family to anyone

except relatives and close friends. It is a kind of taboo, whereby the act of nursing is considered shameful or embarrassing, so that it is not practiced by a woman of status, but is relegated to a wet nurse. Nurses are regularly represented as old women, even when they are holding small babies in their arms and would be presumed to be wet nurses. This is probably a reference to their status as slaves, who are regularly shown as ugly in comparison to the beautiful male and female citizens, and in this case confirm a negative attitude to nursing.³²

In Italy, images of the *kourotrophos* as nursing mother are frequent from the eighth century on and continue well into Roman times. They are by no means limited to the Etruscan world—examples are found in all of Italy, in Latium, Campania, and throughout the former Greek colonies of southern Italy and Sicily. They are three-dimensional, and they come in all sizes. The earliest image appears on a tiny bronze horse trapping from an eighth-century woman's tomb at Decima, in Latium, near the border of Etruria, where it had been deposited along with the chariot that indicated the high status of the deceased. Represented are two naked human figures, a woman nursing a large child and a man with two birds pecking out his eyes. As often, it is hard to tell whether they are meant to represent a divine, mythological, or a human couple. The large size of the swaddled baby on this and other images may reflect the fact that children were nursed until they were two or three years old.³³

Etruscan *kourotrophoi* appear in many different contexts. An over life-size archaic *kourotrophos* statue representing Leto with the baby Apollo in her arms stood on the rooftop at the temple at Veii, a divine image presiding over the faithful. Most numerous are the small votive images of *kourotrophoi* deposited in the sanctuaries as gifts for the gods, asking for the life and well-being of children.³⁴ They have the same function as the large statues given by wealthier votaries, but they belong to different artistic traditions. The later, fourth-century "Mater Matuta" from Chiusi, a large seated figure of an enthroned goddess with a baby in her lap, was funerary, as were the many *matres* from Capua in Magna Graecia. These all hold the babies, but do not nurse them, unlike the life-size, sixth-century funerary limestone statue of a woman nursing two babies at Megara Hyblaea, in Sicily.³⁵ These images also demonstrate the different ways of showing affection in mainland Greek and Etruscan and Italic art. The difference in medium emphasizes this contrast, since on Greek scenes with babies and their mothers or nurses, these mostly appear in profile, on vases, while in Italy they are three-dimensional, as statues or statuettes. Italian *kourotrophoi* emphasize the physical closeness of Italian mothers and their babies as against the Greek manner of expressing

affection by the intense looks exchanged between Greek nurses or caregivers and babies, like those between lovers.³⁶

The variety of types is due to the absence of any stable Greek models for this motif.³⁷ An interesting example is the life-size, standing statue of a woman with a baby from Volterra, the so-called Maffei statue. The mother is based on a Greek fourth-century model; the Etruscan artist has turned the statue into a *kourotrophos* by adding the baby.³⁸ Clearly, in Etruscan religion, the need for such images was important enough to cause artists and craftsmen to invent new models and modify old ones, in spite of the classical prohibition against representing nursing and exposing the naked female breast.

The fourth to second centuries BC saw a proliferation of these *kourotrophoi* holding or nursing small children, in a variety of forms, functions, sizes, styles, iconography, and context that reflects the local importance of the motif and the impelling need for such an image for the devout. The many later nursing *matres* with swaddling babies from Capua, and the hundreds of votive terracotta figurines of *kourotrophoi* from sanctuaries, all date from this period.

Rites of passage and age groups

Images of older children, and toddlers between the ages of two and five years, were probably created to mark a coming of age ritual, the all-important moment of weaning. Now the children are no longer swaddled. On statuettes of children found in Etruria, Cyprus, and Greece, like the votive images of toddlers dating from the fourth to the first century, the boys are naked, while the girls are dressed.

Cinerary urns and sarcophagi of the fourth through first centuries BC show boys and girls of different ages, and document a difference between northern and southern Etruria in terms of the representation of the children's gender: Nielsen has noted that while baby girls appear in the southern cities, almost all the babies found in Volterra and Chiusi in the north are boys.³⁹

Particularly interesting is a tiny amber figurine in the Metropolitan Museum, only two and a half inches high, showing a woman carrying a child on her shoulder (Figure 54.4).⁴⁰ Made by a skillful Etruscan craftsman in the fifth century BC, it represents a female figure wearing a chiton that falls in soft folds down to her right elbow. The child looks to be three or four years old. The child's head, which is unfortunately lost, was surely that of a little girl, dressed like her

mother in a chiton whose overfolds were clearly shown over her belt.⁴¹

It is unusual to see such a large child held by the person we suppose to be her mother. There are plenty of nursing mothers in Italy, but this is not a baby, neither is it nursing. The ages between two and five generally mark the crucial time of weaning, when the child is more likely to survive. This crucial moment was especially important when nursing was well nigh universal. Bottle-fed babies were few and far between, and rarely survived. Even in relatively recent times, the moment of weaning was the time when children who had been sent out to the country to be raised by wet nurses came back home. Around that time, or somewhat later, at the age of seven, the child's status in the household changes: girls remain with the women and start to be educated on the running of a household, while boys leave the women's quarters and join the men to be educated by their fathers and start the transition toward adolescence and adulthood.⁴² The age of the child on the amber pendant (Figure 54.4) was thus one that marked a coming-of-age ritual. The subject of the pendant could have been commissioned to remember this important event in the life of the little girl who wore it as a grown woman and took it with her to her grave, or perhaps by the mother who had kept it as an image of her child.

Comparisons with Greek customs, which are better known to us from art and literature, can help us understand such an Etruscan situation. The Choes ritual, which marked the third year of life for Athenian toddlers, indicated the importance of this age in Attica at that time for both boys and girls. Scholars have widely agreed that the small choes associated with the festival were given to toddlers as gifts, from which they received their first sip of wine. This symbolic gesture—drinking from a cup—alluded to the child's successful completion of the weaning process.⁴³



Figure 54.4 Amber figurine of a woman carrying a little girl. H. 2.5 in. Fifth century BC. (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.)

Older children are also represented in Etruscan art, though it is not always easy to see whether they were meant to be children or slaves. Though they were all raised together in the same household, there were important legal differences between them. In Rome, language reflects these differences: Latin distinguishes the Roman *liberi* (“freeborn children”) from the children (*pueri*) of slaves or *liberti* (“freedmen,” “freed”). *Filii*, or “nurslings,” are those who have been nursed at home, from *felare*, “to suckle, to nurse.”⁴⁴

Nuclear families

Aristocratic women at banquets or other social occasions are shown with their husbands rather than their children, but there are scenes of the nuclear family with father, mother, and child together. On the seventh-century Etruscan oinochoe, or wine jug, from Tragliatella, near cerveteri (Figure 54.5),⁴⁵ the three lively, primitive figures have Etruscan names: *mamarce*, *thesathei*, and little *Velelia* are evidently members of the aristocratic family who commissioned the decoration of the vase.

Though the smaller figure between the man and the woman might originally have been inspired by an Archaic Greek representation of Ariadne's nurse, here she is meant to represent a real child, Velelia. And what about Arnza, "little Arnth," who kneels or crouches next to Vel Saties and releases the birds from which the seer reads the omens in the fourth-century François Tomb—is he an attendant or his son?⁴⁶ A scene on the wall of the Tomba del Barone may represent a formal family portrait, father and mother with their son.⁴⁷ The young naked boys serving at banquets on tomb paintings are slaves, part of the *familia* whose banquet commemorates the deceased and celebrates the continuity of the new generations of this aristocratic society.

We have dealt with the children more than the mothers. The preponderance of images of mothers and children, in comparison with the contemporary Greek situation, may allow us to draw some conclusions about the psychological fallout from this state of affairs. Some aspects of it may probably be safely assumed to be characteristic, such as the mother's function to bear children and see them grow up. Their appearance in Etruscan art tells us much about the social makeup of the family in the Etruria. It is often said that boys appear more often than girls in ancient art; but the amber amulet with mother and daughter illustrated above (Figure 54.4) and the family on the Tragliatella urn (Figure 54.5) show little girls with their parents, and confirm the importance of children of both sexes in Etruscan society.

Finally, we can look at the closeness between Etruscan mother and child, and the contrast with what we find in Rome, where the mother's role may not have been too different from that of the father (see Lovén, this volume).⁴⁸ And we can ask whether the overwhelming presence of the mother and her nurturing function would not have resulted in the kind of ambivalent feelings noted above toward mother figures, midwives, and godmothers, who inspire fear and gratitude, love and hate? We have no texts to confirm such an interpretation, but certain iconographical themes may provide subconscious hints supporting such a conclusion.⁴⁹ The matricide of

Clytemnestra at the hands of Orestes is frequently represented on Etruscan mirrors. These bronze mirrors were specifically made for women, probably given to the bride on her wedding day, used by the *mater familias* during her lifetime, and buried with her in her grave at her death. What better place to express such an ambivalence, which was surely explained in quite a different manner by all the people involved? Freud did not invent the Oedipus complex or the complexities of the mother–child relationship. He showed that it is at the base of much literary and artistic creation, and can help us understand the hidden motives for some choices in art that are otherwise puzzling and deeply contradictory.⁵⁰ Perhaps we can learn as much about Etruscan psychology from their art, and the kinds of relationships it illustrates, as we learn about the Greeks of Athens from the plays acted out on the stage, and the family relationships they brought before the eyes of their audiences.

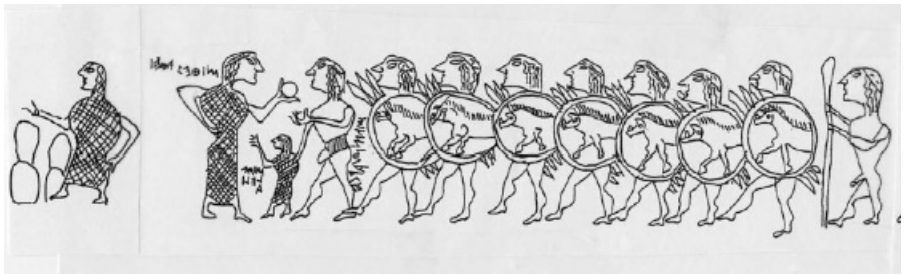


Figure 54.5 Nuclear family, detail from Tragliatella oinochoe (cerveteri): Mamarce, Thesatheï, Velelia. 630–600 BC. Rome, Capitoline Museum. (Drawing.)

Conclusion

The graves and funerary monuments of cerveteri, Tarquinia, and other Etruscan cities are eloquent about the importance of the married couple as the basis for the family, and the essential role of the woman as part of the couple, for her fertility and the birth of children guaranteed the family's status and continuity. Etruscan parents prized their children, whether they guaranteed the continuity of a great family, or joined one of the humble families who left hopeful *ex votos* in sanctuaries. The desire for children arose from different needs: to secure the continuance of the family name; to provide heirs to the family property; and especially among those of lesser wealth or status, to ensure a system of support in old age. Occasionally, reference is made in ancient literature to family happiness. Lucretius writes of the joy afforded parents by small children (e.g., *Lucr.* 3.894–911), a

feeling that many have shared, and that is attested in antiquity by the care they took of them when they were alive, and the epitaphs that marked the sadness at their death.

Notes

- 1 Leitao 2012. Bettini 2013, for birth myths in various cultures. For the male metaphorical appropriation of female functions, compare the Judaeo Christian traditional metaphor of the Divine Father breastfeeding his people (Tite 2009: 380): “I fashioned their members, and my own breasts I prepared for them, that they might drink my holy milk and live by it” (*Odes of Solomon* 8.13–14).
- 2 On the prevalence of birth scenes and babies, see Bonfante 1989b: 85–106, 2013: 426–446. On babies and small children, see Van der Meer 1995: 119–134, Haynes 2000: 361–363, Dasen 2011a, 2011b, and De Grummond 2006: 59–63. For Greek birth scenes, see Gourevitch 1988: 42–88, Demand 1994, Lewis 2002: 14–20.
- 3 Boardman 2004: 103–112.
- 4 London, British Museum. Swaddling 1993, *CSE* Great Britain 1.1.24; De Grummond 2006: 61–64, fig. IV.12. The attendants’ shoulder tassel was a sign of status and prestige: Bonfante 2003: 189. For a humorous painting with Zeus moaning in labor as he delivers Dionysos, assisted by divine midwives (*obstetricia dearum*), see Pliny 35.140. (*Ctesilochus, Apellis discipulus, petulanti pictura innotuit, Iove Liberum parturiente depicto mitrato et muliebriter ingemesciente inter obstetricia dearum.*)
- 5 Bonfante 1993a: 52, 1993b: 224–225.
- 6 Perkins 2012: 146–201. Turfa and Becker 2013: 862.
- 7 Crouching woman on *lastroni a scala*, De Grummond 2006: 111–112, fig. V.43; Bruni 1986: 33. For a survey of ancient birth scenes, see Perkins 2012: 146–201, who remarks on the rarity of childbirth images in the classical world, and the uniquely Etruscan character of the shard’s imagery (146).
- 8 Gangemi 2013: 282–285, 293–294, Cat. 6.9, fig. 3 on p. 109.
- 9 I am grateful to my friend Simona Rafanelli for the history of the amber figurine in the museum of Vetulonia. A drawing published by Falchi in 1899 includes the head of the woman, which has since been lost. The two heads, mother and daughter, look similar, but it is difficult to judge from the drawing. See Causey 2011: 93. Haynes 2000: 100 thinks it might be a monkey.
- 10 Magnotta 2014: 28. H. 65 cm, w. 45 cm, depth of incised hole 30 cm.
- 11 Relief from Ostia, Tomb of Scribonia Attice. Lefkowitz and Fant 2005, fig. 13. Mirror with Zeus giving birth to Athena, see note 4.
- 12 Bettini 2013. The English translation of the Italian title, *Nascere. Storie di donne, donnole, madri ed eroi* (1998), misses the etymological word play of the word for “weasel” in Italian, *donnola*, related to *donna*, “woman.”
- 13 Johnson 2006: 5(1): 8. Scarborough 2006: 6(1): 9. Bonfante and Bonfante 2002: 186–191.
- 14 One plant is mentioned twice.
- 15 Turfa 2004: 359–368, 2006: 90–115. Recke 2013: 1068–1085, especially 1074–1078.

- 16 Gourevitch 2004: 239–264. Turfa 1994: 227–230.
- 17 Bartoloni 2006a: 16–18, 2006b: 30–34, figs. 2–12, 2013: 436, and this volume.
- 18 De Grummond (2006: 111) suggests that this may be the same goddess represented with legs apart, in a childbirth pose, on a relief *a scala* from Tarquinia: Bruni 1986.
- 19 For birth goddesses, see Maras 2001 [1998]: 177–184. Torelli 1986: 192. Turfa 2004: 360.
- 20 Jannot 2005: 140.
- 21 Laes 2011. Of Roman children who survived their births, about 50 percent died before reaching the age of ten. For the statistics, see Frier 2000: 827–854: demographically, an ordinary premodern state had a low life expectancy, high infant mortality, a low marriage age, and high fertility within marriage.
- 22 Turfa and Becker 2013: 857–858.
- 23 Harris 1982: 112–116. But Rawson (2003) convincingly argues that “children were, in principle and often in practice, welcome and valued and visible in Roman society.”
- 24 Tacitus, *Germania* 19: *Numerum liberorum finire aut quemquam ex adgnatis necare flagitium habetur*. “To restrict the number of children, or to kill any of those born after the heir, is considered wicked.” Judaism prohibits infanticide. Josephus, *Against Apion* 2.5, and 2.202: God “forbids women to cause abortion of what is begotten, or to destroy it afterward.” Diodorus Siculus, 40.3.8. For Egyptians, Diodorus Siculus 1.80.3; Strabo, *Geography* 17.2.5. For Greece and Rome, Harris 1982: 114–116. Still basic is the article on Athenian infanticide by Glotz, who calls it a universal custom: Derenberg-Saglio, s.v. *expositio*.
- 25 Lefkowitz and Fant 2005: 88–89, n. 100: Theopompus, *Histories* 115 *FGrHist* F204 = Athenaeus 517d–518a. G.
- 26 In *New Comedy* the wished-for happy ending at the conclusion of the play is that the slave girl is discovered to be a citizen, and can thus be married and resume her place in society.
- 27 Torelli 1997: 52–86, especially 77, and see below, on the Verucchio Throne. See Pomeroy 2002: 48, 90–91 for possible Spartan examples.
- 28 Bonfante and Bonfante 2002: 89–90, 106–110. Nielsen 1989: 121–145. Wallace 2008: 77–94, on matronymics and women’s names. For Roman matronymics, influenced by Etruscan custom, see Gasperini 1989: 181–211, with list of Latin matronymics; these are identified by *natus* (or *gnatus*), as against *filius*, used for patronymics.
- 29 For swaddled babies in Gaul, see Deyts 2004: 227–237. For Greek swaddled babies, see an Attic classical gravestone in the Levy Collection (CAT 2.780a, Clairmont 1993–1995) or one in the BM (1864.6–16.1) (CAT 2.786, Clairmont 1993–1995). I am grateful to Tom Carpenter for this reference. In Italy, kourotrophoi almost always carry swaddled babies.
- 30 Budin 2011, who notes that the image was not a universal symbol of maternity. Price 1978 includes male and animal *kourotrophoi*, and Pedrucci 2013 studies in depth the difference in the appearance of the nursing motif in the archaic and the classical periods.
- 31 Lefkowitz and Fant 2005: 188–189.
- 32 For the ugliness of slaves and prostitutes in Greek art, see Bonfante 1989a: 555, 568, and Lear and Cantarella 2008: 107, 119–120, 190, 192: “ugliness, in Greek eyes . . . signified a lack of nobility.” These images seem to confirm the custom

of hiring lower-class women or slaves as wet nurses, and a negative attitude to nursing.

- 33 Bonfante 1989b: 85–106. Veii kourotrophos, Haynes 2000: 208–209, fig. 173.
- 34 Vagnetti 1971: 61–62, 66–75, nn. F11, 16; G1–2: 12, 14, 20–21, 24–34, some nursing. Bonfante 1986: 195–201. Nagy 1988: 36–38. And what about her IIA44 (p. 173), fragment of figurine with left breast exposed? Decima horse trapping: Bonfante 1989b: 86–87; Tarquinia bronze, Bonfante 1989b: 88, pl. XXXIII.1–2.
- 35 Mater Matuta: Haynes 2000: 296–298. Matres from Capua: Bonfante 1989b: 91, pls. XXXVI.2, XL.2, XLIII.2. Megara Hyblaea: Bonfante 1989b: 87, 92, pl. XXXV. Greek examples: Bonfante 1989b: 95, pls. XLIV, XLVIII.
- 36 For the lovers' gaze, see a young couple on an Attic red-figure jug from the end of the fifth century, Brendel 1970: 39–41, figs. 25–26. Gallic pipe clay images of kourotrophoi also exhibit affection by means of physical closeness: Bonfante 1989b: 91–92, pl. XLVI; Coulon 2004.
- 37 Bonfante 1997: 177–178.
- 38 Kourotrophos Maffei: Haynes 2000: 357, fig. 279. Bonfante and Bonfante 2002: 168, Source 51, fig. 47. Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli's (1982: 301) *bon mot* about this statue, whose head was missing (it was later found), was that it showed a woman who had lost her head, and found herself with a baby in her arms.
- 39 Nielsen 1989: 132.
- 40 Picene or Etruscan. De Puma 2013: 273, n. 7.51.
- 41 A long overfold was a way of dealing with extra cloth, and is probably a realistic note, since children were dressed in larger clothes that they could grow into.
- 42 The following is based on the article by Sophie Crawford-Brown 2010: 5, 31, and her unpublished Senior thesis (New York University) on "'Temple Boys,' Cypriot and Etruscan." "The traditional name of 'temple-boys' is misleading, since statuettes of girls have also been uncovered. The existence of at least two Cypriot figures of girls is undisputed, and a number of statuettes assumed to be male could well be female figures. In Italy we also find examples of female children, most notably at Capua. Hence, whatever rituals may have been associated with these figures would not have been limited to boys, although they may have favored them."
- 43 Hamilton 1992. Dasen 2011a: 6–7. On the Greek mainland, as in Etruria, at this age little boys were shown naked, while little girls were dressed.
- 44 Ernout Meillet 1932, s.v. Bonfante 1989b: 49–63. Pedrucci 2013.
- 45 Traglatella urn: Giglioli 1929: 111–159, pls. 23–26; he sees the group of three figures as an "idyllic" scene of father, mother, and daughter (Van der Meer 1986). Martelli 1987: 270–272, n. 49. According to Small 1986: 63–96, the narrative as commissioned in honor of the deceased, Thesathei, for whom funerary games were celebrated. Haynes 2000: 97–99.
- 46 For children and servants, see the Tomb of the Painted Vases, Steingraber 1986: 353–355, n. 123: "the rear wall has an intimate air, with a married couple and the children seated alongside them." François Tomb: Steingraber 1986: 377–378, n. 178, fig. 185, sees Arnza as the servant of Vel Saties. Haynes 2000: 280–281, fig 227. The Latin term *liberi* was used of the *familia*'s legitimate children in contrast to the slaves: see Ernout Meillet 1932, s.v. The Greek term *puer* referring to a slave corresponds to calling a slave "boy" in the Old South, implying his inferior status.

- 47 For the Tomb of the Baron, rear wall: Steingraber 1986: 285, n. 44, citing different interpretations of the scene. Haynes 2000: 224, fig. 183. Amann 2001 [1998] 71–93.
- 48 Dixon 1987. Rawson 2003.
- 49 De Angelis (1999, 2001), cited by Carpino (2011: 22), notes the close bond usually depicted between mother and son on mirrors, and suggests that the Etruscan meaning of this motif evoked the inversion of the mother–son relation. This comes close to referring to Freud’s Oedipus complex, and the ambivalence of the mother image, which includes both the Bad Mother and Good Mother image.
- 50 Carpino 2011: 3–37. Eisenbud 1991. De Angelis 2001: 37–73. Freud 1899 [2010], 1905 [1962], 1924, and Standard edition, Index, s.v. Oedipus complex.

References

- Amann, P. (2001 [1998]) Die Tomba del Barone. Überlegungen zu einem neuen ikonologischen Verständnis. *Studi Etruschi* 64: 71–93.
- Bartoloni, G. (2006a) Madri di Principi. In P. Amann, M. Pedrazzi and H. Taeuber (eds) *Italo-Tusco-Romana. Festschrift für Luciana Aigner Foresti*. Vienna, Austria: Holzhausen, pp. 13–22.
- Bartoloni, G. (2006b) Le donne dei principi nel Lazio. *Aristonothos* 3: 23–45.
- Bettini, M. (2013) *Women and Weasels: Mythologies of Birth in Ancient Greece and Rome*. Trans. E. Eisenach; first published 1998. Chicago, IL and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Bianchi Bandinelli, R. (1982) La kourotrophos Maffei nel museo di Volterra. In *L’Arte Etrusca*. Rome: Editori Riuniti, pp. 301–314.
- Boardman, J. (2004) Unnatural conception and birth in Greek mythology. In V. Dasen (ed.) *Naissance et Petite Enfance dans l’Antiquité*. Actes du Colloque de Fribourg 2001. Fribourg, Academic Press and Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, pp. 103–112.
- Bonfante, L. (1986) Votive terracotta figures of mothers and children. In J. Swaddling (ed.) *Italian Iron Age Artefacts in the British Museum*. Papers of the Sixth British Museum Classical Colloquium. London, pp. 195–201.
- Bonfante, L. (1989a) Nudity as costume in Classical art. *American Journal of Archaeology* 93: 543–570.
- Bonfante, L. (1989b) Iconografia delle madri: Etruria e Italia antica. In A. Rallo (ed.) *Le Donne in Etruria*. Rome: L’Erma di Bretschneider, pp. 49–63.
- Bonfante, L. (1993a) Etruscan nudity. In *Essays on Nudity in Antiquity in Memory of Otto Brendel*. *Source* 12: 47–55.

- Bonfante, L. (1993b) *Fufluns Pacha: The Etruscan Dionysos*. In T. Carpenter and C. Faraone (eds) *Masks of Dionysos*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 221–235.
- Bonfante, L. (1997) Nursing mothers in Classical art. In C. Lyons and A. Koloski-Ostrow (eds) *Naked Truths: Women, Sexuality and Gender in Classical Art and Archaeology*. New York and London: Routledge, pp. 174–196.
- Bonfante, L. (2003) *Etruscan Dress*. Second edition. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Bonfante, L. (2013) Women and children. In J. M. Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. Oxford, UK: Routledge.
- Bonfante, G. and Bonfante, L. (2002) *The Etruscan Language. An Introduction*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- Brendel, O. J. (1970) The scope and temperament of erotic art in the Greco-Roman world. In T. Bowie and C. Christenson (eds) *Studies in Erotic Art*. Institute for Sex Research. New York: Basic Books, pp. 3–69, fig. 148.
- Bruni, S. (1986) *I lastroni a scala*. Rome, Giorgio Bretschneider.
- Budin, S. L. (2011) *Images of Woman and Child from the Bronze Age: Reconsidering Fertility, Maternity, and Gender in the Ancient World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Carpino, A. A. (2011) Killing Klytaimnestra: Matricide myths on Etruscan bronze mirrors. *Etruscan Studies* 14: 3–37.
- Causey, F. (2011) *Amber and the Ancient World*. Los Angeles, CA: The J. Paul Getty Museum.
- Clairmont, C. W. (1993–1995) *Classical Attic Tombstones*, 6 vols. Kilchberg, Switzerland: Akanthus.
- Coulon, G. (2004) *L'enfant en Gaule Romaine*. Paris: Errance, Hespérides.
- Crawford-Brown, S. (2010) Votive children in Cyprus and Italy. *Etruscan News* 12: 5, 31.
- Dasen, V. (2011a) Naissance et petite enfance dans le monde grec. *ThesCRA* VI: 2–8.
- Dasen, V. (2011b) Childbirth and infancy in Greek and Roman antiquity. In B. Rawson (ed.) *Blackwell Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell. First published 2011. Electronic edition, Malden, MA, pp. 291–314.
- De Angelis, F. (1999) Tragedie familiari. Miti greci nell'arte sepolcrale etrusca. In F. De Angelis and S. Muth (eds) *Im Spiegel des Mythos. Bilderwelt und Lebenswelt. Lo specchio del mito. Immaginario e realtà, Symposium, Rome, 19–20 février 1998*. Wiesbaden, Germany (*Palilia* 6), pp. 53–66.

- De Angelis, F. (2001) Specchi e miti: La recezione della mitologia greca in Etruria. *Ostraka* 11(1): 37–73.
- De Grummond, N. (2006) *Etruscan Myth, Sacred History, and Legend*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.
- Demand, N. H. (1994) *Birth, Death, and Motherhood in Classical Greece*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- De Puma, D. D. (2013) *Etruscan Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- Deyts, S. (2004) La femme et l'enfant en maillot en Gaule. In V. Dasen (ed.) *Naissance et Petite Enfance dans l'Antiquité*. Actes du Colloque de Fribourg 2001. Fribourg, Switzerland: Academic Press and Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, pp. 227–237.
- Dixon, S. (1987) *The Roman Mother*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma.
- Eisenbud, J. (1991) *Love and Hate in the Nursery and Beyond. Voices from the Unconscious*. New York: Psyche Press. Freudian interpretations.
- Ernout, A. and Meillet, A. (1932) *Dictionnaire Étymologique de la Langue Latine, Histoire des Mots*. Paris: C. Klincksieck.
- Freud, S. (1924) The dissolution of the Oedipus Complex. *Standard Edition* 19: 172–179.
- Freud, S. (1962 [1905]) *Freud, Sigmund: Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*. Trans. J. Strachey. New York: Basic Books.
- Freud, S. (2010 [1899]) *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Trans. J. Strachey. New York: Basic Books.
- Frier, B. W. (2000) Demography. In A. K. Bowman, P. Garnsey and D. Rathbone (eds) *The Cambridge Ancient History XI: The High Empire, A.D. 70–192*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 827–854.
- Gangemi, G. (2013) La situla della tomba 1 di Pieve d'Alpago. In *Venetkens* 2013. Exhibit in Padua. Venice, Italy: Marsillo Editore, pp. 282–285.
- Gasperini, L. (1989) La dignità della donna nel mondo etrusco e il suo lontano riflesso nell'onomastica personale romana. Catalogo delle iscrizioni latine con matronimico – Addenda – Indice delle formule matronimiche. In A. Rallo (ed.) *Le Donne in Etruria*. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, pp. 181–211.
- Giglioli, G. Q. (1929) L'oinochoe della Tragliatella. *Studi Etruschi* 3: 111–159, pls. 23–26.
- Gourevitch, D. (1988) Grossesse et accouchement dans l'iconographie antique. *Dossiers de l'Archéologie* 123: 42–88.

- Gourevitch, D. (2004) Chirurgie obstétricale dans le monde romain: Césarienne et embryotomie. In V. Dasen (ed.) *Naissance et Petite Enfance dans l'Antiquité*. Actes du Colloque de Fribourg 2001. Fribourg, Switzerland: Academic Press and Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, pp. 239–264.
- Hamilton, R. (1992) *Choes and Anthesteria: Athenian Iconography and Ritual*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Harris, W. V. (1982) The theoretical possibility of extensive infanticide in the Greco-Roman world. *CQ* 32: 112–116.
- Haynes, S. (2000) *Etruscan Civilization: A Cultural History*. Los Angeles, CA: Getty Publications.
- Jannot, J.-R. (2005) *Religion in Ancient Etruria*. Trans. and ed. by J. K. Whitehead. Wisconsin Studies in Classics. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Johnson, K. (2006) An Etruscan herbal? *Etruscan News* 5(1): 8.
- Laes, C. (2011) *Children in the Roman Empire: Outsiders Within*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Lear, A. and Cantarella, E. (2008) *Images of Ancient Greek Pederasty: Boys Were Their Gods*. New York: Routledge.
- Lefkowitz, M. R. and Fant, M. B. (2005) *Women's Life in Greece and Rome: A Source Book in Translation*. Third edition. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Leitao, D. (2012) *The Pregnant Male as Myth and Metaphor in Classical Greek Literature*. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Lewis, S. (2002) *The Athenian Woman: An Iconographic Handbook*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Magnotta, A. (2014) *Il Parco Lunigianese delle Incisioni Rupestri e altri scritti*. Sarzana, Italy: Archeoclub Apuo Ligure dell'Appennino Tosco Emiliano.
- Maras, D. F. (2001 [1998]) La dea Thanr e le cerchie divine in Etruria. Nuove acquisizioni. *Studi Etruschi* 64: 173–197.
- Martelli, M. (ed.) (1987) *La ceramica degli Etruschi*. Rome: De Agostini.
- Nagy, H. (1988) *Votive Terracottas from the Vignaccia, cerveteri, in the Lowie Museum of Anthropology*. *Archaeologica* 75. Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider.
- Nielsen, M. (1989) La donna e la famiglia nella tarda società etrusca. In A. Rallo (ed.) *Le Donne in Etruria*. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, pp. 121–145.
- Pedrucci, G. (2013) *L'Allattamento nella Grecia di Epoca Arcaica e Classica*. Rome: Scienze e Lettere.

- Perkins, P. (2012) The Buccherio childbirth stamp on a late orientalizing period shard from Poggio Colla. *Etruscan Studies* 15(2): 146–201.
- Pomeroy, S. B. (2002) *Spartan Women*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Price, T. H. (1978) *Kourotrophos: Cults and Representations of the Greek Nursing Deities*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Rawson, B. (2003) *Children and Childhood in Roman Italy*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Recke, M. (2013) Science as art: Etruscan anatomical votives. In J. M. Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Scarborough, J. (2006) More on Dioscorides' Etruscan herbs. *Etruscan News* 6: 1, 9.
- Small, J. P. (1986) The Tragliatella Oinochoe. *Römische Mitteilungen* 93: 63–96
- Steingraber, S. (1986) *Etruscan Painting*. New York, Johnson Reprints.
- Swaddling, J. (1993) *CSE Great Britain. The British Museum*. Fasc. I. *Archaic and Classical Mirrors (Early Tanged and Related Mirrors)*. Drawings by Susan Bird. London.
- Torelli, M. (1986) La religione. In G. Pugliese Carratelli (ed.) *Rasenna. Storia e civiltà degli Etruschi. Antica Madre*. Collana di Studi sull'Italia antica. Milan, Italy: Libri Scheiwiller, pp. 159–237.
- Torelli, M. (1997) *Il Rango, il Rito e l'Immagine. Alle Origini della Rappresentazione Storica Romana*. Saggi de Archeologia. Milan, Italy: Electa.
- Turfa, J. M. (1994) Anatomical votives and Italic medical tradition. In R. D. de Puma and J. P. Small (eds) *Murio and the Etruscans*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 224–240.
- Turfa, J. M. (2004) (Weigeschenke: Altitalien und Imperium Romanum. 1. Italien.) B. Anatomical votives. In J. C. Barlty *et al.* (eds) *ThesCRA I*. Los Angeles, CA: Getty Publications, pp. 359–368.
- Turfa, J. M. (2006) Etruscan religion at the watershed: Before and after the fourth century BC. In C. E. Schultz and P. B. Harvey (eds) *Religion in Republican Italy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Turfa, J. M. and Becker, M. J. (2013) Health and medicine in Etruria. In J. M. Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. Oxford, UK: Routledge.
- Vagnetti, L. (1971) *Il Deposito Votivo di Campetti a Veio. Materiali degli Scavi 1937–1938*. Florence, Italy: Sansoni.
- Van der Meer, L. B. (1986) Le jeu de Truia. Le programme iconographique de l'oinochoé de Tragliatella. *Ktema* XI: 169–178.

Van der Meer, L. B. (1995) *Interpretatio Etrusca: Greek Myths on Etruscan Mirrors*. Amsterdam: Gieben.

Wallace, R. E. (2008) Zich Rasna. *A Manual of the Etruscan Language and Inscriptions*. Ann Arbor, MI: Beech Stave Press.

HEALTH AND MEDICINE FOR ETRUSCAN WOMEN

Jean MacIntosh Turfa

Although no Etruscan medical or gynecological literature exists comparable to extant Greek and Roman texts, we can document certain categories of medically related knowledge that are nearly unique to the female sphere of first-millennium Etruria. General circumstances of nutrition, hygiene, and exercise in Italy also shed light on the lives of Etruscan women.

The general health of Etruscan women

Diet

By the first millennium BCE, the diet of most Italians was quite healthy, with wild foods supplemented with cultivated grains (Bartoli *et al.* 1997; Brocato 2000). Skeletal studies of pre- and proto-historic *Italic* populations such as that at Sant’Abbondio near Pompeii have demonstrated that men and women, boys and girls received the same nutrition without discrimination by sex (Tafuri 2005: 16–20).¹ All that we know of Etruscan society suggests the same situation applied throughout the first millennium BCE.

To judge from images of banqueters holding wine cups, Etruscan women also had parity in the consumption of wine (in Rome this was allegedly anathema) (Giulierini 2008: 33–36; Rathje 2013). An inscribed seventh-century BCE punchbowl from cerveteri attests to Etruscan women participating publicly in the wine-enriched banquet (*ET Cr* 2.9). It proclaims “*mi titelas thina mla mlach mlakas*”—“I am the punchbowl of beau- beauti- beautiful Titela!” (Bettini 2008).

The literary trope of the *obesus etruscus* (Catullus *Carmen* 39.11; Virgil, *Georgic* 2.193), the “fat Etruscan,” however, applied only to

men, and no evidence of clinical obesity appears in women's remains or portraiture (Gentili 1994: pl. 8, no. A 26, pl. 33, no. B 72; Prag 2002: 66, fig. 3; Turfa 2016 and forthcoming).

Exercise

The comments of the fourth-century BCE Greek historian, Theopompus, are preserved through citations by the second-century CE Athenaeus in his *Deipnosophistai* ("Dinner-table Philosophers" 12.517–18). Here, Theopompus tells us that, "[Etruscan] women bestow great care on their bodies and often exercise even with men, sometimes with one another; for it is no disgrace for women to show themselves naked."

Theopompus' catty remark about Etruscan women exercising does tell us something, since exercise is an important parameter for health. It is attested by numerous images of nude female athletes (Turfa 2005: 167 no. 147) and athletic paraphernalia buried with women. Strigils for self-cleaning in the gymnasium probably symbolized a Greek-inspired education provided for aristocratic girls during the fourth century and later (Rafanelli and Spaziani 2011a, 2011b: 26). A bronze strigil from a tomb at Praeneste, now in the British Museum, has a handle modeled as a lithe young athlete scraping herself (Haynes 1985: 312–313 no. 176).

Occupational hazards

Until Romanization late in the first millennium, food preparation involved daily hand-grinding of grain, (illustrated on the Verucchio wooden throne, c.680 BCE: Kossack 1999: 65–66, figs. 43–44; Turfa 2012a: fig. 21). Such repetitive activities can cause arthritic conditions and changes in the bones, as might weaving at a warp-weighted loom (weaving scenes: Morigi Govi 1971: pls. 52 and 54; Turfa 2012a: fig. 22).

Luxuries (Giulierini 2008, 2005; Turfa 2012a: [chapter 5](#)) also brought potential health threats, especially industrial pollution (heavy metals poisoning groundwater near Etruscan mines: Harrison *et al.* 2010). Women preparing foodstuffs would have been especially exposed. Other problems may have included non-lethal anthrax or "wool sorters' disease" causing black lesions in those who worked wool, as most women did in central Italy (perhaps the "spotted diseases" of the *Brontoscopic Calendar*: Turfa 2012a: 190).

Hygiene

Kron (2005, 2013) has indicated that the good water supply of Roman Italy, begun by the Etruscans along with public amenities like sewers, fostered a higher standard of diet and hygiene. He finds that *Roman* health and mortality statistics show better life expectancy than in modern pre- and early industrial cities. Many of the Roman-era data were collected in Etruria and should give an impression of conditions in later first-millennium Etruscan towns.

Etruscan culture furnished ample bathing opportunities for women, attested by archaeological evidence of home equipment and artistic representations of daily life. For women bathing and washing their hair, see Rafanelli and Spaziani 2011b; many scenes include architecture suggestive of gymnasia. (For bath structures private and public, see Firmati 2011.) Homes had large basins (*louteria*) or bathing facilities, at Hellenistic Ghiaccio Forte and Musarna, and fifth-century Marzabotto. Civic-minded magistrates endowed public baths at Musarna, near Tarquinia (Jolivet 2011). At Mezzomiglio, near the modern spa Chianciano Terme, Soren excavated a Roman temple with thermal immersion pool; its Etruscan predecessor operated during the third century BCE. The spring high in sulfates, carbonates, and calcium is a forerunner of Imperial and modern bathing establishments (Soren 2010: 13). More than cleanliness was involved: healing votives were often associated with sanctuaries of healing waters (Esposito 2011; Vilucchi 2011).

Kosmesis: personal care and appearance

Female tombs frequently contain equipment like tweezers, thought to be for depilation, another luxury supposedly practiced by Etruscan youths (Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistai* 12.518; Colmayer 2011: 236, fig. 111). However, we may note one fashionable woman who apparently did not do so. A chamber tomb at Coste di Manone outside Civita Castellana revealed a woman's skeleton with still-wavy hair in an embroidered *sakkos* (snood): excavators were shocked to see pubic hair on the skeleton (Turfa 2012b).

The Hellenistic tomb of Thana Plecunia at Chiusi yielded an imported Egyptian alabaster jar containing remnants of unguent, identified as a cream base with moringa oil, terebinth (mastic), and pine resins; its volatile perfume oil has disappeared (Colombini *et al.* 2009; Iozzo 2011). The moringa oil would have been efficacious in preventing the ill effects of face-powder made from heavy metals such

as antimony or lead (Fahey 2005). Actually, perfumes and unguents may be categorized as hygienic: many perfume oils are antiseptic or insect-repellant.

Literary references furnish supposedly Etruscan names for flowers and herbs used in cosmetic and medicinal preparations, including *Millefolium*, favored in antiquity for wounds and toothache, feverfew, gentian, henbane, etc. (Giulierini 2011). Households also had access to various substances useful in controlling intestinal parasites (Harrison and Turfa 2010). Etruscan products were noted for cosmetic applications, such as facial masks using Chiusine flour (*far clusinum*), according to Ovid (*Med.Fac.* 65; Giulierini 2008: 30; Harrison and Turfa 2010: 286, table 1; Rafanelli and Spaziani 2011a: 13). An “Etruscan wax” (κηρὸς τυρρηνικός) was believed to aid conception, according to the text of “Metrodora,” a female, sixth-century Byzantine doctor (Greek text Kousis 1945: 54 κς’; Rafanelli and Spaziani 2011a: 14).

Etruscan women and their teeth

Skeletal studies show that at least as early as the seventh century, many Etruscan and Italic women did not grow third molars (wisdom teeth): their delicate jaws afforded no room (Becker *et al.* 2009: 45–46). There is no evidence whatever for dental treatments, or even extractions, in pre-Roman Etruria: the earliest hint of dentistry is a shop-drain full of extracted teeth in the Roman Forum (second century CE, Becker 2014).

Fashion and medicine coincide in the uniquely Etruscan phenomenon of gold-band dental appliances: bridges and braces made of thin bands of gold—by a goldsmith, not a dentist (Figures 55.1a and 55.1b). More than 21 examples are known from burials, 19 from Italy (15 from Etruria). The oldest, from seventh-century Satricum, held a gold replacement tooth, the latest are Hellenistic (Bliquez 1996; Becker 1998, 2000, 2002; Naso 2011; Becker and Turfa forthcoming). A very few women of the ruling families of Tarquinia, Orvieto, Chiusi, Populonia, Falerii, and Praeneste flashed golden bands anchoring or replacing front teeth. The cause of their dental problems is controversial. Etruscans, like most populations, did not normally lose front teeth, neither is there evidence of domestic abuse, so some unusual activity, perhaps deliberate, ritual removal of teeth, caused this. These bridges were entirely the realm of women, their technology not duplicated until modern times.

Gynecology

Anatomical votives

While we cannot discern the presence of medical professionals, the sanctuaries of Etruria furnish plenty of testimonials to healing and to Etruscan women's perception of anatomy, trauma, and disease. Thousands of terracotta models of body parts, none pathological, were deposited at over 200 sanctuaries throughout central Italy, with a high concentration in Etruria (Turfa 2004; Recke 2013). It appears, on stylistic grounds, that stock types depicting internal organs were developed at Caere, Tarquinia, Vulci, and Veii, and rapidly disseminated during the third through first centuries BCE (Turfa 1994). Model female genitalia, both external and internal, must represent thank offerings for healing of gynecological or obstetric conditions. A very few betray public perception of human physiology and anatomy or instances of medical intervention.

a



b



Figure 55.1 Etruscan dental appliances from the nineteenth-century collection of Joseph Mayer, now World Museum, National Museums Liverpool. Gold, with human teeth. Although

separated from their original owners, their small size indicates both were female. Figure 55.1a: Accession no. M10334 retains replacements for upper central incisors, is missing the original rooted “anchor” teeth. Figure 55.1b: M10335 retains the original rooted teeth, but the two upper replacement teeth, indicated by rivets, are missing. (Photos by Margarita Gleba (2011). Courtesy of National Museums (World Museum Liverpool).)

Rare models of vulvae found at the Faliscan (Italic) site of Vignale-Tempio Maggiore depict the physiology of elderly women. Such acknowledgment of aging constitutes a sign of women’s high status in Etruria and neighboring regions (Comella 1986: 78, pl. 42a–b). Deposits at Tessennano, Caere-Manganello, and Pyrgi furnished several large terracotta votives of the lower body of a pregnant woman with navel exposed above a modesty drape (Unge Sörling 1994: 48–49, figs. 1–2; Nagy 2011: 123, fig. 19).

Over fifty deposits throughout Etruria and Latium contain uterus models, but there is no evidence of medical facilities or incubation rooms as at Greek Asklepieia (Turfa 2006). Female genitalia and breasts (possibly commemorating lactation) are especially common in extramural sanctuaries such as that of Uni (Hera/Juno), Turan (Aphrodite/Venus), and Veia (Demeter/ceres) at Gravisca (Comella 1978; Turfa 2004: 365, no. 315; Fiorino and Torelli 2010). Gravisca also revealed many model infants and uteri; 222 of the 297 uteri were found in a room housing dedications to Veia.

Representations of the uterus, although simplified, could not have been deduced from butchered animal carcasses: primate uteri are unlike those of other mammals. Oval or vase-shaped models schematically depict the wave-like ridges of third-stage labor contractions; spherical bumps on the surface of some indicate fibroid tumors inaccurately rendered in a symmetrical pattern. A few models seem to show uteri sectioned across the cervix, with puckered surfaces as if to represent the scars of past deliveries (Turfa 1994: 227–232). Such details, subject to the conventions of Classical art and never rendered like modern anatomy illustrations, must derive from surgical knowledge, and a few female torsos actually show such a uterus low on the abdomen (Bartoloni 1970: 266, no. 17, pl. 22a). Other models portray the hereditary condition of a didelphic or bicorporate, bicornate uterus as a hollow organ with a smaller, hollow appendage with its own opening (Turfa 1994: 227, fig. 20.2, E–H). It is as if someone who saw an exposed uterus described it to an artist, and

different stylistic traditions prevailed in different cities.

Some uterus models were made with one or two clay pellets inserted in some ritual perhaps associated with conception or determination of sex or number of infants (Allegrezza and Baggieri 1999: figs. 68–70). A molded uterus in the Manchester Museum (Figure 55.2) is oval with added, hand-modeled portions of the urinary tract depicting ureters perhaps healed after damage in childbirth (Turfa and Becker 2013: 867, fig. 47.6). It seems likely that such a view could have been gained—rarely—during emergency post-mortem C-section (Turfa 1994: 227–232). At Rome, the *Lex regia de mortuo inferendo*, attributed to King Numa Pompilius, prohibited burial of a woman who died pregnant without an attempt at fetal salvage; it likely was based on Etruscan precepts (Watson 1972; Turfa 1994: 229). The Manchester model was a special commission: it would have taken weeks to produce. Another type of uterus is flat, as if deflated: perhaps depicting an organ that has just given birth or been excised. Two made for the sanctuary at Fontanile di Legnissina, Vulci, were inscribed before firing “*Vei*” (“to Demeter”) (*ET* Vc 3.17–18, Ricciardi 1988–89: 189, fig. 48). Live C-sections did not occur in Italy in antiquity.

The only inscribed anatomical models are the two uteri from Vulci, two knees, one naming a freedman, and one stylized human heart from Lavinium, dedicated in Latin to Menrva by a woman, Senenia (Turfa 2004: 363). By c.300 BCE healing cults were relatively egalitarian if a freedman and a woman could inscribe their names.



Figure 55.2 Votive terracotta model of pregnant uterus, molded, with ureters added by hand, from central Italy, third–first century BCE. Manchester Museum inv. 35152, ex Sharp Ogden Collection. Drawing by Paul Butler. (For photographs, see Turfa 1994: 229 fig. 20.5 and 2013: 867 fig. 47.6.)

Childbirth

A late seventh-century bucchero vase fragment excavated at Poggio Colla near Florence depicts in low relief a woman with braided hair giving birth in seated or squatting position (Lorenzi 2011; Turfa and Becker 2013: 862, fig. 47.2; see Bonfante, this volume, fig. 2). The urn of a seventh-century Faliscan woman held the bones of her newborn mingled with her own (De Lucia Brolli 2004; see Tabolli and De Lucia Brolli, this volume).

Imported faience amulets depicting the Egyptian god, Bes, a lion-dwarf hybrid, found in Etruscan tombs of the Orientalizing and Archaic periods, very likely were acquired for their magical powers of protection of childbirth and children (celuzza 2011: 36, fig. 14; cf. Bubenheimer-Erhart 2006; see also Feucht, this volume). General conditions of sanitation and home delivery in ancient Italy probably prevented many postpartum infections such as developed in the wake of modern hospitals. In fact, the scarce evidence analyzed for Etruria

does not support a higher incidence of childbirth-related death than in modern populations.

Funerary evidence implies, for some families, early marriages, successive births, and some early deaths. The phenomenon of “dynastic” arranged marriages is evident in the names of married couples among the great ruling families of Orvieto-Caere-Tarquinia-Vulci, and perhaps in a seventh-century Vulcian burial where a tiny, pretty 16-year-old girl was interred in the same *tomba a pozzo* as a man (Becker *et al.* 2009: 44–46).²

In a third-century BCE chamber tomb at Norchia, near Tarquinia, the skeletons of a full-term neonate and its 19-year-old mother portray an instance of death related to childbirth (Barbieri and Becker 1996–97). Respect was shown to the mother with the gift of an extra pair of fashionable *Tyrrhenika sandalia* (Cicero *De Natura Deorum* 1.82), in addition to those on her feet. (These platform-sole sandals with hinged insteps seem like potentially lethal tripping hazards yet were worn for generations in Etruscan cities, and imitated among Greek and Macedonian women: Touloupa 1973: 122; Turfa 2005: 163–165, no. 143.)

Infant mortality and care

Theopompus marveled (in disapproving tone) that the Etruscans reared all children that were born, presumably meaning that malformed infants were cared for and survived, but implying that many were of questionable paternity. Perhaps some commentator saw Etruscan images like the frescoes of the Tomb of the Saties family of Vulci (François Tomb, c.350 BCE). A boy (either son or servant) nicknamed Arnza (“Little Arnth”) assisting the head of the family in an augural ceremony is depicted naturalistically as a hunchbacked dwarf (Steingraber 1986: pl. 185). Etruscan attitudes were more open-minded—but, as with the *obesus etruscus*, artists did not portray women or girls with such conditions. (There is also Roman-era evidence for the rearing of handicapped children: Dasen 2009: 200–201.)

Infant mortality in Etruscan antiquity remains difficult to gauge: use of perishable containers (wood, cloth, basketry) for children, compounded by past nonchalant excavation techniques, has created a dearth of skeletal evidence for the most fragile of age groups (Becker 2012). As surveyed by celuzza (2008, 2011), some cities segregated child burials as in Tarquinia’s Bruschi Falgari necropolis. At Adriatic

Verucchio, children accounted for approximately 27 percent of burials with a higher incidence of girls. At Pontecagnano, on the southern, Tyrrhenian side of the peninsula, 85 of 148 tombs held children. celuzza reminds us of the seventh-century edict of king Numa declaring no mourning for children under 3 years of age (Plutarch *Numa* 12.2).

Becker (2012) found that at Tarquinia about 10 percent of the population died between the ages of 5.5 and 16.5 years. The Tarquinian and Volterranean epitaphs show a curious phenomenon among noble children: very young boys and girls received epitaphs in even numbers (very few, never more than four per year of age). But children who died between the ages of 7 and 11—and received dated epitaphs—were more often girls than boys; for ages 15 to 19 boys and girls were nearly even. But between 21 and 30 years of age, the numbers change significantly: 33 men versus 13 women received epitaphs. The numbers only represent two cities, but they seem to indicate a sort of daddy's-little-princess syndrome: epitaphs cut off just when young women would have been newlyweds living (and buried) with in-laws.³

Some tombs, especially at Cerveteri, preserve evidence of children interred on a smaller bed or couch beside their mother's. Other female beds are carved with hollows on the pillow of a female bed for one larger and one smaller head to rest, as if they died around the same time (Ricci 1955: 565, 595, 802, 771). The Tomb of the Reliefs illustrates another female child who died as an unmarried teenager, Ramtha Matunai Canatnei (Steingraber 1986: 262–264, no. 9, color pl. 1).

The practice of swaddling infants occurred in Etruria, illustrated in terracotta models of infants, both male and female, found in votive deposits at dozens of shrines of the late fourth to first centuries BCE, for instance Vulci-Porta Nord (Pautasso 1994: 33–44, pls. 12–25; see Graham 2014). Graham (2013: 227) suggests the donation of such votives marked the end of a child's 40-to-60-day swaddling phase: potential evidence for survival to that age. celuzza (2011: 40–44) illustrates subsequent works, from Bellini to Della Robbia, which appropriated such Etruscan images.

Age, longevity, and mortality

Over 1,200 out of nearly 5,000 epitaphs, mainly at Tarquinia and Volterra, record age at death (Turfa 2016 and forthcoming: graph 1).

There, the number of women dying during childbearing years, in any given year between 15 and 40 years of age, is no higher than for men, and in several age cohorts it is actually lower. Interpretation depends upon the assumption that men and women had equal chances of receiving an epitaph.

At Tarquinia, Šethra Safici (ET Ta 1.113)⁴ died as the wife of Arnth, at age 16; in the Tomb of the Spitu family, Larth son of Larth, who lived 63 years, survived at least two of three wives including Šethra Catni who died at 31, while the other wives each bore three children, although Larth's epitaph notes his "five offspring" (*maχ hušur*, ET Ta 1.164). One wife, Metli Arnthi, lived 64 years and had *ci clenar*, "three sons" (ET Ta 1.167) while Semni Ramtha, credited with bearing "three offspring" (*ci hušur*) probably had at least one daughter; Semni's age is illegible (ET Ta 1.168). Different epitaphs note families/wives who "had three sons" such as Šeθre ceisinie's wife, Ramtha Matulnei, who died at 45 (ET Ta 1.169). Other fathers are credited with three sons, though we cannot determine how many mothers there were (ET Ta 1.169; AT 1.105). Some grandmothers lived to be proud of their grandsons, like Ramtha Huzcnai, buried in the painted "Amazons Sarcophagus" at Tarquinia: she was the *ati nacna* ("grandmother") of a *zilath* (magistrate, equivalent of Roman *praetor*: ET Ta 1.50, 1.51). Thana Palazui, probably wife of Lars Felsnas (106 years) was said to have "had children" (ET Ta 1.108), although her age has been contested: originally read as 19, the damaged inscription may have said "50."⁵ One special woman, Larthi Cilnei, twice married and the wife of a *zilath*, received a long epitaph noting her 14-year marriage to Luvce Hulchnie and her death at age 83 (ET Ta 1.263).

A few third-century effigies of older matrons may imply longevity. A few fourth- to second-century epitaphs commemorate 11 men who died in their seventies compared to only 4 women; of octogenarians, 7 men and 3 women were recorded. One woman at Volterra reached 90; only 2 Tarquinian men surpassed her, reaching 100 and 106 years (Turfa forthcoming).

A specific case: the health of Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa

A rare find of a near complete skeleton within a terracotta portrait sarcophagus from a tomb at Chiusi (c.250–250 BCE) surely presents an uncommon life history. The study of Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa opens new vistas for understanding Etruscan women's active (and privileged) lives (see Swaddling, this volume). Seianti was of average height for an Etruscan woman, at 5 ft. 2 in. (1.57 m) with a robust

physique and particularly strong legs. Stoddart (2002: 37) attributed this to horseback riding, but there is little evidence in Etruria for women riding rather than driving and walking. Tasks such as weaving and food preparation were demanding, and often left traces like bone spurs and arthritis in legs, arms, and spines. The condition of Seianti's bones and teeth shows that she died around 50 years of age and had borne at least one child (although methods of determining this remain controversial). In late adolescence, she sustained some violent injury, without broken bones, which left her with a distorted right pelvis, leg, and lower back. Osteophytes were formed at the site of what must have been bruising, contusions, and swelling. At the same time, injury on the right side of her jaw contributed to a TMJ dysfunction: crookedness of the temporomandibular joint led to difficulty chewing and speaking, and thence to poor dental hygiene and extensive tooth loss on the right mandible. Seianti would have found walking painful and been unable to open her mouth fully and would have required softened or cooked foods (Lilley 2002). She obviously was well nourished and exercised, and no cause of death is evident. The portrait figure on the lid of her sarcophagus (Swaddling, this volume, fig. 1) is believed to be a fair likeness, although it shows a plump, placid matron, omitting the asymmetry caused by her early accident (Neave and Prag 2002).

Other possible evidence for women's health could be the female mummy once wrapped in the Zagreb *Liber Linteus*, the "Linen Book" of the Hellenistic period. Although she was buried in Egypt, Etruscan ancestry is assumed because of the Etruscan text, a religious calendar. Her mummy showed degenerative conditions from aging or arthritis in her right knee and left hip, and X-rays of the *os coxae* revealed a fracture healed during her lifetime: a broken "tail bone" is a common accident even today. The cause of her death between 30 and 40 years of age was not apparent, although more studies remain to be performed (Plavšić and Hančević 1986; Van der Meer 2007: 3–9).

Conclusions

While many basic conditions and activities conducive to health were common to Etruria, such as fertile soil and abundant foodstuffs, provision of safe water supplies, and frequent exercise and bathing, we find virtually no evidence of direct medical (or dental) intervention apart from a few phenomena in the female sphere. These were the provision—on rare occasions, and for the rich—of gold-band dental appliances, and surgical attempts at fetal salvage when the mother died in childbirth. Nonetheless, the mortality statistics of

women and children were average or decidedly better than for many other societies.

Notes

- 1 The equality of nutrition among youngsters in early central Italy contrasts with the patterns of other cultures, for instance, at the necropolis site for Pendlebury Camp, Dorchester (Roman Durnovaria, first century BCE to third century CE). There, unequal care and nutrition led to a death rate three times higher for girls, although all newborns were treated the same (Molleson 1992: 52). Roman Imperial-era populations in Italy and the Empire show variation in this however: see Killgrove and Tykot 2013: 33–34.
- 2 We take the liberty of so identifying her since her stature as estimated from cremated long bones was under 5 feet and she had high cheekbones and small teeth. No cause of death could be determined, but burial of two family members together (we assume the man was a husband since her weaving set identifies her as a matron) implies related deaths, probably from infectious disease.
- 3 At Vulci, a young couple were buried together (in the Boston MFA sarcophagus) c.350 BCE by both sets of parents, a rare situation, *ET Vc* 1.92.
- 4 Etruscan inscriptions are identified by place of origin and serial numbers according to the standard reference, *Etruskische Texte*.
- 5 See the first and second editions of *Etruskische Texte* which follow Colonna 1987 and Morandi 2004, respectively.

References

- Allegrezza, L. and Baggieri, G. (1999) Come leggere I votive anatomici. In G. Baggieri (ed.) *L'Antica Anatomia nell'arte dei Donaria*. Second edition of *Speranza e Sofferenza nei votive anatomici dell'antichità*. Rome: MelAMi, pp. 34–76.
- Barbieri, G. and Becker, M. J. (1996–1997) Tomba della donna con i sandali. *Notizie degli Scavi* 1996–1997: 343–355.
- Bartoli, F., Mallegni, F. and Fornaciari, G. (1997) Le risorse alimentari nel mondo etrusco: Aspetti della paleodieta in due gruppi umani a cultura etrusca. In *Aspetti della cultura di Volterra etrusca fra l'età del ferro e l'età ellenistica, Atti del XIX Convegno di Studi Etruschi ed Italici (Volterra 1995)*. Florence, Italy: Istituto di Studi Etruschi, pp. 477–488.
- Bartoloni, G. (1970) Alcune terrecotte votive delle collezioni medicee ora al Museo Archeologico di Firenze. *Studi Etruschi* 38: 257–270.
- Becker, M. J. (1998) Etruscan gold dental appliances: Evidence for cultural processes. In Antonio Guerri (ed.) *Health and Diseases: Historical Routes, Volume 2 of the Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Anthropology and History of Health and Disease*. Genoa,

- Italy: Erga edizioni, pp. 8–19.
- Becker, M. J. (2000) Reconstructing the lives of south Etruscan women. In A. E. Rautman (ed.) *Reading the Body: Representations and Remains in the Archaeological Record*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 55–67.
- Becker, M. J. (2002) Etruscan female tooth evulsion: Gold dental appliances as ornaments. In G. Carr and P. Baker (eds) *Practices, Practitioners and Patients: New approaches to Medical Archaeology and Anthropology*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow Books, pp. 236–257.
- Becker, M. J. (2012) Coming of age in Etruria: Etruscan children's cemeteries at Tarquinia, Italy. *International Journal of Anthropology* 27(1/2): 63–86.
- Becker, M. J. (2014) Dentistry in Ancient Rome: Direct evidence based on the teeth from excavations at the Temple of Castor and Pollux in the Roman Forum. *International Journal of Anthropology* 29(4): 209–220.
- Becker, M. J. and Turfa, J. M. (forthcoming) *The Golden Smile: The Etruscans and the History of Dentistry* (monograph).
- Becker, M. J., Turfa, J. M. and Algee-Hewitt, B. (2009) *Human Remains from Etruscan and Italic Tomb Groups in the University of Pennsylvania Museum* (Biblioteca di Studi Etruschi 48). Pisa, Italy and Rome: Fabrizio Serra.
- Bettini, M. C. (2008) Stato civile, ruolo sociale ed emancipazione femminile nel mondo etrusco: La documentazione archeological. In *Larthia. La vita di una donna al tempo degli Etruschi*. (Atti del Convegno . . . Chianciano Terme (Siena), 21–22 settembre 2007). Florence Italy: Consiglio regionale della Toscana, pp. 65–78.
- Bliquez, L. (1996) Prosthetics in Classical antiquity: Greek, Etruscan, and Roman prosthetics. In W. Haase (ed.) *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt. Teil II: Principat*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 37(3): 2640–2676.
- Brocato, P. (2000) *La Necropoli Etrusca della Riserva del Ferrone. Analisi di una Comunità Arcaica dei Monti della Tolfa*. Rome: Edizioni Quasar.
- Bubenheimer-Erhart, F. (2006) Aspects of Egyptian religion in archaic Etruria (7th–6th centuries B.C.). *Aegyptus et Pannonia (Acta Simposii anno 2004, Budapest)* 3: 11–26.
- celuzza, M. (2008) Bambini etruschi. In *Larthia. La vita di una Donna al Tempo degli Etruschi*. (Atti del Convegno Chianciano Terme (Siena), 21–22 settembre 2007). Florence, Italy: Consiglio regionale della Toscana, pp. 87–103.
- celuzza, M. (2011) La cura dei bambini nella società etrusca. In S.

- Rafanelli and P. Spaziani (eds) *Etruschi: Il Privilegio della Bellezza*. Sansepolcro, Italy: Aboca, pp. 34–47.
- Colmayer, M. F. (2011) Gli oggetti da toeletta della Collezione Gori al Museo Archeologico e d'Arte della Maremma a Grosseto. In S. Rafanelli and P. Spaziani (eds) *Etruschi: Il Privilegio della Bellezza*. Sansepolcro, Italy: Aboca, pp. 234–263.
- Colombini, M. P., Giachi, G., Iozzo, M. and Ribecchini, E. (2009) An Etruscan ointment from Chiusi (Tuscany, Italy): Its chemical characterization. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 36: 1488–1495.
- Colonna, G. (1987) *Rivista di Epigraphia Etrusca (REE)*. *Studi Etruschi* 53: 224 no. 38.
- Comella, A. (1978) *Il Materiale Tardo Votivo di Gravisca*. Rome: G. Bretschneider.
- Comella, A. (1986) *Il Materiali Votivi di Falerii*. Rome: G. Bretschneider.
- Dasen, V. (2009) Roman birth rites of passage revisited. *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 22: 199–214.
- De Lucia Brolli, M. A. (2004) Una tomba a cremazione entro custodia litica dall'Agro falisco. In A. M. Moretti Sgubini (ed.) *Scavo nello Scavo: Gli Etruschi non Viste: Ricerche e 'Riscoperte' nei Depositi dei Musei Archeologici dell'Etruria Meridionale: 5 marzo 2004–30 giugno 2004, Viterbo, Fortezza Giulio*. Rome: Soprintendenza per I Beni Archeologici per l'Etruria Meridionale/Union Printing Edizioni, pp. 109–11 (pp. 112–117 catalogue).
- Esposito, A. M. (2011) Le aquae del Sasso: Sacralità, salute, bellezza. In S. Rafanelli and P. Spaziani (eds) *Etruschi: Il Privilegio della Bellezza*. Sansepolcro, Italy: Aboca, pp. 122–129.
- ET* = *Etruskische Texte* (two editions): Regional corpus of known Etruscan inscriptions. H. Rix (ed.) (1991) *Etruskische Texte. Editio minor*, first edition, two volumes. Tübingen, Germany: Gunther Narr. G. Meiser (ed.) (2014) *Etruskische Texte. Editio minor*, second edition, two volumes. Hamburg, Germany: Baar.
- Fahey, J. W. (2005) *Moringa oleifera*: A review of the medical evidence for its nutritional, therapeutic, and prophylactic properties. [part 1. Trees for Life Journal](http://www.tfljournal.org/article.php/20051201124931586) 1(5). Available at <http://www.tfljournal.org/article.php/20051201124931586>.
- Fiorino, L. and Torelli, M. (2010) Quarant'anni di ricerche a Gravisca. In L. B. Van der Meer (ed.) *Material Aspects of Etruscan Religion*. Leuven, The Netherlands: Peeters, pp. 29–49.
- Firmati, M. (2011) I luoghi del bagno: Le strutture private. Il bagno dell'edificio residenziale nella fortificazione ellenistica di Ghiaccio Forte. In S. Rafanelli and P. Spaziani (eds) *Etruschi: Il Privilegio della*

- Bellezza*. Sansepolcro, Italy: Aboca, pp. 48–54.
- Gentili, M. D. (1994) *I Sarcophagi Etruschi in Terracotta di Età Recente*. Rome: G. Bretschneider.
- Giulierini, P. (2005) Cibo e alimentazione in Etruria: Produzione e consumi. In *Cibi e sapori nel mondo antico* (Exhibition, Florence, 18 March 2005–15 January 2006). Livorno, Italy: Sillabe (Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici della Toscana), pp. 66–78.
- Giulierini, P. (2008) I piaceri della tavola: Il mondo femminile e la cucina. In *Larthia. La vita di una donna al tempo degli Etruschi*. (Atti del Convegno Chianciano Terme (Siena), 21–22 settembre 2007). Florence, Italy: Consiglio regionale della Toscana, pp. 27–54.
- Giulierini, P. (2011) Le erbe medicinali. In S. Rafanelli and P. Spaziani (eds) *Etruschi: Il Privilegio della Bellezza*. Sansepolcro, Italy: Aboca, pp. 130–145.
- Graham, E.-J. (2013) The making of infants in Hellenistic and early Roman Italy: A votive perspective. *World Archaeology* 45(2): 215–231.
- Graham, E.-J. (2014) Infant votives and swaddling in Hellenistic Italy. In M. Carroll and E.-J. Graham (eds) *Infant Health and Death in Roman Italy and Beyond*. Ann Arbor, MI: Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplementary series 96, pp. 23–46.
- Harrison, A. P. and Turfa, J. M. (2010) Were natural forms of treatment for *Fasciola hepatica* available to the Etruscans? *International Journal of Medical Sciences* 7(5): 282–291.
- Harrison, A. P., Cattani, I. and Turfa, J. M. (2010) Metallurgy, environmental pollution and the decline of Etruscan civilization. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research International* 17: 165–180; online (2009) doi 10.1007/s11356-009-0141-5.
- Haynes, S. (1985) *Etruscan Bronzes*. London: Sothebys Publications.
- Iozzo, M. (2011) Il Beauty-case di Thana Plecunia. In S. Rafanelli and P. Spaziani (eds) *Etruschi: Il Privilegio della Bellezza*. Sansepolcro, Italy: Aboca, pp. 206–209.
- Jolivet, V. (2011) I luoghi del bagno: Le strutture pubbliche. Pratica del bagno e società tardo-ellenistica: Il caso di Musarna. In S. Rafanelli and P. Spaziani (eds) *Etruschi: Il Privilegio della Bellezza*. Sansepolcro, Italy: Aboca, pp. 55–71.
- Killgrove, K. and Tykot, R. H. (2013) Food for Rome: A stable isotope investigation of diet in the Imperial period (1st–3rd centuries AD). *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 32: 28–38.
- Kossack, G. (1999) *Religiöses Denken in Dinglicher und Bildlicher Überlieferung Alteuropas aus der Spätbronze- und frühen Eisenzeit (9.-6. Jahrhundert v. Chr. Geb.)*. Munich, Germany: Bayerischen Akademie

der Wissenschaften.

- Kousis, A. P. (1945) ΙΑΤΡΙΚΟΙ ΚΩΔΙΚΕΣ. Metrodora's work "on the feminine diseases of the womb" according to the Greek codex 75.3 of the Laurentian Library. *Praktika tēs Akademias Athēnōn* 20: 46–68.
- Kron, G. (2005) Anthropometry, physical anthropology, and the reconstruction of ancient health, nutrition, and living standards. *Historia* 54(1): 68–83.
- Kron, G. (2013) Fleshing out the demography of Etruria. In J. M. Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London: Routledge, pp. 56–75.
- Lilley, J. D. (2002) Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: Some observations on the dental features. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. London: British Museum Occasional Paper Number 100, pp. 23–26.
- Lorenzi, L. (2011) Ancient images of a mother giving birth found. *Discovery News* October 19, 2011. Available at <http://news.discovery.com/etruscan-mother-birth-art111019.html>. Reprinted in *Etruscan News* 14 (Winter 2012): 17.
- Molleson, T. (1992) Children at Pendlebury Camp, Dorchester. In S. Bassett (ed.) *Death in Towns: Urban Responses to the Dying and the Dead, 100–1600*. Leicester, UK: Leicester University Press, pp. 43–55.
- Morandi, A. (2004) *Rivista di Epigraphia Etrusca (REE)*. *Studi Etruschi* 70: 334–335, no. 54.
- Morigi Govi, C. (1971) Il tintinnabulo della "Tomba degli ori" dell'Arsenale militare di Bologna. *Archeologia Classica* 23: 212–235.
- Nagy, H. (2011) Etruscan votive terracottas and their archaeological contexts: Preliminary comments on Vei and cerveteri. In N. T. de Grummond and I. Edlund-Berry (eds) *The Archaeology of Sanctuaries and Ritual in Etruria (JRA Suppl. 81.)* Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, pp. 113–125.
- Naso, A. (2011) Protesi dentarie auree in Etruria e nel Lazio. In S. Rafanelli and P. Spaziani (eds) *Etruschi: Il Privilegio della Bellezza*. Sansepolcro, Italy: Aboca, pp. 146–154.
- Neave, R. A. H. and Prag, A. J. N. W. (2002) The face of Seianti: The reconstruction and the portrait. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa. The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. London: British Museum Occasional Paper Number 100, pp. 53–58.
- Pautasso, A. (1994) *Il Deposito Votive Presso la Porta Nord a Vulci*. Rome: G. Bretschneider.
- Plavšić B. and Hančević, J. (1986) X-ray analysis of the Zagreb mummy. *Vjesnik Arheološkog Muzeja u Zagrebu (VAMZ)* 19: 99–103.
- Prag, A. J. N. W. (2002) Seianti and Etruscan portraiture. In J.

- Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. London: British Museum Occasional Paper Number 100, pp. 59–69.
- Rafanelli, S. and Spaziani, P. (2011a) Introduzione. In S. Rafanelli and P. Spaziani (eds) *Etruschi: Il Privilegio della Bellezza*. Sansepolcro, Italy: Aboca, pp. 11–15.
- Rafanelli, S. and Spaziani, P. (2011b) Dal *louterion* allo specchio. Il “percorso delle immagini” nel mondo etrusco. In S. Rafanelli and P. Spaziani (eds) *Etruschi: Il Privilegio della Bellezza*. Sansepolcro, Italy: Aboca, pp. 18–32.
- Rathje, A. (2013) The banquet through Etruscan history. In J. M. Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London: Routledge, pp. 823–830.
- Recke, M. (2013) Science as art: Etruscan anatomical votives. In J. M. Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London: Routledge, pp. 1068–1085.
- Ricci, G. (1955) III. Necropoli della Banditaccia. Zona A “Del Recinto”. *Monumenti Antichi* 42: cols. 201–1048.
- Ricciardi, L. (1988–89) L’altare monumentale e il deposito votivo. In B. Massabò (ed.) CANINO (Viterbo). Il santuario etrusco di Fontanile di Legnisina a Vulci: Relazione delle campagne di scavo 1985 e 1986: Il tempio. *Notizie degli Scavi* 42/43: 137–209.
- Soren, D. (2010) Introduction to volume 2. In D. Soren and P. Mecchia (eds) *An Ancient Roman Spa at Mezzomiglio, Chianciano Terme, Tuscany*, volume 2 (BAR I. S. 2171). Oxford, UK: Archeopress, pp. 13–17.
- Steingraber, S. (1986) *Etruscan Painting: Catalogue Raisonné of Etruscan Wall Paintings*. D. Ridgway and F. R. Serra Ridgway (eds). New York: Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich.
- Stoddart, R. W. (2002) Remains from the sarcophagus of Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: Pathological evidence and its implications. In J. Swaddling and J. Prag (eds) *Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: The Story of an Etruscan Noblewoman*. London: British Museum Occasional Paper Number 100, pp. 29–38.
- Tafari, M. A. (2005) *Tracing Mobility and Identity: Bioarchaeology and Bone Chemistry of the Bronze Age Sant’Abbondio cemetery (Pompeii, Italy)*. (BAR Int. Ser. 1359.) Oxford, UK: Archaeopress.
- Touloupa, E. (1973) “Καττύματα Τυρρηνικά”—“Κρηπίδες Αττικάί”. *Archaiologikon Deltion* 28(1): 116–137.
- Turfa, J. M. (1994) Anatomical votives and Italian medical tradition. In R. D. De Puma and J. P. Small (eds) *Murlo and the Etruscans*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 224–240.
- Turfa, J. M. (2004) (Weigeschenke: Altitalien und Imperium Romanum. 1. Italien.) B. Anatomical votives. In J. C. Barlty *et al.*

- (eds) *Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum (ThesCRA) I. Processions – Sacrifices – Libations – Fumigations – Dedications*. Los Angeles, CA: Getty Publications, pp. 359–368.
- Turfa, J. M. (2005) *Catalogue of the Etruscan Gallery of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology*. Philadelphia, PA: University Museum Press.
- Turfa, J. M. (2006) Was there room for healing in the healing sanctuaries? *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 8: 63–80.
- Turfa, J. M. (2012a) *Divining the Etruscan World: The Brontoscopic Calendar and Religious Practice*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Turfa, J. M. (2012b) Buried in the height of fashion. *Expedition* 54(2): 7–9.
- Turfa, J. M. (2016) The *obesus etruscus* – can the trope be true? In A. A. Carpino and S. Bell (eds) *A Companion to the Etruscans*. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 321–335.
- Turfa, J. M. (forthcoming) The *obesus etruscus* – any basis in fact? *International Journal of Medical Sciences*, special issue, ed. A. P. Harrison (May 2012).
- Turfa, J. M. and Becker, M. J. (2013) Health and medicine in Etruria. In J. M. Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London: Routledge, pp. 855–881.
- Unge Sörling, S. (1994) A collection of votive terracottas from Tessennano (Vulci). *Medelhavsmuseet Bulletin* 29: 47–54.
- Van der Meer, L. B. (2007) *Liber Lintheus Zagrabensis. The Linen Book of Zagreb*. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters.
- Vilucchi, S. (2011) L'edificio termale di Campo Muri a Rapolano Terme. In S. Rafanelli and P. Spaziani (eds) *Etruschi: Il Privilegio della Bellezza*. Sansepolcro, Italy: Aboca, pp. 118–121.
- Watson, A. (1972) Roman private law and the *Leges Regiae*. *Journal of Roman Studies* 62: 100–105.

ETRUSCAN MARRIAGE

Gilda Bartoloni and Federica Pitzalis

Etruscan society, like many others both ancient and modern, based its stability on family ties and, from its earliest phases, attributed great importance to the marriage covenant.

Written sources

Any reflection on this topic, however, as on any other aspect of Etruscan culture, suffers severely from the lack of direct historical and literary sources which might have explained at least some of the more complex aspects of the subject (Bartoloni and Pitzalis 2011a). The epigraphic documents, however, offer some indications. Among the known words of the Etruscan language, an explicit reference to the marriage bond and to the role that spouses assume toward each other is recognized in the terms *puia* “wife,” especially used in the gamonymic form (name states “the wife of X”), and in *tuśurthi*, *tuśurthii*, *tusurthir*, which probably designated “the spouses” (Heurgon 1963: 109; Benelli 2009: 316–317, 404).

The ancient historians, especially the Greeks, have fueled the misunderstanding of an unlikely Etruscan matriarchy, in which the woman would have power equal to or even greater than that of her husband (Aristotle, Fragment 566 Rose, *apud* Athenaeus 1.42.23d; Timaeus *apud* Athenaeus 4.38.153d and 12.14.517d; Theophrastus *apud* Athenaeus 12.14.517d-518; Alcaeus in Athenaeus 12. 14.518; Plautus *Cistellaria* 561–562; Horace *Ode* 3.10.11–12). The conduct of “Tyrrhenian” women, moreover, was tarnished by numerous prejudices, as appears evident in the story of Tarquin, humiliated by the comparison of the modesty of the Latin wives with the debauchery of his own wife (Livy 1.57ff.), or by that of the Chiusine Arruns who abandoned his own city because of the public infidelity of his wife, initially demanding compensation and only later devising his revenge

(Livy 5.33; see also Sordi 1977). These tales are only disavowed by a few Latin authors such as Virgil (Virgil, *Georgics* 2.523ff.; *Aeneid* 12.270) and Musonius Rufus, admirers of the strength and humanity of the Etruscan family, within which all children were raised without distinction and which bestowed equal status on both sexes, “equally endowed with intelligence” (Musonius Fragment XV, Papyrus Harr.1).

The study of the prosopography of the Etruscan cities and of onomastic formulae, which provide for the general use of the *praenomen* and the diffusion of the matronymic (use of the mother’s name), suggest, along with other indications linked to material culture, that, compared to Greek or Roman women, Etruscan women exercised greater influence in society in general and in the processes of succession and inheritance. An Etruscan woman, in contrast to a Roman, possessed a legal autonomy that continued even after marriage (Sordi 1995), when her life does not appear to have been entirely circumscribed by the domestic sphere. Iconography offers, in fact, numerous examples of the presence of women in contexts of social interaction, often portraying such women in the act of participating in banquets (see Bartoloni and Pitzalis, [Chapter 57](#), this volume).

Social mobility and bonds of alliance

In any case, it is in marriage that the woman fulfills her social destiny (Bartoloni and Pitzalis 2011b). In the earliest phases of Etruscan culture (ninth to seventh centuries BC), marriage with foreign women is documented, as is shown especially in the numerous ornaments of imported types found in their tombs. In some cases, instead, in the aristocratic groups, the woman’s family would willingly accept a foreign husband rather than a local man of lower social order, as demonstrated in the story of Demaratus, who came from Corinth to Tarquinia, where he married a local woman, from whom would be born the future king of Rome, Tarquinius Priscus (Dionysios of Halikarnassos, *Antiquities*. 3.46ff.; Strabo 5.2.2; 8.6.20; Pliny, *Natural History* 35.16; Livy 1.34). A union between an aristocratic Etruscan woman and a Picene man also seems to be documented at Verucchio (near Rimini), in the tomb of a man, tomb 89 in the Lippi necropolis, where the deceased seems to have inherited a throne from his mother and an Umbrian-Picene helmet from his father (Torelli 1997: 73–81).

This openness toward foreign communities is reflected as well in the oldest tradition of *conubium*, later reworked by Roman law into its better known legal form, intended as the *access to an exchange of*

marriage partners between neighboring populations of the area of Etruria and Latium (Livy 1.9.2). The marriage bond, in fact, constituted a prime means to establish and consolidate alliances in the short and long range, and was fully part of the broader mechanism of aristocratic gift-exchange: in this case it is the woman who is considered to be a valuable asset (Finley 1955; Bartoloni and Pitzalis 2011b: 138 with bibliography).

With the consolidation of the urban plan, however, marriage practices must have suffered a stiffening, veering toward an endogamous system (marriage bonds between members of the same community), as evidenced by the later epigraphic documentation. From the second century on, in northern Etruria, the sepulchral inscriptions have restored for us the reality of married women, who return from gravitating in the orbit of the husband's family and are buried in the tomb of their natal family. A limited case is represented in the Tomba delle Madri e delle Figlie ("Tomb of the Mothers and Daughters") of the Santa Lucia necropolis at Perugia containing four or five generations of exclusively female burials (Nielsen 1989: 143).

Until at least the seventh century BC, the marriage covenant probably required, according to the Homeric model, the payment by the groom of gifts (*hedna*) to the family of the bride; this compensated not so much for the loss of the woman, as for her "generative potential." With the phase of urbanization, instead, customs must have undergone an evolution parallel to that of the Greek world, replacing the *hedna* with the *pròix*, the dowry that the *nupta* brought with her into her new *oikos* (household) (Leduc 2003; cf. also Scheid Tissinier 1999). Social mobility in the earlier phases must be understood as operating horizontally, allowed only between members of the same social class, although of different communities; it achieved a greater dynamism in a later period, contemplating the possibility of unions even between individuals of different social classes, as is shown by a Chiusine urn on which is celebrated the lawful union of an aristocratic Etruscan woman with her freedman of Syrian origin (Sordi 1995: 168).

Marriage as a rite of passage

Marriage as a fundamental stage of life, especially in the lives of women, should be understood as a regular rite of passage, preceded and accompanied by a series of codified acts, which confirm the break with the past life as a girl and the acquisition of a new status. In the iconographic repertoire, scenes of abduction have been considered as

a kind of violent “mythological paradigm of marriage” (Webster 1972; Napolitano 1992). The theme is widespread in the Etruscan-Italic sphere. As an example, we may recall some fragmentary architectural terracottas dated to the second quarter of the sixth century BC and belonging to a public building located in the settlement of Poggio Buco. In a mythical scene of abduction on the fragmentary plaques, at least three female personages may be discerned fleeing while raising the hems of their dresses with one hand, and a male torso leans forward toward a female torso (c. second quarter of the sixth century BC; Bartoloni 1992: 20–25). In a pedimental group on the temple of celle at Falerii, dated to the first half of the fourth century BC, the line is further blurred. The terracotta group, unfortunately extremely fragmentary and of much-debated interpretation, may represent, according to F. H. Massa Pairault, the hero Halesus “founder of Falerii . . . in his erotic encounter with the local nymph,” an episode conjured up to link the foundation of an Italic city with a ritual of marriage, like that otherwise known for the founder of Tibur and the nymph Albunea (Massa Pairault 2006: 247).

In the ritual acts preparatory to marriage it has been hypothesized that textile implements, as a symbol of female labor, could take on the function of an *ex voto* (Gleba 2009: 70, 74). In fact, Minerva and Uni are included among the main recipients of these gifts, the first surely as the tutelary deity of weaving, although in some forms of her cult, as attested for example in the sanctuaries of Caere-Punta della Vipera (Tomassucci 2005) and of Veii-Portonaccio, she was also venerated as protector of the reproductive power of the young (Colonna 1987a: 430) and of *wedded fertility* (Torelli 1982: 126). Uni, instead, is the model wife and consort of the greatest male divinity. Even more so than the Greek Hera, she is associated with the reproductive sphere (Torelli 1986: 207) and is sometimes depicted during the wedding ceremony, as on a mirror dated around 340 BC on which she appears as a couple with Tinia, who clasps her waist while a standing female figure holding an alabastron (small container for unguents) attends the scene, which is completed by a cylindrical container with its lid lying on the ground (Zimmer 1995: 27–28, n. 20). Another goddess who appears frequently on mirrors, objects strongly linked to women’s world and more indirectly to the matrimonial sphere, is Turan the “Lady,” depicted, for example, as a witness to amorous encounters or to scenes of dressing very often attributable to the marriage rite, as in an example, of unknown provenance, of a toilette scene connected with the Judgement of Paris. In this mirror, preserved in the Indiana University Art Museum, several deities, among them Turan, Uni, and Menerva, assist a female figure, probably Helen (c.300 BC; De Puma

1987: 18–20, n. 4). The goddess, sometimes herself the protagonist of such scenes, can appear accompanied and assisted by female figures variously related to the spheres of love and fertility, of birth, or of the rearing of children. Among these, Thalna is attested particularly often, a distinctive character in the Etruscan imagination from at least the end of the fifth century and recurrent in the iconography of the mirrors (Camporeale 1960).

Other divinities bound to the marital realm also seem to be involved in prenuptial rituals, for example, a loom weight from Roselle bearing the inscribed name “Vei” (Ambrosini 2000: 149, 154–159), the eponymous deity of the city of Veii. She protects the most important passages of female life (Carosi 2008) and seems to be involved in rites of fertility and purification attributed to the Cannicella sanctuary of Orvieto, with an assimilation between this Etruscan goddess and the Latin Bona Dea (Colonna 1987b: 22–23). The name Vei is reproduced on two terracotta uterus models from the site of Fontanile di Legnissima at Vulci (Comella 2005: 47). The goddess will be assimilated during the Roman era into Demeter or Kore (Persephone).

In addition to the textile instruments, other utensils such as children’s toys may have been offerings to the divinities especially associated with the sphere of fertility (Torelli 1984: 137), likewise terracotta reproductions of male and female genitals, perhaps related to a ritual of “preventive purification” for the conjugal union (Camporeale 2004: 48). The same purpose must have been served by the sacrifice of a piglet, as handed down in the literary sources:

In fact it seems that animal sacrifices began with pigs. There are traces in the fact that in initiations into the cult of Ceres piglets are immolated and in the ceremonies of signing peace treaties, when the agreements are signed, they kill a pig, and in the beginning of the wedding rite of ancient kings and of Etruscan persons of high rank, to enter into marriage the new couple sacrifice a piglet.

(Varro *De re rustica* 2.4.9, authors’ translation here and below)

In the contexts of extra-urban sanctuaries, for which a specific valence of *sexual and socio-legal promotion of young persons* has been recognized (Colonna 1987a), pits and pools have sometimes been linked with the *louttron nymphikòn*: that is, the bath by which the girl would acquire the *charis*, which was a prelude to marriage (Menichetti 2008: 222). For example, the little temple of Valle Zuccara at Caere was founded near a spring probably dedicated to a divinity analogous to the Latin goddess Anna Perenna, a figure associated, at least originally, with the sexual sphere of female initiation rites, which preceded and prepared

The wedding ceremony

Many objects, especially architectural terracottas, sarcophagi, urns, and mirrors, depict key moments in the wedding: the procession, the symbolic covering of the couple with a veil, and the *dextrarum iunctio inter coniuges*, namely the act of joining the right hands of the newlyweds. The ritualized transfer of the bride in a cart from her father's house to the new post-wedding home is in particular one of the gestures most widely documented in the iconography. In some versions, the model selected is that of the *hieros gamos* (Greek: "sacred marriage," a union of god and goddess, or human imitation of same), which evidently reflects a custom consolidated in royal society. In the terracotta frieze plaques of palaces and temples of the series "Rome-Veii-Velletri," for example, the emblematic married couple in the cart have been recognized as Dionysos and Ariadne (Sommella Mura 1977: 68–83), the epitome of eternal conjugal love, in which tenderness and sensuality are combined (Vatin 2004). On the plaques, dated between the third and fourth quarters of the sixth century BC, variously interpreted and already traced to an episode of *hieros gamos*, there are depicted two converging processions, each with a *triga* (three-horse chariot) and a *biga* (two-horse chariot) with winged horses, preceded by a herald. One of the processions contains only male figures, while in the other the long robe seems to reveal the presence of at least two female figures (Menichetti 1994: 96–102; Torelli 1997: 89–98, 106. On the plaques, see Sommella Mura 1977: 68–83; Fortunelli, S., in *Roma* 2008: 263. For the role of Dionysos in wedding iconography, see also Menichetti 2006: 60–61).

In some cases, on urns and sarcophagi, it is difficult to determine whether the cart procession is evoking a wedding ceremony or funeral rites, or whether it celebrates both, as basic moments of passage in life. On the short sides of the older of the two Vulcian sarcophagi with double effigies held in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts there appear, respectively, two women in a cart with a parasol and one man who climbs into a *biga* (Marthà 1889: 357–358; Sprenger and Bartoloni 1983: 140, n. 208; Torelli 1997: 64, fig. 52). On the lids of both sarcophagi, attributed to two married couples of the Tetnies family, belonging to the same line of male descent, is depicted instead the covering of the couple with the veil, another crucial part of the wedding ritual. On the lid of the more recent sarcophagus (340 BC),

especially, the dead couple are lying, nude and embracing each other under a mantle ([Figure 56.1](#)); while on the long sides of the chest are reproduced respectively a scene of Amazonomachy and a heroic battle; on the short sides appear two pairs of lions and griffins in the act of biting, on one side a bull and on the other a horse (Sprenger and Bartoloni 1983: 140, n. 209).



Figure 56.1 Married couple covered with veil. Sarcophagus from Vulci. (From Sprenger, Bartoloni 1983, scheda 209.)



Figure 56.2 Episode of *dextrarum iunctio* (married couple clasp right hands). Sarcophagus from Vulci. (From Bartoloni and Pitzalis 2011a, p. 41.)

A statement of Aristotle (Athenaeus 1.23d.) and some iconographic models have raised doubts that the covering of the spouses with a veil actually extended to the banquet couches, although it is possible that these cases also constitute a metaphorical allusion to the marriage bond. Examples appear in a Chiusine alabaster urn in which the man holds a patera with his left hand and rests his right hand on his wife's shoulder (middle decades of the fourth century BC; Maggiani 1993: 159, table VII), and on a terracotta urn with an elderly married couple, from Volterra (end of second to beginning of first century BC; Sprenger and Bartoloni 1983: 160, nos. 286–287; Camporeale 1986: 269, fig. 229).

The *dextrarum iunctio* is instead the act by which the couple join hands to symbolize their ratification of the pact. To illustrate this, there is again one of the Boston sarcophagi, the older of the two (370–360 BC). In the low relief of one long side may be discerned, to either side of the couple, objects evidently associated with the ceremony, among which are a fan, a lyre, and a parasol to the side of the wife, and a *lituus* (symbol of religious or political office), a folding stool, and a trumpet beside the husband (Figure 56.2). Such objects are present in part in one of the more controversial types of the sixth-century architectural plaques from Murlo, interpreted by some scholars as a scene of *hieros gamos*: the figural scene depicts a series of personages armed in this case with very specific attributes, among which are a *lituus*, a fan, a situla, (incense bucket) and a double axe, with some figures on foot and others seated on stools, and one veiled

female figure on a throne (Rathje, A., in Stopponi 1985: 122–123; Lacy, L. R., in Stopponi 1985: 125, nos. 417–424).

Still in reference to the celebration of marriage, it is possible that some objects with strong female connotations such as, at first, spindles and distaffs and in a later period, *cistae* and mirrors (Massa Pairault 2000; Menichetti 2006), constituted wedding gifts, as supported by the testimony of Pliny:

Marcus Varro reports having seen that in the temple of Sancus there was still in his day the wool on a distaff and on a spindle of Tanaquil, the woman who was also called Gaia Caecilia; he reports that in the temple of Fortuna there was preserved the royal *toga undulata* that had been worn by Servius Tullius, made by the same woman. From this was derived the tradition that a decorated distaff and a spindle with thread on it should be carried in the wedding procession of virgin brides.

(Pliny, *Natural History* 8.194)

Latin tradition attributed to Tanaquil the custom for girls to wear, the night before their wedding, the *tunica recta*, a garment made from a single piece of cloth: “Tanaquil was the first to weave a straight tunic, like those which, along with a toga devoid of any ornaments, are worn by a young man or a young new bride” (Pliny, *Natural History* 8.194–195). During the ceremony, the heads of Etruscan brides, and also of Latin brides, had to be almost constantly crowned, probably with laurel, and also veiled. Besides the woman seated in the cart in the procession scene (Figure 56.3) and the enthroned female figure in the so-called assembly scene in the Murlo frieze plaques, there also appear, for example, the deceased woman seated at the feet of her husband and portrayed in the act of *anakalypsis* (“unveiling”) on the lid of an alabaster urn with double effigy from Città della Pieve-Bottarone, dated to the end of the fifth century BC (Cristofani 1975: 44, scheda 19, tav. XXXVII; Sprenger and Bartoloni 1983: 132–133, no. 191; Camporeale 1986, fig. 197; Maggiani 1993: 160–161), and, from the first half of the second century BC, Larthia Seianti, reclining partially upright on the lid of a terracotta sarcophagus from Chiusi-Poggio Cantarello (Sprenger and Bartoloni 1983: 156–157, nos. 270–271; see Swaddling, this volume). A striking example of covering the head with a veil is represented on a mirror of unknown provenance kept in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. On it a draped female image, perhaps Turan, helps a nude male figure, probably Adonis, in the act of *anakalypsis*, uncovering *his* head (c.400–350 BC; De Puma 1993: 46, n. 27).

Funerary archaeology probably furnishes us with clues to this practice by the location of some fibulae on the top of the head of

deceased women's bodies, as noted especially for the Latin necropolis of Castel di Decima (Bartoloni *et al.* 1982: 260). The widespread evidence, always in burials, of metal spirals for the locks of hair might also be associated with the *seni crines*, which are the braids parted in the middle by the *hasta celibaris* (a ritual spear) to frame the face (Torelli 1984: 34). Beginning in the mid-fourth century, there spread over central Italy a type of female votive head characterized by a hairstyle arranged in two or three rows of curls parallel to the sides of the face and gathered into a net made of ribbons. Some of these veiled votive heads found in Hellenistic deposits have been hypothetically attributed to *nubendae* (brides about to marry; Olivieri 2005: 183). The head of Penelope also appears to be veiled, evidently perceived in Etruria as a figure paradigmatic of the condition of the bride: she is portrayed thus, for example, on a mirror of unknown provenance conserved in Mainz: she is seated with her head covered by a long veil, beneath which her long hair is loose while in front of her stands a female figure (last quarter of the fourth century BC; Höckmann 1987: 54–56, n. 31).



Figure 56.3 Procession with cart. Frieze plaques from Murlo. (From AA.VV., *Rasenna*, 1986, fig. 507.)

Marriage and motherhood

The importance that Etruscan society evidently recognized for marriage is closely connected with the great value attributed to lineage and thus to the power of procreation. The destiny of a woman is fulfilled by marriage only as it is the obligatory passage into legitimate motherhood, subject to family control. Unfortunately, this value does not find a proportionate response in the archaeological record and, at least in the earliest phases of Etruscan history, it is

perceived only in the presence, in many female and infant tombs, of pendants which reproduce the forms of divinities or the symbols connected in various capacities with the protection of fertility, of childbirth, and of children. These include the amulets in amber, with nude female figures, especially associated with little crouching monkeys that were widespread especially at Veii and in the centers most affected by its influence (Negroni Catacchio 1989: 66; Michetti 2007: 160 and 164), or the figurines of Egyptianizing type, among which are the god Bes, the god Ptah, the child-god Nefertum, and the lion-headed goddess Sekhmet, the last two types documented especially in the Tarquinian “Bocchoris Tomb” dated between 700 and 690 BC (F. Sciacca in *Bologna* 2000: 294, with bibliography).

In addition, it is now generally accepted that the large, flat metal circles with rich incised decoration, held in place by a fibula over the abdomen of Latin women of high rank, buried during the Early and Middle Orientalizing period, are to be interpreted as emblems of their distinguished lineage (Bartoloni 2008: 30–34, and references therein; see also Bonfante, this volume). In the few reported cases, the age of the deceased women so honored with this ornament seems to correspond to full maturity between the ages of 30 and 40. Although distant both chronologically and especially geographically, a particularly telling comparison may be made with the princess of Vix, who died aged around 33 to 37 years and was buried with a large metal ring over her abdomen (Rolley 2003).

Although the written sources and the archaeological documentation thus provide us with the image of the Etruscan woman engaged in many aspects of social life, the aspects of wife and of mother remain without a doubt the principal female roles of all women regardless of rank.

Federica Pitzalis

References

- Ambrosini, L. (2000) I pesi da telaio con iscrizioni etrusche. *Scienze dell'Antichità* 10: 139–162.
- Bartoloni, G. (1992) Palazzo o tempio? A proposito dell'edificio arcaico di Poggio Buco. *Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli* XIV: 9–33.
- Bartoloni, G. (2008) Le donne dei principi nel Lazio protostorico. *Aristonothos* 3: 23–46.
- Bartoloni, G. and Pitzalis, F. (2011a) Matrimonio nel mondo etrusco.

- In *Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum* VI, Los Angeles, CA: J. Paul Getty Museum, pp. 95–100.
- Bartoloni, G. and Pitzalis, F. (2011b) Mogli e madri nella nascente aristocrazia tirrenica. In V. Nizzo (ed.) *Dalla Nascita alla Morte: Antropologia e Archeologia a Confronto*, Atti del I Congresso Internazionale di Studi (Roma 2010). Rome: Editorial Service System, pp. 137–160.
- Bartoloni, G., Cataldi Dini, M. and Zevi, F. (1982) Aspetti dell'ideologia funeraria della necropoli di Castel di Decima. In G. Gnoli and J. P. Vernant (eds) *La Mort, les Morts dans les Sociétés Anciennes*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 257–273.
- Benelli, E. (2009) *Thesaurus Linguae Etruscae*. Pisa, Italy and Rome: Fabrizio Serra Editore.
- Bologna 2000 = Bartoloni, G., Delpino, F., Morigi Govi, C. and Sassatelli, G. (eds) (2000) *Principi Etruschi tra Mediterraneo ed Europa*, catalogo della mostra (Bologna 2000–2001). Venice, Italy: Marsilio.
- Camporeale, G. A. (1960) Thalna e scene mitologiche connesse. *Studi Etruschi* LXXVIII: 233–262.
- Camporeale, G. A. (1986) Vita privata. In AA.VV., *Rasenna*. Milan, Italy: Scheiwiller, pp. 241–308.
- Camporeale, G. A. (2004) Purificazione. Mondo etrusco. In *Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum III*. Los Angeles, CA: J. Paul Getty Museum, pp. 36–62.
- Capanna, M. C. (2006) Il culto di Anna Perenna al I miglio. In A. Carandini (ed.) *La Fattoria e la Villa dell'Auditorium*. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, pp. 65–70.
- Carosi, S. (2008) Veio, Roma e il culto di Demetra/cerere, relazione letta al Symposium cumantum. *Diversa exilia et desertas quaerere terras* (Aen. 3.4): *Greeks in Rome and Romans in Greece* (Cuma-Bacoli 2008), pp. 1–6. Available at www.centrumlatinitatis.it/cuma/simona_carosi.pdf.
- Colonna, G. (1987a) Note preliminari sui culti del santuario di Portonaccio a Veio. *Scienze dell'Antichità* I, pp. 419–446.
- Colonna, G. (1987b) I culti del santuario della Cannicella. *Annali del Museo Faina III*. Rome: Quasar, pp. 11–25.
- Comella, A. (2005) Il messaggio delle offerte dei santuari etrusco italici di periodo medio e tardo repubblicano. In A. Comella and S. Mele (eds) *Depositi Votivi e Culti dell'Italia Antica dall'Età Arcaica a quella Tardo Repubblicana*, Atti del Convegno di Studi (Perugia 2000). Bari, Italy: Edipuglia, pp. 47–59.

- Cristofani, M. (1975) *Statue-Cinerario Chiusine di Età Classica*. Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider.
- De Puma, R. D. (ed.) (1987) *Corpus Speculorum Etruscorum, U.S.A. 1, Midwestern Collections*. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
- De Puma, R. D. (ed.) (1993) *Corpus Speculorum Etruscorum, U.S.A. 2*. Boston and Cambridge, MA: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
- Finley, M. I. (1955) Marriage, sale and gift in the Homeric world. *Revue Internationale des Droits de l'Antiquité* 2: 167–194.
- Gleba, M. (2009) Textile tools in ancient Italian votive context: Evidence of dedication or production? In M. Gleba and H. Becker (eds) *Votives, Places and Rituals in Etruscan Religion. Studies in Honor of Jean Macintosh Turfa*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill, pp. 69–84.
- Heurgon, J. (1963) *Vita quotidiana degli Etruschi*. Milan, Italy: Mondadori.
- Höckmann, U. (1987) *Corpus Speculorum Etruscorum, Bundesrepublik, Deutschland 1*. Munich, Germany: Hirmer Verlag.
- Leduc, C. (2003) Come darla in matrimonio? La sposa nel mondo Greco, secoli IX-IV a.C. In P. Schmitt Pantel (ed.) *Storia delle Donne. L'Antichità*. Bari, Italy: Edizioni Laterza, pp. 117–128.
- Maggiani, M. (1993) Problemi della scultura funeraria a Chiusi. In AA.VV., *La Civiltà di Chiusi e del suo Territorio*. Florence, Italy: Olschki, pp. 149–169.
- Marthà, J. (1889) *L'Art Étrusque*. Paris: Librairie de Firmin-Didot et Cie.
- Massa Pairault, F. H. (2000) Problemi ermeneutici a proposito degli specchi. Esame di alcune scene connesse con il mito di Eracle. In AA.VV., *Aspetti e Problemi della Produzione degli Specchi Etruschi Figurati*. Rome: Aracne, pp. 181–207.
- Massa Pairault, F. H. (2006) Considerazioni su un gruppo frontonale da Falerii. In E. M. Edlund-Berry, G. Greco and J. Kenfield (eds) *Deliciae Fictiles III*, Proceedings of the International Conference Held at the American Academy in Rome (Roma 2002). Oxford, UK: Oxbow Books, pp. 243–250.
- Menichetti, M. (1994) *Archeologia del Potere*. Milan, Italy: Longanesi e C.
- Menichetti, M. (2006) La donna alla fontana. *Charis* e matrimonio sulle ciste prenestine. In I. Colpo, I. Favaretto and F. Ghedini (eds) *Iconografia 2005. Immagini e immaginari dall'antichità classica al mondo moderno*. Rome: Quasar, pp. 51–64.
- Menichetti, M. (2008) Lo specchio nello spazio femminile. Tra rito e mito. In S. Estienne and D. Jaillard (eds) *Image et Religion dans l'Antiquité Gréco-Romaine*, Actes du colloque (Roma 2003). Naples,

- Italy: centre Jean Bérard, pp. 217–230.
- Michetti, L. M. (2007) L'Etruria e l'area laziale. In M. L. Nava and A. Salerno (eds) *Ambre. trasparenze dall'Antico*, catalogo della mostra (Napoli 2007). Milan, Italy: Electa, pp. 160–167.
- Napolitano, G. (1992) L'iconografia nuziale sulle *loutrophoroi* attiche a figure rosse di V sec. a.C. Considerazioni preliminari. *Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli* XIV, pp. 277–281.
- Negroni Catacchio, N. (1989) L'ambra, produzione e commerci nell'Italia preromana. In AA.VV. *Italia Omnium Terrarum Parens*. Milan, Italy: Scheiwiller, pp. 659–696.
- Nielsen, M. (1989) La donna e la famiglia nella tarda società etrusca. In A. Rallo (ed.) *Le Donne in Etruria*. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, pp. 121–145.
- Olivieri, V. (2005) Attorno al deposito votivo di Macchiagrande a Veio. In A. Comella and S. Mele (eds) *Depositi Votivi e Culti dell'Italia Antica dall'Età Arcaica a quella Tardo Repubblicana*, Atti del Convegno di Studi (Perugia 2000). Bari, Italy: Edipuglia, pp. 179–187.
- Rolley, C. (ed.) (2003) *La Tombe Princière de Vix*. Paris: Picard et Société des amis du musée du Châtillonais.
- Scheid Tissinier, E. (1999) Le mariage et les femmes. In E. Scheid Tissinier (ed.) *L'Homme Grec aux Origines de la Cité (900–700 a.v. J.-C.)*. Paris: Armand Colin, pp. 129–150.
- Sommella Mura, A. (1977) La decorazione architettonica del tempio arcaico. In *Lazio Arcaico e Mondo Greco, La Parola del Passato XXXII*, pp. 62–128.
- Sordi, M. (1977) La leggenda di Arunte chiusino e la prima invasione gallica in Italia. *Rivista Storica dell'Antichità* 6: 111–117.
- Sordi, M. (1995) La donna etrusca. In M. Sordi (ed.) *Prospettive di Storia Etrusca*. Como, Italy: New Press, pp. 1–173.
- Sprenger, M. and Bartoloni, G. (1983) *The Etruscans: Their History, Art, and Architecture*. New York: Harry N. Abrams.
- Stopponi, S. (ed.) (1985) *Casa e palazzi d'Etruria*. Milan, Italy: Electa.
- Tomassucci, R. (2005) Il santuario etrusco di Punta della Vipera. In A. Comella and S. Mele (eds) *Depositi Votivi e Culti dell'Italia Antica dall'Età Arcaica a quella Tardo Repubblicana*, Atti del Convegno di Studi (Perugia 2000). Bari, Italy: Edipuglia, pp. 237–243.
- Torelli, M. (1982) Veio. La città, l'arx e il culto di Giunone Regina. In H. Blank and S. Steingraber (eds) *Miscellanea Archeologica Tobias Dohrn Dedicata*. Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider, pp. 117–128.
- Torelli, M. (1984) *Lavinio e Roma. Riti Iniziativi e Matrimonio tra Archeologia e Storia*. Rome: Quasar.

- Torelli, M. (1986) La religione. In AA.VV., *Rasenna*. Milan, Italy: Scheiwiller, pp. 157–237.
- Torelli, M. (1997) *Il Rango, il Rito e L'immagine. All'Origine della Rappresentazione Storica Romana*. Milan, Italy: Electa.
- Roma 2008 = Torelli, M. and Moretti Sgubini, A. M. (eds) *Etruschi, le Antiche Metropoli del Lazio*, catalogo della mostra (Roma 2008–2009). Rome: Electa.
- Vatin, C. (2004) Le couple dionysiaque dans l'Italie étrusque. In C. Vatin (ed.) *Ariane et Dionysos, un Mythe de l'Amour Conjugal*. Paris: Éditions rue d'Ulm, pp. 55–67.
- Webster, T. B. L. (1972) *Potter and Patron in Classical Athens*. London: Methuen Young Books.
- Zimmer, G. (1995) *Corpus Speculorum Etruscorum. Bundesrepublik Deutschland 4*. Munich, Germany: Hirmer Verlag.

WOMEN OF THE PRINCELY FAMILIES IN ETRURIA

Gilda Bartoloni and Federica Pitzalis

From the eighth through the first decades of the seventh century BC, which witnessed the birth and fruition of the Middle-Tyrrhenian aristocracies, archaeological evidence, comprising mainly funerary contexts, provides us with the image of a society in which, at least among the upper classes, women are as privileged as men and receive an equal profusion of goods. In fact, the funeral rites may represent the occasion on which the community underscores in the most complete and significant manner, the totality of the social identities which constitute the position of each of its members.

Textiles

Although it has at times been suggested that the richness of some female tomb groups reflects male vanity rather than female status (Pomeroy 1997: 112), the analysis of burials furnishes us with precious evidence for the reconstruction of the role that women, especially those belonging to the elite, played within the community. The tomb offerings that stand out in the various necropoleis, aside from specifically local variations in ritual, appear to be substantially uniform in terms of the presence and combination of their various elements. All the female tombs appear to be distinguished by craft equipment related to the activities of spinning and weaving, regardless of the rank of the deceased. If household production and educating the young are the destiny of woman, then the spinning of wool is her emblem (Finley 1972: 124–136). The working of wool is the symbol of a woman, just as skill at arms is that of a man (Maurin 1983). Etruscan literature no longer exists, but the Homeric epics, nearly contemporary with the eighth- to seventh-century period discussed in this chapter, and to some extent embraced by the early Etruscan elite

(see Ridgway 1997), offer some useful points of comparison and contrast. In the *Iliad*, Hektor invites his wife Andromache to return home and leave to him the task of fighting:

[b]ut go home now and return to your tasks, to the spindle and to the loom and direct your handmaidens to be mindful of their work; let the men be mindful of war, all the men of Ilium, and I more than any other.

(*Iliad* 6.490–493, authors' translation)

This difference is well documented in the grave goods that accompany funerary depositions, where we find the remains of the tools used for work during life. In the richest tombs, apart from the prestige goods deposited in the tombs of both sexes without distinction, albeit in different proportions, the male grave goods are characterized by arms in various combinations, the female grave goods by precious ornaments and especially by textile equipment (Bartoloni 2008).

By far the most common element in women's burials is the spindle whorl, often present in multiple examples (from one to three) and of quite varied typology, from spherical to truncated-conical or biconical in shape, faceted or with incised or stamped decoration. Another rather widespread occurrence is the presence of *rocchetti* (small terracotta weights resembling spools—see Gleba, this volume) which are differentiated by the type of end, either concave, convex or flat, and rarely decorated, but sometimes distinguished by the presence of letters or simple incised signs, which according to some scholars may actually attest to female participation in the introduction of writing into Etruria (Bagnasco Gianni 1999). The presence of groups of these tools, often in multiples of three, concentrated chiefly in prominent contexts at Populonia, Veii, Cerveteri and Bisenzio, but also at Narce and Verucchio, has been variously interpreted in the past, due to the multifunctionality of these objects. Recently, specialist studies conducted on the finds from Verucchio have indicated the close connection of the *rocchetti* with so-called tablet-weaving, useful for the creation of intricate borders for finishing textiles and clothing, indicating not only aesthetic purposes but also an ideological value as indicators of status (Gleba 2012: 229). The additional presence of bronze tensioning clasps (*forcelle tessili*) would seem to support this hypothesis, as these are also suitable for producing narrow bands of cloth. They are found in prominent contexts of southern Etruria as well as in the Faliscan-Capenate region and in the area of Campania (Pitzalis 2011: 40, nn. 91–93).

Less common are the equipment kits containing spindles and distaffs in valuable or precious materials,¹ in bronze, amber or glass, like the

spindle and distaff from tomb 2 in the Banditella necropolis of Marsiliana d'Albegna (Cianferoni 2012). Particularly elaborate is a series of distaffs in glass paste (Martelli 1994) of which the best known is undoubtedly the one from tomb 119 at Campovalano, belonging to a woman who had been richly dressed, as attested by the 1,256 tiny rings in glass paste found in the area of her chest, the belt made of plaques and the bronze sandals with repoussé decoration (Roma 2001: no. 556, fig. 77, 102; P. Boccolini in Chiaramonte Trerè and D'Ercole 2003: 70, n. 45, pl. 81.6). By contrast, the presence of loom weights in these burials is extremely rare, probably due to their less personal character compared to the other objects. If, therefore, the textile equipment and in particular the spindle whorls and *rocchetti* proclaim female gender in the burials, the finds of these tools in some warriors' tombs should probably be read as a symbolic offering to the deceased by his partner in life.

Throughout antiquity, woman, whatever her social position, is first mentioned as a spinner of thread. Even the women of the eminent families, wives and daughters of the "princes", do not escape this fate. The princely female burials differ from those of other women in the number and quality of the goods deposited in the funeral assemblage and also in the quality of the arrangements, but not in the objects that characterize sex and function, which stand out not because of type but because of the value of their materials. One difference, however, has been supposed between the role of spinner, extended indiscriminately to all women, and that of spinner-weaver, socially more significant and thus probably often reserved for the mistress of the house (Torelli 1997: 62).

In the *Odyssey*, which better reflects the life of the aristocratic courts of the Mediterranean Early Orientalizing period, Telemachos invites his mother Penelope to tend to her chores, to the loom and the distaff (*Odyssey* 21.350–353). Penelope's activity at the loom is intended as her independent contribution to the welfare of the household, equivalent to that of her husband and parallel to his building their bed himself. The Etruscan male counterpart is seen in the presence of carpenter's tools in the tombs of warriors at Veii, and in the prestigious Tomb of the Fans at Populonia or in the rich tombs of Este: their symbolic meaning illustrates a reference to the Homeric passages which sing of the qualities of Odysseus as a carpenter and woodworker (*Odyssey* 5.234–261, 23.187–201).



Figure 57.1 Tintinnabulum (ceremonial rattle) from the Tomba degli Ori (Tomb of the Gold Jewels) in the Arsenale necropolis of Bologna. (From *Venezia* 2000: 134.)



Figure 57.2 Throne from Tomb 89 of the Lippi necropolis of Verucchio. (From von Eles 2002: pls. II–III.)

A clear illustration of the activities undertaken by the women within the house is furnished by the representations on the two sides of a *tintinnabulum*, a pendant rattle of probable religious significance,

from the Tomb of the Gold Jewels in the Arsenale necropolis of Bologna (Bartoloni 2007: 19–22). On one side is the scene of spinning with the representation of female figures intent upon the raw wool on their distaffs and on spinning with distaff and spindle; on the other is the scene of weaving with the representation of the preparation of the warp and of a woman busy weaving (Figure 57.1).

In the *Odyssey* also are recalled, in the interior of the *oikos*, the handmaidens who attend to the spinning under Penelope's orders (*Odyssey* 21.353). Likewise, the many stages in textile production are portrayed in several images reproduced on the wooden throne from Tomb 89 at Verucchio at the end of the eighth to the beginning of the seventh century BC (Torelli 1997; Von Eles 2002: 235–272; Verger 2011; and Figure 57.2). Fully corresponding to this is the image recounted by Pliny (*Natural History* 8.194) of Rome of the first kings: Tanaquil, the Etruscan wife of Tarquinius Priscus, is depicted with distaff and spindle. It was Tanaquil who wove the royal “*toga undulata*” worn by King Servius Tullius.

In addition to the spindle and distaff, Plutarch (*Roman Questions* 31) says another attribute of noble ladies is the *taleros*, that is, a small crate or pail used to hold wool, very likely corresponding to the Greek, pierced kalaskōn found in the rich Athenian female tombs of the Geometric period (Lord Smithson 1968). Perhaps destined for this purpose were the various *cistae* (canisters) in assorted valuable metals that characterize the rich grave groups of female burials of the Tyrrhenian aristocracy. Among them all, an exceptional example is the pail, made in sheet silver with decoration executed in shallow relief and engraving, from the Castellani Tomb at Palestrina/Praeneste (A. Magagnoli in Bologna 2000: 282–283). We must attribute similar significance to the silver *situla* (pail) from the rich female deposition in the main room of the Regolini Galassi Tomb of Cerveteri that was associated with a valuable distaff in silver (most recently: Sannibale 2012: 313).

Clothing

If the presence of textile implements is common to all female burials, then the aspect which distinguishes the richest female burials, most probably of the wives and daughters of the “princes”, showing a greater splendor than others in the various necropoleis, is undoubtedly costume. The burials in some tombs preserve traces of rich textiles and precious jewelry: cloaks covered with silver, robes decorated with amber or faience arranged in squares and attached with bronze wire.

The tunic of the woman standing and spinning represented on side A of the Bologna *tintinnabulum* seems to be adorned with appliqué arranged in rectangles. There is evidence of small gold plaques, more rarely in silver as in Tomba Aureli 11 at Bologna (Dore 2012: 346); they are round, square, rectangular, triangular or in meander pattern, mostly decorated in repoussé and furnished with small holes in the corners, and must have embellished sumptuous ceremonial robes (Cristofani and Martelli 1983: 42). The tunics appear to be fastened with *fibulae* (safety pins) of gold, silver or amber, which recall the “most beautiful peplos, ornamented” with “twelve gold pins closed with curved hooks” given by Antinoos, one of the suitors, to Penelope (*Odyssey* 18.292–294).

To these precious garments should be added necklaces and pendants of amber (Michetti 2007) “like the sun” (*Odyssey* 18. 296), bracelets and earrings of gold and spirals for the hair constructed of sheets or bars also of gold. The spirals, usually found in pairs, indicate the presence of two braids, as evidenced, for example, by those found on either side of the skull in the princely tomb 101 of Castel di Decima (Bedini 1975: 253; Bedini 1977: fig. 14). The same hairstyles are attested in the female statue of the Pietrera Tomb or in the bucchero figurines of the Caeretan Tumulus of the Painted Animals. The largest spirals (more than 3 cm in diameter) might instead indicate a hairstyle with the hair caught in a single braid like that we see most commonly represented in small-scale sculpture in clay. Much rarer in Etruria is the use of hairpins, among which is one with a spherical head with decoration in gold *a polviscolo* granulation³ from the Tomb of the Lictor at Vetulonia. To the same workmanship are attributed the *fibulae* and the armlets from the same tomb (Cristofani and Martelli 1983: 269–273; L. Pagnini in *Bologna* 2000: 290). This group of feminine jewelry must have been collected in a small box covered in sheet gold and placed in a tomb with a single male deposition: even the original editor (Falchi 1898: 158) considered it a precious offering by a relative (the wife?) of the deceased.⁴

The diadems found in lesser numbers in Etruscan contexts particularly recall the Near Eastern milieu: one in ribbon shape made of sheet gold, more than a half-meter long, from the “Isis Tomb” (Vulci) and now in the British Museum (Cristofani and Martelli 1983: 275, n. 77), is richly decorated in repoussé with a file of animals (lions and chimeras) walking between chains of overlapping semicircles surmounted by palmettes. Another, of electrum, limited to the front portion, also decorated in repoussé, is from one of the peripheral tombs (Tomb II) of the Pietrera Tumulus of Vetulonia (Strøm 1971: 91, n. 5).

The magnificence of these robes worn for the funeral ritual, but almost certainly also worn during life on various ceremonial occasions, is in some cases accentuated by repoussé-decorated pectorals in gold sheet, notable among which is the one in semielliptical form belonging to the princess buried in the Regolini Galassi Tomb of Cerveteri, with decoration that has been considered “a sort of anthology of the Orientalizing repertoire” (Martelli in Cristofani and Martelli 1983: 41; Sannibale 2012: 310). In some examples, amber is attached to the sheet gold, as shown by the rectangular examples from the Latin Galeazzi tomb of Palestrina and Tomb 101 of Castel di Decima, most probably imported from Etruria (Martelli in Cristofani and Martelli 1983: 42).

Emblems of power

The eminence of some female burials, nevertheless, is expressed not only through the exhibition of sumptuous clothing or of articulated textile kits, but is sometimes also affirmed by the presence of certain items associated with the ideology of power and royalty, such as shields, thrones, chariots or scepters. The presence of shields especially appears to be indicative, like the examples in the Castellani Tomb of Palestrina, where no less than three are attested. As in contemporary male tombs, these must have been affixed to the walls of the trenches or chambers. The practice of decorating the walls of aristocratic residences with arms is described for Greece by Alkaios (Fr. 54) and for Rome by Virgil in reference to the palace of Picus (*Aeneid* 7.183–184). In Etruscan culture this custom is attested in the atria of the rich Caeretan tombs in the form of houses. The multiplicity of these examples contained within a single tomb seems to dissolve the functional connection of the shields with the other arms actually used in combat. They no longer emphasize the warrior’s worth, but have become the signs of rank and of the continuity of the noble clan: interest is centered no longer on the individual as warrior but on the family group, with its ties of solidarity and of continuity that transcend time (Bartoloni and De Santis 1995: 279).

An unequivocal royal sign is the throne. The thrones depicted on the Bologna *tintinnabulum* do not differ from those bronze thrones found in the princely tombs at Cerveteri or Palestrina, or from those which support the Chiusine “canopic” (funerary) urns or those carved in the rich Orientalizing Caeretan tombs, which, as is well known, very likely reproduce rooms from contemporary private structures. These seats have a circular base with full lower part and back; with the throne is usually associated a stool-footrest (Colonna and Von

Hase 1986). An analogous seat on which sits a veiled woman appears on the Murlo frieze plaque with an assembly scene (c.575 BC, Rathje 1989). At Verucchio, in addition to the female attribution, already discussed, of the throne of Tomb 89 (Torelli 1997; Verger 2011; [Figure 57.2](#)), one example, accompanied by a *suppedaneum* (footrest), was found in tomb 26/1969 of the Moroni necropolis, dated between the end of the eighth and the first decades of the seventh century BC. It belonged to the burial of a little girl of about 3 years of age (Von Eles 2012). Such “princely” treatment of a child too young to have earned such honors speaks to an emphasis on lineage and on ascribed rather than achieved status in the community – a status that applied to girls as well as boys.

Another distinctive feature of the heights of the social hierarchy is the two-wheeled cart, present in male depositions for the most part, but also in female burials (Emiliozzi 1997: 311–335), to be interpreted, whether they are two-horse chariots (*bigae*) or gigs (carts, *calessi*) as parade vehicles. The use of the cart/chariot in the life of princes can be exemplified in the different registers of the Cypro-Phoenician cesnola 4555 cup (Culican 1982), where racing and transport chariots are represented for men, and carts (*calessi*) for the queen and her female attendants. Giovanni Colonna has observed how the possession of the cart, undoubted indicator of wealth, appears “strictly functional for the mobility of the lord, for his need, inasmuch as he is the owner of lands and herds, to leave the city and repair to the countryside, wherein resided the economic base of his personal status” (Colonna in Emiliozzi 1997: 21). It was in a vehicle of this type that Tarquinius Priscus and his wife Tanaquil came with covered head to Rome, bringing their wealth (Livy 1.34.8). A miniature bronze cart in which two figures are sitting (probably a man and woman) from the Vetulonian necropolis of Poggio alla Guardia, dated to the first quarter of the seventh century BC, may help us to imagine the forms of these carts (M. Cygielmann in Emiliozzi 1997: 65), of which generally only the rims of the wheels with the wheel-hubs and the three-pronged terminals of the carts’ poles survive.

The two-wheeled cart in female tombs is usually compared to the Roman *carpentum*, reserved for matrons and strictly linked to their function as mothers (D’Agostino 1993: 65). This connection does not conflict with the notion of seeing an undoubted ritual character in the final disposition of these carts, as evidenced in their find contexts. The vehicle typically used in the wedding ceremony (Torelli 1997: 64–66) is now deposited in the tomb for the final trip. Extremely rare, in contrast, is the association in female tombs of the *currus*, the two-wheeled war chariot, currently known only in tomb VI of the Veii-

Vaccareccia necropolis and in the Tomba della Regina (“Tomb of the Queen”) of Sirolo-Numana, while the four-wheeled cart boasts only two specimens, one of which was deposited in the Regolini Galassi Tomb.

Recognition of real scepters is more controversial. If, in fact, the finials of some distaffs on occasion recall the shape of the staffs of command found, albeit rarely, in male tombs, it is difficult to demonstrate that these utensils transcend the simple ideological value associated with their craft. An interesting case, however, appears to be represented by a terminal with bird-shaped protome that came to light in the rich inhumation tomb 655 of the Veii Grotta Gramiccia necropolis (Drago and Berardinetti 1997: 57, fig. 29). Recently, L. Drago has hypothesized the function of scepter for an object found in the female tomb 804 of the Veii Quattro Fontanili necropolis (Drago 2013: 33–34).

Objects likely related to the prerogatives of cult, linked at least in the earliest phases of Etruscan history especially to the domestic dimension, are axes and knives. These too are occasionally deposited in some high-ranking female tombs probably to emphasize the involvement of some women in the management of sacrificial rituals (see also Tabolli and De Lucia Brolli, this volume).

Conviviality

Another traditionally male area in which Etruscan women were nevertheless commonly accepted is that of conviviality (participation in social events). In the literary tradition, Greeks and Romans appear to condemn the participation of Etruscan women in banquets, “in which they lie down like them [men] and [recline] at their side on the beds of the *triclinium* [dining hall]” (Heurgon 1963: 112), a condemnation due to the undoubtedly different perception of women in the area of family conduct (Sordi 1981). In the terracotta plaques which decorated the roof of the palace at Murlo, with representations which “openly targeted the exaltation of the noble lifestyle” (D’Agostino 1991: 225), we find the oldest representation in Etruria of the banquet reclining on *klinai* (banquet couches), according to a custom probably reproduced from the courts of the Near East (Bartoloni 2002; Bartoloni and Cordano 2013). At Murlo, however, both men and women are partially stretched out alongside each other (Rathje 1989: 78). This fashion will then be widely attested in the later tomb paintings.

In the female tombs of Middle-Tyrrhenian Italy ceramic shapes appear that are linked to the preparation and serving of wine such as the *holmoi* (large conical stands). These are associated in the Latin region for the most part with the great cup-kraters or with the *lebetes* (cauldrons) as substitutes for the *olla* (jar) that is more common in the Etruscan region; they would seem even here a prerogative of the genre. The grave goods of women also often exhibit numerous drinking vessels, organized in “services” very similar to those of male burials, also similar in the mode of their deposition. Only at cerveteri are *kantharoi* rare in women’s burials, but their function is at least apparently compensated for by the carinated chalices, footed cups, *kotylai* and *skyphoi* (Greek shapes of drinking cups), with which perhaps one could drink different varieties of the same beverage. In the other Etruscan centers, the drinking cup form recurring with greater frequency alongside chalices and cups is generally the carinated cup with high-flung handle, suitable for dipping and for drinking. Furthermore, the discovery in some Caeretan tombs of inscribed plates, cups, tripod-plates and other vases, presumably inserted in the circuit of gift-giving, seems to include women fully in the mechanisms of aristocratic conviviality (on this argument, see Pitzalis 2011: 263–264; and Bartoloni *et al.* 2012).

In the past, the role of household management and the distribution of wine has been attributed to the mistress of the house, as in the representation on the lid of the Montescudaio urn, on which consumption is not necessarily shared by men and women. According to some scholars, the female role should be further reduced, limiting it to the tasks of *distribution* and *administration* rather than to real *management* (Martelli 1984, especially 52). But probably an active participation by the women of the emerging classes in social events ought to be reconsidered, albeit with caution.

In conclusion, a chore that seems peculiar to women of all walks of life since the earliest periods is that of taking an active part in funerals, from the preparation of the body to the lamentations (Bruit Zaidmann 1990: 411–412). Not only the women of the family but also slaves and hired mourners participated in the latter activity. Homer, in the description of Hector’s funeral, refers to Hecuba’s tiredness due to much weeping (*Iliad* 24.780). We are reminded of the funeral lament by the crossed arms of the female statues in stone which must have decorated the Pietrera tumulus (Vetulonia). The vicissitudes of this monument, the vault of which collapsed shortly after construction, do not permit us to place them in their original position: it has been assumed that they stood against the walls, near the funeral bed, in a composition similar to that in later scenes depicting the

funeral lament (A. Maggiani in *Roma* 1981: 94). They may instead have been placed in the *dromos* (entrance passage) like images of the ancestors, who would welcome the deceased into the tomb (Colonna and Von Hase 1986). Such large figures clearly represent elite women; other mourning figures are also invariably female. Around the bed made of woven bronze strips in the principal deposition (of the “princess”) of the Regolini Galassi Tomb were placed thirty-three statuettes posed in ritual gestures, which must have performed the same function (Colonna and Di Paolo 1996: 160; Sannibale 2012: 319). The same meaning should be attributed to the figurines in bucchero from the Poggio Gallinaro tumulus (Tarquinia). We find a similar scene of funeral lament on the later funeral bed of the Camucia tomb (Cortona) with a procession of weeping women carved in low relief (Zamarchi Grassi 1992: 49). Undoubtedly alluding to the funeral lamentation by their gestures are also the statues which top some cinerary urns of the region of Chiusi, reproducing the figure of the deceased, such as the Paolozzi ossuary. The female figurines attached to the shoulders of the vase may be compared to those found near the beds in the rich inhumation tombs cited above. The primary role of the lamentations appears evident in all these funeral ceremonies, the final task performed by and for the women of the princely families.

Notes

- 1 Most examples were made of wood and have been nearly entirely lost.
- 2 Where this find is presented as a sceptre.
- 3 Gold decoration in patterns formed of fine grains resembling “dust”.
- 4 There are numerous Iron Age precedents for this, female fibulae and spindles placed in undisputedly male graves, and male objects such as razors or serpentine fibulae placed in women’s burials. More statistical studies of the human remains are needed to quantify this phenomenon.

References

- Atene 2012 = N. C. Stampolidis (ed) (2012) *‘Principesse’ del Mediterraneo all'alba della Storia*, exhibition catalog (Athens 2012). Athens, Greece: Museum of Cycladic Art.
- Bagnasco Gianni, G. (1999) L'acquisizione della scrittura in Etruria: Materiali a confronto per la ricostruzione del quadro storico e culturale. In G. Bagnasco Gianni and F. Cordano (eds) *Scritture Mediterranee tra il IX e il VII Secolo a.C. Atti del Seminario-Università degli Studi di Milano* (Milan 1998). Milan, Italy: ET Edizioni, pp. 85–

- Bartoloni, G. (2002) Appunti sull'introduzione del banchetto nel Lazio: La coppa del principe. In M. G. Amadasi Guzzo, M. Liverani and P. Matthiae (eds) *Da Pyrgi a Mozia: Studi sull'Archeologia del Mediterraneo in Memoria di Antonia Ciasca*. Rome: La Sapienza editore, pp. 57–68.
- Bartoloni, G. (2007) La società e i ruoli femminili nell'Italia preromana. In P. von Eles (ed.) *Le Ore e i Giorni delle Donne. Dalla Quotidianità alla Sacralità tra VIII e VII Secolo a.C.*, exhibition catalog (Verucchio 2007–2008). Verucchio, Italy: Pier Giorgio Pazzini, pp. 13–23.
- Bartoloni, G. (2008) Le donne dei principi nel Lazio protostorico. *Aristonothos* 3: 23–46.
- Bartoloni, G. and De Santis, A. (1995) La deposizione di scudi nelle tombe di VIII e VII sec. a.C. nell'Italia centrale tirrenica. In *Preistoria e protostoria in Etruria. Secondo incontro di Studi* (Farnese 1993). Milan, Italy: Edizioni ET, pp. 278–287.
- Bartoloni, G. and Cordano, F. (2013) 'Si propone di bere secondo il costume greco' (Cicerone, Verrine 2,1,66). In memoria di Horst Blanck, *Bullettino dell'Istituto Archeologico Germanico, sezione romana* 119: 13–32.
- Bartoloni, G., Acconcia, V. and ten Kortenaar, S. (2012) La diffusione della vitivinicoltura e del consumo del vino in Etruria: Il quadro della cultura materiale tra la fine dell'età del Ferro e l'Orientalizzante antico. In A. Ciacci, P. Rendini and A. Zifferero (eds) *Archeologia della Vite e del Vino in Toscana e nel Lazio. Dalle Tecniche dell'Indagine Archeologica alle Prospettive della Biologia Molecolare*. Florence, Italy: All'Insegna del Giglio, pp. 201–275.
- Bedini, A. (1975) Recenti rinvenimenti di manufatti di ambra da Castel di Decima. In *Studi e ricerche sulla problematica dell'ambra I*. Rome: Editore Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, pp. 253–257.
- Bedini, A. (1977) L'ottavo secolo nel Lazio e l'inizio dell'orientalizzante antico alla luce delle recenti scoperte nella necropoli di Castel di Decima. In *Lazio Arcaico e Mondo Greco* = *La Parola del Passato* 32: 274–309.
- Bologna 2000 = Bartoloni, G., Delpino, F., Morigi Govi, C. and Sassatelli, G. (eds) (2000) *Principi Etruschi tra Mediterraneo ed Europa*, exhibition catalog (Bologna 2000–2001). Venice, Italy: Marsilio.
- Bruit Zaidmann, L. (1990) Le figlie di Pandora: Donne e rituali nelle città. In P. Schmitt Pantel (ed.) *Storia delle Donne. L'Antichità*. Bari, Italy: Edizioni Laterza, pp. 374–423.

- Chiaramonte Treré, C. and D'Ercole, V. (eds) (2003) *La Necropoli di Campovalano. Tombe Orientalizzanti e Arcaiche, I* (BAR International series 1177). Oxford, UK: Oxbow Press.
- Cianferoni, G. C. (2012) Le principesse d'Etruria. *Atene* 2012: 258–305.
- Colonna, G. and Von Hase, F.-W. (1986) Alle origini della statuaria etrusca. La tomba delle statue presso ceri. *Studi Etruschi* 52: 13–59.
- Colonna, G. and Di Paolo, E. (1996) Il letto vuoto, la distribuzione del corredo e la finestra della Tomba Regolini Galassi. In *Etrusca et Italica. Scritti in ricordo di Massimo Pallottino*. Pisa, Italy and Rome: Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali, pp. 131–172.
- Cristofani, M. and Martelli, M. (eds) (1983) *L'Oro degli Etruschi*. Novara, Italy: De Agostini.
- Culican, W. (1982) cesnola 4555 and other Phoenician bowls. *Rivista di Studi Fenici* 10: 13–32.
- D'Agostino, B. (1991) Dal palazzo alla tomba. *Archeologia Classica* 48: 223–235.
- D'Agostino, B. (1993) La donna in Etruria. In C. Bettini (ed.) *Maschile Femminile. Genere e Ruoli nelle Culture Antiche*. Bari, Italy and Rome: Edizioni Laterza, pp. 61–73.
- Dore, A. (2012) Bologna. Sepolcreto Aureli, Tomba 11. *Atene* 2012: 344–347.
- Drago, L. (2013) Aspetti dell'orientalizzante antico a Veio. Dalla tomba a fossa alla tomba a camera. In A. Capoferro, L. D'Amelio and S. Renzetti (eds) *Dall'Italia. Omaggio a Barbro Santillo Frizell*. Florence, Italy: Polistampa, pp. 19–44.
- Drago, L. and Berardinetti, A. (1997) La necropoli di Grotta Gramiccia in G. Bartoloni (ed.) *Le Necropoli Arcaiche di Veio*. Rome: La Sapienza edizioni, pp. 39–61.
- Emiliozzi, A. (ed.) (1997) *Carri da Guerra e Principi Etruschi*. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
- Falchi, I. (1898) Vetulonia. Nuove scoperte nell'area della città e della necropoli. *Notizie degli Scavi*: 81–112 and 141–63.
- Finley, M. J. (1972) The silent women of Rome. In *Aspects of Antiquity: Discoveries and Controversies*. London: Penguin.
- Gleba, M. (2012) Italy: Iron Age. In M. Gleba and U. Mannering (eds) *Textiles and Textile Production in Europe from Prehistory to AD 400*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow Press, pp. 215–241.
- Heurgon, J. (1963) *La Vita Quotidiana degli Etruschi*. Milan, Italy: Mondadori.
- Lord Smithson, E. (1968) The Tomb of a rich Athenian lady, ca. 851 B. C. *Hesperia* 37: 98–103.

- Martelli, M. (1984) Per il dossier dei nomi etruschi di vasi: Una nuova iscrizione ceretana del VII sec. a.C. *Bollettino d'Arte* 27: 49–56.
- Martelli, M. (1994) Sulla produzione di vetri orientalizzanti. In M. Martelli (ed.) *Tyrrhenoi Philotechnoi*, Atti della giornata di studio (Viterbo 1990). Rome: Gei, pp. 75–97.
- Maurin, J. (1983) Labor matronalis: Aspects du travail féminin à Rome. In E. Lévy (ed.) *La femme dans les Sociétés Antiques*, Actes des Colloques (Strasbourg 1983). Strasbourg, France: Aecr, pp. 139–155.
- Michetti, L. (2007) L'Etruria e l'area laziale. In *Ambre. trasparenze dall'antico*, exhibition catalog (Naples 2007). Milan, Italy: Electa, pp. 160–170.
- Pitzalis, F. (2011) *La Volontà Meno Apparente. Donne e Società nell'Italia centrale Tirrenica tra VIII e VII sec. a.C.* Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
- Pomeroy, S. B. (1997) *Dee, Prostitute, Mogli, Schiave. Donne in Atene e a Roma.* Milan, Italy: Bompiani.
- Rathje, A. (1989) Alcune considerazioni sulle lastre da Poggio Civitate con figure femminili. In A. Rallo (ed.) *Le Donne in Etruria.* Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, pp. 75–84.
- Ridgway, D. (1997) Nestor's Cup and the Etruscans. *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 16(3): 325–344.
- Roma 1981 = Iaculli, G. (ed.) (1981) *Prima Italia. L'Arte Italica del I Millennio a.C.*, exhibition catalog (Rome 1981). Rome: De Luca.
- Roma 2001 = Franchi dell'Orto, L. (2001) *Eroi e Regine. Piceni Popolo d'Europa*, exhibition catalog (Rome 2001). Rome: De Luca.
- Sannibale, M. (2012) La principessa etrusca della Tomba Regolini-Galassi. *Atene* 2012: 307–321.
- Sordi, M. (1981) La donna etrusca. In AA.VV., *Misoginia e Maschilismo in Grecia e in Roma.* Genoa, Italy: Darficlet, pp. 49–67.
- Strøm, I. (1971) *Problems Concerning the Origin and Early Development of the Etruscan Orientalizing Style.* Odense, Denmark: Odense University Press.
- Torelli, M. (1997) “Domiseda, lanifica, Univira”. Il trono di Verucchio e il ruolo e l'immagine della donna tra arcaismo e repubblica. In M. Torelli (ed.) *Il Rango, il Rito e L'immagine. Alle Origini della Rappresentazione Storica Romana.* Milan, Italy: Electa, pp. 52–86.
- Venezia 2000 = M. Torelli (ed.) (2000) *Gli Etruschi*, exhibition catalog (Venice 2000). Milan, Italy: Bompiani.
- Verger, S. (2011) Duel privé, duel public. Le trône de la tombe 89/1972 Lippi de Verucchio, aux origines de la représentation des rituels politiques étrusques. In *Finem Dare. Il confine tra sacro,*

profano e immaginario. A margine della stele bilingue del Museo Leone di Vercelli, Atti del Convegno Internazionale (Vercelli 2008). Vercelli, Italy: Mercurio Editore, pp. 171–215.

Von Eles, P. (ed.) (2002) *Guerriero e Sacerdote. Autorità e Comunità nell'Età del Ferro a Verucchio. La Tomba del Trono* (Quaderni di Archeologia dell'Emilia Romagna 6). Florence, Italy: All'Insegna del Giglio.

Von Eles, P. (2012) Le principesse di Verucchio. *Atene* 2012: 235–257.

Zamarchi Grassi, P. (ed.) (1992) *La Cortona dei Principes*. Cortona, Italy: Calosci.

TO GIVE AND TO REceIVE

The role of women in Etruscan sanctuaries

Ingrid E. M. Edlund-Berry

Introduction

Wanted: Intelligent, well-educated young woman of Etruscan origin, familiar with religious practices and willing to represent her family at sanctuary events.

According to the Romans, their closest neighbors and fierce rivals, the Etruscans, were a religious people who in all circumstances of life followed the will of their deities. Also, according to the Greek and Roman historical and literary texts, the Etruscan women led a life of debauchery, not to be imitated by the hard-working, loyal Roman matrons.¹

It would be unfortunate if we chose to rely only on the negative accounts to become acquainted with the life and actions of the women of Etruria. Luckily, however, there is both historical and archaeological evidence that allows us to gain better information on their role within the sphere of Etruscan religion.

Probably the most famous Etruscan woman whom we know by name was Tanaquil.² According to the ancient texts (e.g., Livy, *ab urbe condita* 1.34), she stemmed from a high-ranking family in the city of Tarquinia, and married Lucumo, a descendent of a Greek from Corinth, named Demaratus. Lucumo had high ambitions and left Tarquinia with his wife to settle in neighboring Rome. As the couple approached the Janiculum hill, an eagle swooped down and first removed Lucumo's cap from his head and later put it back. Tanaquil, who was well versed in interpreting divine signs, immediately realized that the gods were in favor of their presence, and, according to tradition, the couple settled in Rome in 616 BC where Lucumo, as the ruler of the city, acquired the name Tarquinius Priscus.

Because of the rivalry between Romans and Etruscans and their different view of the role of women, it is significant that Tanaquil, at least if we accept the validity of the Roman sources,³ was able to make the transition from a presumably carefree life of an upper-class woman in Tarquinia to the more conservative city of Rome. As queen, she continued to strengthen the power of her family and used her skills in interpreting signs transmitted from the deities (Livy, 1.39).

We can only guess as to how Tanaquil's expertise may have shocked the Roman men, especially those involved with religious practices, and perhaps even the Roman matrons, but some generations later, in 396 BC to be precise, another Etruscan woman, entered the city. This time it was a deity and not a mortal, the Etruscan goddess Uni, known in Latin as Juno. After the fall of Veii, the Etruscan city closest to Rome, it was this goddess who was invited into the city and, when asked by one of the Roman soldiers if she wanted to go to Rome, was reputed to have nodded in agreement (Livy, 5.20–22).

Once arrived in Rome, Juno was awarded a temple on the Aventine by the Roman commander and dictator Camillus, and her cult as Juno Regina gained increasing importance throughout the Roman Republic. Although she was honored by both men and women, the Roman historian Livy makes a point of stating that during the Second Punic War (218–202 BC), it was the Roman women who brought the goddess valuable offerings.⁴

A princess and a deity, can they be said to represent the role of Etruscan women in religious practices? A closer look at the archaeological evidence for rituals and worship in Etruscan sanctuaries suggests that much of Etruscan religion was in the hands of women, either alone or in the company of male priests and attendants.

As in other areas of Etruscan studies, there are no contemporary written accounts of how the Etruscans viewed their religious practices, including the involvement of priests and priestesses and offerants.⁵ In addition, although there are historical references to the general status of Etruscan women, there are different ways of interpreting their accuracy and validity. Recent scholarship has questioned the common opinion that Etruscan women were independent and had a much more important role in society than their Greek and Roman counterparts, and, as a result, their social status would also affect the degree of their independent religious involvement.⁶

The following discussion attempts to document and evaluate

evidence for Etruscan religious practices within the context of temples and sanctuaries, pertaining to deities, priestesses, and offerants, as well as rituals and offerings. As can be expected, the interpretation of the material remains is likely to present many questions, and it is important to recognize the pitfalls of applying modern theories or preconceived notions to the available evidence.

Etruscan temples and sanctuaries

Etruscan sanctuaries are identified by their location, and vary in form from modest votive deposits to altars and buildings, including temples, located at sacred places in nature or as part of settlements. While the location of sanctuaries may not be gender-specific, temples to female deities were oriented differently from those of their male counterparts,⁷ and the number of important urban temples to female deities, such as Uni or Turan (Venus), indicates that Etruscan goddesses played an important role in society and religion.⁸ Within the sanctuary complex, they were manifest in cult statues in the temples,⁹ and further through votive offerings, many with dedicatory inscriptions, placed in different areas.

Etruscan female deities

The evidence for Etruscan female deities is two-fold: first the names of deities recorded on votive offerings and other inscriptions, and second the depiction of such deities as statuettes or in other media. In addition to the names of male and female deities recorded on, for example, the Piacenza Liver¹⁰ and on bronze mirrors,¹¹ there is also ample evidence for male and female versions of the same deity, or pairs of deities.¹²

In addition to inscriptions naming male and female Etruscan deities, features such as clothing, gestures, attributes, and a mythological or ritual context may serve to illustrate their identity. Thus Menrva (Athena, Minerva) appears with a helmet and Artumes (Artemis, Diana) with a bow as a huntress, but at times the iconographic language makes it difficult to distinguish between deities and important humans as shown in the terracotta frieze plaques of seated figures from Poggio Civitate (Murlo). Here the composition of seated and standing figures, each holding specific attributes such as a curved staff, a sword, or flowers, may suggest named deities such as Tin (Zeus, Jupiter) and Uni (Hera, Juno) or anonymous humans whose social status provided them with a regal or semi-divine context.¹³

Etruscan priestesses

Because of the possible overlap in depicting divine and human in the iconography, Etruscan priestesses may be equally difficult to identify. Attributes such as hats and a distinctive hairstyle have been suggested for the group of sarcophagi from the Bruschi Tomb at Tarquinia where the women shown also hold items such as a kantharos or a patera.¹⁴ Likewise, a woman depicted on a sarcophagus in the British Museum is shown with a thyrsos staff and a kantharos, attributes usually associated with the priestesses of Bacchus (Figure 58.1).¹⁵ A bronze statuette in Paris is often referred to as depicting the ritual dress of a priestess, but the authenticity of the piece has been questioned.¹⁶

Several words in Etruscan inscriptions have been interpreted as titles for priestesses, often on very uncertain grounds.¹⁷ Of these, the word *hatrencu* appears in funerary inscriptions from Vulci, and the women thus identified have been associated with the cults of Mater Matuta and Dionysus. The word occurs primarily in the Tomba delle Iscrizioni at Vulci where women with this title are buried in the same chamber, a practice that diverges from the common pattern of husband and wife buried together. Because of the limited usage and funerary context, however, the meaning of the word as a religious title is uncertain, and may instead apply to a civic title.¹⁸

Etruscan female offerings and offerants

The ritual which pervaded all types of Etruscan sanctuaries, regardless of location, size, divinities worshipped there, and time period, was gift-giving where offerants brought objects for the deity. As an act of giving, the offerant sought to communicate with the deity and was no doubt hoping for a favorable response. This exchange of giving and receiving between offerants and deities took very tangible forms, probably supplemented with prayers and chants. Regardless of the material and type, these items were brought by people for whom they represented a religious act to the appropriate deity.¹⁹

Of the forms of offerings that pertain to women, the main groups are bronze and terracotta statuettes, spinning and weaving implements, and anatomical votives. Other gifts such as pottery, coins, small objects, and perhaps food items may have been presented by any visitor to a sanctuary, and the value of the material would reflect the status of the offerant, whether male or female.

Implements for weaving and spinning are abundant in Etruscan

sanctuaries, and illustrate the value of even modest offerings as well as the importance of elevating everyday tasks to a religious activity, whether actually performed at the sanctuary, or represented symbolically by the tools.²⁰ Although previously often ignored because of their multitude and humble appearance, as spindle whorls and spools are now being studied responsibly, much new information is gained about the importance of ritual contexts in sanctuaries such as Poggio Colla (Vicchio) and other sites that are being re-studied or are currently being excavated.²¹

The so-called anatomical votives are particularly illustrative of a female presence in the votive offerings.²² In addition to terracotta heads and half heads, and swaddled infants, body parts such as breasts, hands, feet, intestines, and uteri illustrate concerns with human, in this case, female health and quality of life. Although many sites are reported to have had thousands of such votives, many were discarded or sold as part of earlier excavation practices, and it is thus impossible to make any valid analysis of proportions between male and female body parts, or estimate total numbers. Thanks to careful studies of individual objects or of the preserved groups within votive deposits, the interest in even modest offerings has increased, and we are now in a better position to incorporate such information into the broader concept of women's (and men's) role in Etruscan sanctuaries.²³



Figure 58.1 Sarcophagus lid (London, British Museum Inv. 1838,0608.9; Image AN447109001; Sc D22). (Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum.)

Votive objects such as bronze or terracotta statuettes could represent either the offerant, perhaps in her role as priestess, or a deity, depending on the pose, clothing, gestures, and attributes. Bronze statuettes usually show standing figures, whereas terracotta statuettes include seated individual figures or groups of two or more.²⁴

As for the *identity* of female offerants, we may postulate that bronze

or terracotta statuettes holding small objects such as fruits or flowers reflect the act of gift-giving, but there is no clear indication of their status, whether they could represent priestesses in this role, or just ordinary worshippers (Figures 58.2a and 58.2b).²⁵

Although not very common, dedicatory inscriptions by women would suggest actions by a female offerant and/or priestess.²⁶ Thus an Archaic inscription preserved on fragments of a bucchero oenochoe (pitcher) from the area of the altar at the Portonaccio temple at Veii refers to a woman named Venalia Slarinas, and the text includes a warning not to touch the vase (or its contents?).²⁷ The context suggests a female deity, Minerva, as the recipient of the offering at Veii, whereas inscriptions from Pyrgi give the names of two female dedicants, and the receiving female deities as Uni and Cavatha. The first inscription is recorded on a fragmentary bronze plaque found in the area of temple A, and contains the name Thanchvil (Tanaquil) Catharna, as the dedicant of a statue of Thesan (Aurora) in the sanctuary of Uni.²⁸ A second inscription appears on two fragments that may both belong to the same Attic kylix (cup) found at the Area Sud of the sanctuary at Pyrgi. The text may be reconstructed to refer to a female dedicant named Vinuma who presented her offering to Cavatha (a variant form of Catha).²⁹

A female deity, Turan (Venus), is also the recipient of a dedication by Ramtha Venatres at the sanctuary at Gravisca, the harbor of ancient Tarquinia.³⁰ The text is preserved on the foot of an Attic kylix found in *sacellum* gamma and includes the formula of the name of the deity in the genitive form, followed by the verb indicating gift-giving and the name of the dedicant (*turns turce ramtha venatres*).³¹



Figure 58.2a Bronze statuette (Florence 299). (Photo 10537 su concessione della Soprintendenza Archeologica della Toscana – Firenze.)



Figure 58.2b Bronze statuette (Florence 335). (Photo 10503 su concessione della Soprintendenza Archeologica della Toscana – Firenze.)

Although few in number, these inscriptions from the Archaic period through the fifth century BC suggest that women were able to select prestigious objects for the offerings. The social status of these named women is difficult to establish due to the fragmentary nature of the texts, but as indicated by the important recent discovery of an inscribed statue base found at Campo della Fiera at Orvieto (Figures 58.3a and 58.3b), women could achieve social mobility that allowed them to participate in important activities, including that of dedications at sanctuaries. In this case, the inscription on the stone base refers to a Kanuta, a freedwoman of the gens Larecena and wife of Aranth Pinie, who presented a bronze statue to a set of deities collectively called *Thuschva* who may be female and linked to the location of the sanctuary.³²

Later dedications from the fourth century BC provide the names of

women who presented offerings to male deities.³³ These offerings ranged from bronze statuettes dedicated to Selvans or Apollo,³⁴ or to lesser known deities such as Mantrns³⁵ or a dedication on a bronze plaque to a Spring divinity.³⁶

Especially important because of their find spot is the pair of bronze statuettes from the third century BC, dedicated to Culsans and Selvans by a Velia Cvinti, daughter of Arnt, and found as part of a votive deposit at the Ghibelline gate at Cortona (Figure 58.4a and 58.4b).³⁷ Since these deities were of importance as protectors of the city gates (Culsans) and the territory (Selvans), it would seem likely that the Velia Cvinti was a woman with some public status who had the means to procure offerings of considerable value that were placed in a significant location.³⁸



Figures 58.3a and 58.3b Orvieto, Campo della Fiera. Statue base with dedication by Kanuta. (Courtesy Simonetta Stopponi.

Coupled with the accounts of Tanaquil in Tarquinia and Rome, the dedications by female offerants and the objects on which they appear

would thus suggest that women could and did have important roles in religious activities. A related issue is the extent to which the use of women's names in dedicatory inscriptions reflects literacy among women, regardless of social status, comparable to inscriptions on Etruscan bronze mirrors.³⁹

Rituals and ritual action

In all likelihood, Etruscan sanctuaries were full of action, noise, and people, and solemn processions were interspersed with prayers and incantations, preparations of meat and liquid offerings for sacrifices, and, of course, a constant stream of gifts brought to the temples, altars, and other sacred spots. The extent to which such activities were gender-specific is difficult to ascertain, and we should try to refrain from stereotypes suggesting that weapons pertain to men, and cosmetic objects and mirrors exclusively to women.⁴⁰ On the other hand, the figural scenes showing men and women and seemingly ritual activities would seem to reflect what took place in sanctuaries, and the types of offerings indicate at least indirectly a dominant presence of women. Although the depictions of women in what may be a ritual activity may pertain both to private and public spheres, the purpose of honoring a deity is likely to have taken the same form.⁴¹ Activities that were primarily part of the household, such as spinning and weaving, were thus also reflected in the frequent public offerings of implements such as spindle whorls and spools, and the process of weaving could be seen as a ritual event, as shown on the wooden throne from the seventh century BC found at Verucchio (see Gleba, this volume).⁴² Likewise, banquets with both male and female participants would occur both in the home and as part of important public and religious events, such as those shown on a terracotta frieze plaque from Poggio Civitate (Murlo).⁴³



Figure 58.4a Bronze statuette of Culsans (Cortona 1278). (Courtesy Cortona Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca.)



Figure 58.4b Bronze statuette of Selvans (Cortona 1279). (Courtesy Cortona Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca.)

Of the many ritual activities performed at a sanctuary, some are known from depictions in paintings or on reliefs and suggest the participation of women. These include travel by carriage as shown on, for example, a terracotta frieze plaque from Poggio Civitate (Murlo) where a couple (two women, or man and woman?) are riding in a horse-drawn carriage as part of a procession moving to an unknown destination.⁴⁴ Others portray processions which may suggest a double function of a funerary ritual as shown on the Boccanera plaques from Caere/cerveteri and a scene tied to Greek mythology (The Judgement of Paris) (Figure 58.5) where the women appear with characteristic Etruscan pointed shoes.⁴⁵ Women are shown performing a sacrifice on a funerary urn from Volterra,⁴⁶ or appear as spectators wearing tutulus (conical) headgear in the tomb of the Bigas from Tarquinia,⁴⁷ or as a divine (?) recipient of gifts in the Tomb of the Baron at Tarquinia,⁴⁸ all illustrating events of female participation, whereas a chosen few such as Tanaquil may have taken on an active role in divination and prophecy.

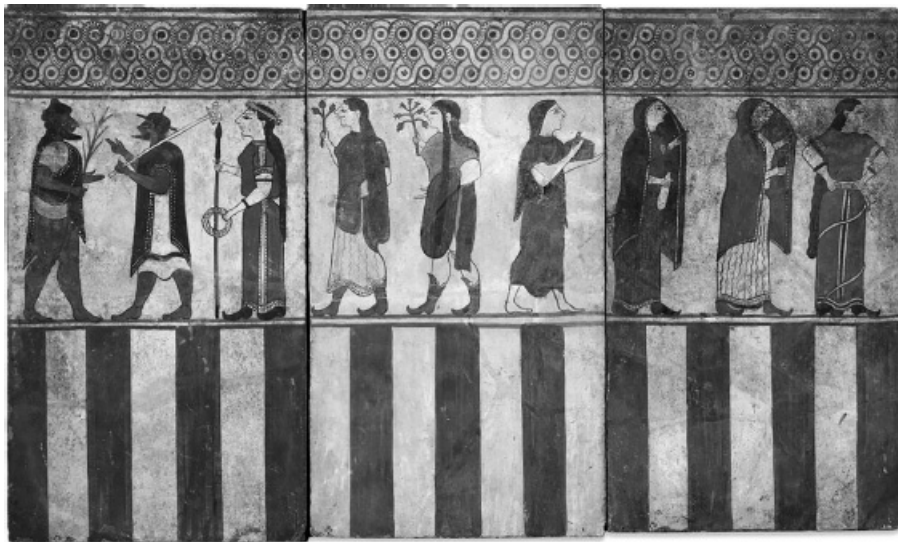


Figure 58.5 Boccanera plaque (London, British Museum 89/4–10/1; 89/4–10/4; 89/4–10/2; Image 00034740001). (Courtesy Trustees of the British Museum.)

A ritual activity that is often mentioned in the literature is sacred prostitution. In large sanctuary complexes, such as at Pyrgi, the harbor town of ancient Caere, there are remains of structures with a number of small rooms which in modern scholarship have been associated with ritual prostitution.⁴⁹ Since neither the plan of the building nor any associated finds provides secure evidence for such a use, this interpretation is primarily due to the belief that sacred prostitution was a common phenomenon in Etruscan as well as in other sanctuaries in Mediterranean cultures.⁵⁰ The practice of sacred prostitution has also been suggested for the sanctuary at Gravisca.⁵¹ Here the evidence centers around two inscriptions referring to a Kyliphake and to Ramtha Venatres (mentioned above), a faience statuette, and small plaque depicting a woman. But here, as at Pyrgi, sacred prostitution cannot be confirmed.⁵²

Although the study of rituals and other activities in Etruscan sanctuaries often by force focuses on isolated features such as the clothing of prominent participants or the presence of altars, ultimately our concern should be with the sanctuary as a functional unit. In the case of both rituals and votives, the lack of secure locations and contexts can by necessity create an artificial construct without a solid foundation in the Etruscan landscape. See De Lucia Brolli and Tabolli in this volume for evidence of rituals in Faliscan cults.

The women's cult at Macchia delle Valli, Vetralla

As mentioned earlier, the relation between votive objects and the ritual context is gaining increased significance thanks to current excavation efforts at Poggio Colla and other sites.⁵³ An especially valuable example that allows us to connect a female deity with votive offerings and with a specific location is the sanctuary at Macchia delle Valli at Vetralla frequented from prehistoric times well into the Roman Empire.⁵⁴ This rural site, located off an ancient road, contains natural features such as a cave and a spring, and the sanctuary was incorporated into the hillside in a suggestive setting between tall cliffs, with a small roofed shrine and a platform for ritual activities (Figures 58.6a and 58.6b). The shrine housed a third-century BC terracotta cult statue of a female figure holding a patera, interpreted as representing Demeter-Vei-eres, and the cult centered on altars placed in front of the statue. Each area of the sanctuary was marked with votive deposits that included pottery and anatomical votives used for various rituals. With few exceptions (male head and leg), the anatomical votives applied to the female body (uteri), and included also the head of a child and female statuettes in terracotta and bronze.

The sanctuary at Vetralla thus connects a female deity represented by the cult statue, and votive offerings of primarily female character with a location (cave, spring) that may have served primarily women but also the population at large. As a sanctuary in nature, marked by the presence of water, the site provided opportunities for cleansing and perhaps healing, under the protection of the all-powerful female deity. No doubt, this sanctuary was not unique, but because of its good state of preservation it represents the totality of ritual activity in a setting that well reflects the Etruscan landscape inhabited by religious Etruscans, men and women.

Conclusion

In spite of our fragmented knowledge of Etruscan women, each piece of information increases the opportunity of suggesting their role in society and especially in religious practices. In addition to specifically female offerings, such as the anatomical votives of body parts, we should look closely at the votive context within sanctuaries and the connection between deity and priestesses or offerants. In addition to the multitude of anonymous offerings of statuettes and full-size and miniature pottery at major sanctuaries as well as modest sacred places, the limited number of inscribed votives with female offerants

shows very clearly that dedications by women were carefully chosen and represented the wishes of a woman to connect with a specific deity, male or female, with the expectation of a positive outcome. Ultimately, there are many forms of giving and receiving as part of religious rituals, and continued study of the different types of evidence for the presence of Etruscan women in the sanctuaries will no doubt further our awareness of the religious life of the Etruscans.

a



b



Figures 58.6a and 58.6b Vetralla, Macchia delle Valli, Demeter sanctuary. (Photo: Ingrid Edlund-Berry.)

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Simonetta Stopponi for generously providing images of the Kanuta inscription from Orvieto. I thank Laura Orsi who kindly assisted me in obtaining photographs of bronze statuettes from the Florence Archaeological Museum and Paolo Giulierini for the photographs of Culsans and Selvans from Cortona Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca. Thanks to Stephan Steingraber I was able to visit the site of the Demeter sanctuary at Vetralla. The material from the site is well displayed at the Museo nazionale etrusco di Viterbo, Rocca Alborno.

Notes

- 1 Colonna 2000; Izzet 2012.
- 2 Amann 2000: 189–197; Meyers 2016.
- 3 Krauskopf 2012.
- 4 Richardson 1992: 215–216; Culham 2014: 134.
- 5 Krauskopf 2012.
- 6 Izzet 2012.
- 7 Prayon 1997.
- 8 Colonna 2006.
- 9 Rask 2011.
- 10 Van der Meer 1987.
- 11 De Grummond 2006a.
- 12 Cristofani 1997.
- 13 Haynes 2000: 120–126, fig. 106; Krauskopf 2012: 189–191.
- 14 De Grummond 2006b: 38–39; Vincenti 2009: 73–84, figs. XVII–XIX.
- 15 Inv. 1838,0608.9, AN447109001; Sc D22; De Grummond 2006b: 38, fig. III.14.
- 16 Bibl. Nat. B.B. 862; Nielsen 1990: fig. 13; Lundeen 2006; Krauskopf 2012: 188.
- 17 Nielsen 1990; Krauskopf 2012: 186–187.
- 18 Lundeen 2006.
- 19 Turfa 2006.
- 20 Gleba 2009; Meyers 2013.
- 21 Meyers 2013.
- 22 Turfa 2004; Recke 2013.
- 23 See the list of sites in Turfa 2006. Displays of anatomical votives are to be found in many museums, including the Villa Giulia Museum in Rome, the Archaeological Museum at Barbarano Romano and at Grosseto to name a few.
- 24 Turfa 2006; Nagy 2011.
- 25 Lundeen 2006: 37.
- 26 Maras 2009: 208–210.
- 27 Rome, Museo di Villa Giulia; Inv. scavo 3266; *ET* Ve 3.13; TLE 40; Maras 2009:

- 28 Rome, Museo di Villa Giulia; *ET* Cr 4.2; TLE 876; Maras 2009: 354–356.
- 29 S. Severa, Antiquarium di Pyrgi; *ET* Cr 3.29, Cr 3.38; Maras 2009: 208, 356–357.
- 30 Tarquinia, Museo Archaeologico Nazionale; Inv. 72/17377; *ET* Ta 3.4; Maras 2009: 386–387.
- 31 Pandolfini 2000: 71, n. 383, 76.
- 32 *ET* Vs 3.12; Stopponi 2011: 37–42; Maggiani 2011: 147–148.
- 33 Maras 2009: 209–210.
- 34 London, British Museum Inv. 1824.4–97.3; *ET* Ta 3.9; Maras 2009: 299; Vatican, Museo Profano Inv. 6645; *ET* Um 3.2; Maras 2009: 392; Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, Inv. B.B. 101; *ET* OB 3.2; Maras 2009: 313–315.
- 35 Cortona, Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca, Inv. 1280; *ET* Co 3.7; Maras 2009: 255.
- 36 Arezzo; *ET* Ar 1.1; Maggiani 1999: 190–191, fig. 3; Maras 2009: 226.
- 37 Cortona, Museo dell' Accademia Etrusca, Inv. 1278–1279; *ET* Co 3.4 and 3.3; TLE 640–641; Maras 2009: 256–258.
- 38 Maras 2009: 210.
- 39 Bagnasco Gianni 1999; Bonfante 2013: 439.
- 40 Spivey 1991.
- 41 Lundeen 2006: 36.
- 42 Meyers 2013: fig. 2.
- 43 Haynes 2000: 123, fig. 105.
- 44 Haynes 2000: 123, fig. 103; Krauskopf 2012: 189.
- 45 Haynes 2000: fig. 178.
- 46 Mus. Guarnacci 212. Krauskopf 2012: 197, fig. 8.
- 47 Rallo 1989: 156, pls. LXVI–LXIX; Haynes 2000, fig. 191.
- 48 Amann 2000: 159–160; Haynes 2000, fig. 183.
- 49 Colonna 2006: 133.
- 50 Budin 2008: 250–254.
- 51 Fiorini and Torelli 2010: 45; Turfa 2011.
- 52 Budin 2008: passim; Demetriou 2012: 90–91.
- 53 Meyers 2013.
- 54 Scapaticci 2010, 2014.

References

- Amann, P. (2000) *Die Etruskerin. Geschlechtsverhältnis und Stellung der Frau im frühen Etrurien*. Vienna, Austria: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Bagnasco Gianni, G. (1999) L'acquisizione della scrittura in Etruria: Materiali a confronto per la ricostruzione del quadro storico e culturale. In G. Bagnasco Gianni and F. Cordano (eds) *Scritture*

- Mediterranee tra il IX e il VII secolo a.C.* Milan, Italy: Edizioni Et, pp. 85–106.
- Bonfante, L. (2013) Mothers and children. In J. M. Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 426–446.
- Budin, S. (2008) *The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Colonna, G. (2000) The original features of the Etruscan peoples. In M. Torelli (ed.) *The Etruscans*. Milan, Italy: Bompiani, pp. 25–41.
- Colonna, G. (2006) Sacred architecture and the religion of the Etruscans. In N. T. de Grummond and E. Simon (eds) *The Religion of the Etruscans*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, pp. 132–168.
- Cristofani, M. (1997) Masculin/féminin dans la théonymie étrusque. In F. Gaultier and D. Briquel (eds) *Les plus Religieux des Hommes*. Paris: La Documentation Française, pp. 209–219.
- Culham, P. (2014) Women in the Roman republic. In H. I. Flower (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic*. New York: Cambridge University Press, second edition, pp. 127–148.
- De Grummond, N. T. (2006a) *Etruscan Myth, Sacred History, and Legend*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.
- De Grummond, N. T. (2006b) Prophets and priests. In N. T. de Grummond and E. Simon (eds) *The Religion of the Etruscans*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, pp. 27–44.
- Demetriou, D. (2012) *Negotiating Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- ET = *Etruskische Texte* (two editions): regional corpus of known Etruscan inscriptions. Rix, H. (ed.) 1991. *Etruskische Texte. Editio minor*, first edition, two volumes. Tübingen, Germany: Gunther Narr. Meiser, G. (ed.) 2014. *Etruskische Texte. Editio minor*, second edition, two volumes. Hamburg, Germany: Baar.
- Fiorini, L. and Torelli, M. (2010) Quarant'anni di ricerche a Gravisca. In L. B. Van der Meer (ed.) *Material Aspects of Etruscan Religion*. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, pp. 29–49.
- Gleba, M. (2009) Textile tools in ancient Italian votive contexts: Evidence of dedication or production. In M. Gleba and H. Becker (eds) *Votives, Places and Rituals in Etruscan Religion*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill, pp. 69–84.
- Haynes, S. (2000) *Etruscan Civilization. A Cultural History*. London: British Museum Press.
- Izzet, V. (2012) Etruscan women: Towards a reappraisal. In S. L. James and S. Dillon (eds) *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, pp. 66–77.

- Krauskopf, I. (2012) Die Rolle der Frauen im etruskischen Kult. In P. Amann (ed.) *Kulte – Riten – religiöse Vorstellungen bei den Etruskern und ihr Verhältnis zu Politik und Gesellschaft*. Vienna, Austria: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, pp. 185–197.
- Krauskopf, I. (2013) Gods and demons in the Etruscan pantheon. In J. M. Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 513–538.
- Lundeen, L. E. (2006) In search of the Etruscan priestess: A re-examination of the *hatrencu*. In C. E. Schultz and P. B. Harvey, Jr. (eds) *Religion in Republican Italy*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 34–61.
- Maggiani, A. (1999) Culti delle acque e culti in grotta in Etruria. *Ocnus* 7: 187–203.
- Maggiani, A. (2011) *TLUSCHVA*, divinità ctonie. In D. F. Maras (ed.) *Corollari. Scritti di antichità etrusche e italiche in omaggio all'opera di Giovanni Colonna*. Pisa, Italy and Rome: Fabrizio Serra editore, pp. 138–149.
- Maras, D. F. (2009) Il dono votivo. Gli dei e il sacro nelle iscrizioni etrusche di culto. Pisa, Italy and Rome: Fabrizio Serra editore.
- Meyers, G. E. (2013) Women and the production of ceremonial textiles: A reevaluation of ceramic textile tools in Etrusco-Italic sanctuaries. *American Journal of Archaeology* 117(2): 247–274.
- Meyers, G. E. (2016) Tanaquil: The conception and construction of an Etruscan matron. In S. Bell and A. A. Carpino (eds) *A Companion to the Etruscans*. New York: John Wiley and Sons Inc, pp. 305–320.
- Nagy, H. (2011) Etruscan votive terracottas and their archaeological contexts: Preliminary comments on Veii and Cerveteri. In N. T. de Grummond and I. Edlund-Berry (eds) *The Archaeology of Sanctuaries and Ritual in Etruria*. Portsmouth, RI, *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, pp. 113–125.
- Nielsen, M. (1990) Sacerdotesse e associazioni culturali femminili in Etruria: Testimonianze epigrafiche ed iconografiche. In *Analecta Romana Instituti Danici* 19: 45–67.
- Pandolfini, M. (2000) Iscrizioni etrusche. In A. Johnston and M. Pandolfini (eds) *Le Iscrizioni* (Gravisca, Vol. 15). Bari, Italy: Edipuglia, pp. 67–101.
- Prayon, F. (1997) Sur l'orientation des édifices culturels. In F. Gaultier and D. Briquel (eds) *Les plus Religieux des Hommes*. Paris: La Documentation française, pp. 357–371.
- Rallo, A. (1989) Classi sociali e mano d'opera femminile. In A. Rallo, (ed.) *Le Donne in Etruria*. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, pp. 147–156.

- Rask, K. (2011) New approaches to the archaeology of Etruscan cult images. In N. T. de Grummond and I. Edlund-Berry (eds) *The Archaeology of Sanctuaries and Ritual in Etruria*. Portsmouth, RI: *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, pp. 89–112.
- Recke, M. (2013) Science as art: Etruscan anatomical votives. In J. M. Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 1068–1085.
- Richardson, L. (1992) *A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome*. Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Scapaticci, M. G. (2010) Vetralla. Un santuario a “Macchia delle Valli”. In *Daidalos* 10: 101–136, pls. XI–XIV.
- Scapaticci, M. G. (2014) Nuovi interventi nel santuario rupestre di Macchia delle Valli. In S. Steingraber (ed.) *L'Etruria Meridionale Rupestre*. Rome: Palombi, pp. 130–149.
- Spivey, M. (1991) The power of women in Etruscan society. In *The Accordia Research Papers* 2: 55–67.
- Stopponi, S. (2011) Campo della Fiera at Orvieto: New discoveries. In N. T. de Grummond and I. Edlund-Berry (eds) *The Archaeology of Sanctuaries and Ritual in Etruria*. Portsmouth, RI: *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, pp. 16–44.
- TLE = Pallottino, M. (ed.) (1968) *Testimonia Linguae Etruscae*, second edition. Florence, Italy: La Nuova Italia Editrice.
- Turfa, J. M. (2004) Anatomical votives. In E. Simon (ed.) *Weihgeschenke: Altitalien und Imperium Romanum, ThesCRA I*. Basel, Switzerland and Los Angeles, CA: LIMC and Getty Publications, pp. 359–368.
- Turfa, J. M. (2006) Votive offerings in Etruscan religion. In N. T. de Grummond and E. Simon (eds) *The Religion of the Etruscans*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, pp. 90–115.
- Turfa, J. M. (2011) (L. Bouke van der Meer (ed.)) *Material Aspects of Roman Religion*. *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 2011.03.63.
- Van der Meer, L. B. (1987) *The Bronze Liver of Piacenza. Analysis of a Polytheistic Structure*. Amsterdam: Gieben.
- Vincenti, V. (2009) *La Tomba Bruschi di Tarquinia*. Rome: Giorgio Bretschneider.

WOMEN AND TEXTILE PRODUCTION IN PRE-ROMAN ITALY

Margarita Gleba

Textile production is one of the oldest specialized crafts and archaeological, iconographic and written evidence indicates that, in most ancient societies, spinning and weaving were practised primarily by women (Barber 1994). The reason for this is simple: it is an occupation compatible with childcare, because it can easily be carried out at home, interrupted and resumed again and throughout history women have been the primary child carers and remain so even in our highly industrialized societies (Brown 1970). Not only were women involved in textile production but it occupied an inordinate amount of their time. It is hardly surprising that, over millennia, textile craft became a symbol of the female sphere of life. In pre-Roman Italy, women's contribution to the community as textile workers was illustrated in iconography and expressed by the deposition of their spinning and weaving tools in their burials.

Textile production

The creation of a textile involves raw material acquisition and preparation, spinning, weaving, dyeing and finishing. The most common fibres, flax and wool, were obtained from domesticated plants and animals, cultivation and husbandry of which required expenditure of significant resources: land, labour and time. Additional time and effort went into the preparation of fibres to make them suitable for textile production. Wool had to be removed from sheep, sorted into various qualities and combed to prepare it for spinning. Flax had to be harvested, retted in standing water or dew, and then processed to remove the unwanted parts of the plant.

Once procured and prepared, the fibre mass could be converted into

yarn by splicing the fibre bundles at the ends, or by twisting and drawing out, or drafting, the fibres – the process known as spinning (Barber 1991: 39–78). Spinning was accomplished in ancient times using a suspended or drop spindle. Such a spindle consists of a rod or a spindle shaft and weight known as a spindle whorl, a symmetrical, centrally pierced object which functions as a fly-wheel. Since most spindle shafts in antiquity were made of wood, often the only evidence for their use consists of the less perishable spindle whorls, which were made from fired clay, stone, bone, glass and other materials. Another tool frequently used during spinning was a distaff – a device to keep the prepared fibre mass organized.

The required quantity of yarn having been spun, weaving could begin. Weaving is accomplished on a loom, a special frame that keeps the warp system in place, while allowing the flexible weft to be passed in between tensioned warp threads (Barber 1991: 79–116). North of the Mediterranean, a warp-weighted loom was used until early first millennium BC. It was made up of two upright beams that stood at a slight angle to the vertical plane and a single horizontal or cloth beam, to which warp was attached. In a warp-weighted loom, as suggested by its name, the warp is kept taut by the weights attached at the bottom to groups of threads. Since weights were made of stone or clay, they survive well in archaeological contexts and allow us to trace the presence and sometimes even location of a warp-weighted loom on sites. Before weaving could begin on such a loom, the warp had to be prepared separately and then attached to the cloth beam. This task often took as much time as the weaving of the cloth itself. During the Roman Empire, a two-beam vertical loom became popular and eventually replaced the warp-weighted variety. In Egypt and Mesopotamia, a horizontal ground loom was in use.

Ancient clothes were woven to shape, that is they were not tailored. They could, however, be finished, decorated or manipulated in various ways to give them a specific quality or look, and to drape them around the body. This could involve dyeing, bleaching, fulling, pleating, addition of beads and appliques, or sewing some of the edges together.

Sources of evidence

The sources of evidence for the study of Etruscan and Italic women's role in these various stages of textile production in antiquity are diverse, ranging from iconography to archaeological material. Although each source is imbued with problems and requires careful

consideration before it can be used, they provide us with a picture of the actual (and fictional) women that spent countless hours producing textiles to dress their families, furnish their households, power the ships and much more.

Iconography

There are several important representations of women preparing fibre, spinning, warping and weaving in a variety of media. In all cases, women are depicted at the specific tasks of raw material preparation, spinning and weaving. Some of the earliest scenes appear on the wooden cylindrical throne found in Tomb 89 at Verucchio in north-east Italy and dated around 700 BC. While interpretations of the intricately carved scenes vary (Torelli 1997: 68–69; Kossack 1999: 64–67; Von Eles 2002), most scholars agree that spinning and weaving are among the activities depicted ([Figure 59.1](#)).

Another important object comes from the area of Bologna and is one of the most important representations of textile production in the ancient world, a bronze rattle or *tintinnabulum* found in tomb 5 of Bologna's Arsenale Militare necropolis and dated around 630 BC (Morigi Govi 1971; Kossack 1999: 67–68). It is a flat, bell-shaped object, made of two bronze sheets connected at the edges and decorated in a *repoussé* technique. Each side of the *tintinnabulum* is divided into two sections, allowing space for four scenes depicting various stages of textile manufacture. The bottom scene of side A depicts two women seated in throne-like chairs, reminiscent of the Verucchio throne, each holding a distaff in her left hand ([Figure 59.2](#), left). With her right, each pulls a strand of fibre from the basket in the centre, that is, they are dressing the distaffs for spinning. The top scene of side A shows a woman at the task of spinning ([Figure 59.2](#), centre). She is standing in profile, extending her left hand to hold a dressed distaff, while a spindle hangs from her right hand, which draws out the yarn. Side B of the *tintinnabulum* shows activities associated with weaving. The bottom scene likely represents the weaving of the starting border necessary for the warp-weighted loom. The last scene provides a unique rendering of the only two-storied warp-weighted loom known from antiquity ([Figure 59.2](#), right).



Figure 59.1 Scenes from the Throne of Verucchio depicting women spinning and weaving, Tomb of the Throne, Verucchio, end of the eighth century BC. (After Von Eles 2002, fig. 127.)

From Este comes a bronze votive plaque dated to fifth–sixth century BC which has a schematic depiction of a woman next to a warp-weighted loom and is inscribed *Jutina doto Reitiai* – the devotee Jutina offers to the goddess Reitia an image of herself at the task of weaving (Gambacurta and Ruta Serafini 2007: 52–53). Meanwhile, a bronze bucket or situla recently discovered at Montebelluna and yet unpublished has two spinning women included in its complex figural frieze.

Other relevant finds are a pair of the fifth–fourth century BC stone stelae from the area of Bologna. One such stele shows a woman standing in profile holding a dressed distaff in a fashion similar to the spinner on the *tintinnabulum* (Zannoni 1876, pl. C.13). Another stele shows a woman seated in a wagon holding an umbrella in her right hand and a spindle with thread in her left (Zannoni 1876, pl. XXII).

Another group of anthropomorphic stone stelae depicting what have been interpreted as weaving scenes are known from Daunia in south-east Italy, dated to the seventh–sixth centuries BC (Nava 1980;

D'Ercole 2000; Norman 2011). The scenes show women seated in front of vertical looms, from which hang bands with a meander pattern.

Several engraved Etruscan mirrors also have depictions of spindles. One, dated to the fourth century BC, is currently located in Copenhagen (*CSE Denmark 1, Fasc. 1*, 120–126, no. 26). The central design of the mirror shows a young couple sitting and looking at each other while a young boy stands behind the man. The woman holds in her left hand a distaff from which a spindle hangs. A dressed distaff connected to a spindle with the thread wound around its shaft is also depicted on a contemporary mirror from Arezzo (Ciattini 1971: 149).

Although many of these depictions are highly stylized or simplified, the implements and women's gestures while performing various tasks are represented with high precision and allow us to reconstruct a specific point in the operational sequence of textile production. Another interesting observation is that most of the objects with textile production scenes are prestige objects, indicating both the economic and ideological importance of the textile craft for the societies and specific people that created and used them. They tell us not only that textiles constituted a source of wealth and/or status for their owners but also that textile production was the prerogative of the elite women represented. At the same time, iconographic sources can only get us so far in attempting to understand real women's involvement in textile production. In order to do that, we need to resort to archaeological evidence, in particular, burials of actual women who lived in the past.

Archaeology

Spinning and weaving tools are frequently found in archaeological excavations and occur in three types of archaeological contexts of pre-Roman Italy: settlement, votive and funerary. The primary function of spinning and weaving tools, namely for textile production, can be inferred best from settlement contexts (Gleba 2008). Meanwhile, the presence of textile implements in votive deposits is frequently connected with cults of divinities regarded as protectors of women and domestic activities, as well as productive activities within sanctuaries (Gleba 2009; Meo *et al.* in press). Settlement and votive contexts, however, provide little information about the identity of the craftspeople involved in textile production, although both are typically associated with women. Burials and funerary gift assemblages, on the other hand, represent an important source of information about society and its hierarchical and ideological aspects.

The last decades of research have advanced significantly the analytical methodology of burial studies. Comparisons based on spatial analysis within the same cemetery or across several cemeteries of the same site, allow scholars to characterize the chronological, gender, familial and rank distinctions between members of the community.



Figure 59.2 Tintinnabulum from Bologna, Arsenale Militare, Tomb of the Jewels, bronze, late seventh century BC: (left) a woman dressing the distaff; (centre) a woman spinning; (right) a woman weaving assisted by another woman. (Image: M. Gleba after drawing of Bologna Museo Civico Archeologico.)

One of the primary aspects of an individual that is indicated by burial rites is gender. Textile implements in general, and spindle whorls in particular, traditionally have been regarded as indicators of female burials. Sex determinations on osteological grounds are rare, often because the bones are not sufficiently well preserved, a situation especially common in the case of cremation burials. Further, in many old excavations, bones were not collected, or were discarded, and sex-typing has frequently been based on the types of burial goods that are found with the remains of the deceased. In the Mediterranean and the Near East, spindle whorls, together with other items, such as specific types of pins or certain ceramic shapes, have been regarded as female gender indicators (Bartoloni 1989; Strömberg 1993: 95). In the rare instances when osteological remains are available, they seem to support the gender attribution made on the basis of burial goods (Toms 1998: 171). For instance, at the Iron Age cemetery of Osteria dell'Osa in central Italy, where the bones were analysed in order to determine the sex and age of the deceased, "a single faceted spindle-whorl occurred in the majority of female graves, especially in age-

classes 4 to 8 [adults]" (Bietti Sestieri 1992: 108). Various scholars have argued convincingly that, for the Villanovan necropoleis, spinning/weaving equipment and weapons/armour form distinct groups which are independent of chronology and wealth (Toms 1998: 166). The absolute majority of burials containing spinning and weaving implements are female. Only one textile-related tool appears regularly in male burials. Sheep shears are found in Gallo-Roman male graves in Northern Italy, indicating that, at least among the Celts, the shearing of wool was a man's job, and that a certain class of men in Celtic society earned their prestige not as warriors but as shepherds (Grassi 1991: 85).

When present and analysed, bones not only provide direct evidence that the individuals buried with textile tools were female, but also tell about their age. Girls, it appears, started practising their spinning and weaving skills early on as seen from the deposition of textile tools in their burials (Lipkin 2012). The analysis of the Osteria dell'Osa Iron Age necropolis in central Italy has even provided an indication that spinning was a marker of young girls in that community (Bietti Sestieri 1992).

In cases when they are included among the burial goods, a variety of spinning and weaving tools have been recovered from the burials. Spindle whorls, distaffs, loom weights, spools and needles are the types of textile tools most frequently deposited in graves beginning in the Late Bronze Age. The practice was especially common during the first half of the first millennium BC in the Mediterranean cultures, but continued well into Roman times as well. In Italy, different regions and even different communities appear to have had their own rules for the type and number of implements chosen to be deposited with the dead (Gleba 2008). In Northern and central Italy, especially the areas of Villanovan culture and its influence, spindle whorls, spools and distaffs are frequent finds in female burials. In South Italy, there is more diversity in the ritual. For instance, in Campania, Villanovan cemeteries yield assemblages similar to those of central Italy, but textile implements are absent from the *Fossakultur* sites. In Basilicata and parts of Calabria, spindle whorls are present but spools seem to be substituted by loom weights. In Puglia, loom weights begin to appear in burials only as the region becomes increasingly Hellenized. In Sicily, we find an association of needles, spindle whorls and knives in female tombs.

Implements used for spinning and weaving were generally made of fired clay, wood or bone and had little intrinsic value of their own. They were meaningful only to the person who used them and

therefore carry symbolic value when placed in tombs. It is this symbolic value associated with spinning and weaving implements that led to their manufacture in precious materials. Distaffs made of bronze, silver, amber or bone were particularly important markers of elite female status in Italy during the ninth to seventh centuries BC (Gleba 2009). Being impractical and probably too precious to be used, they are more likely to have been made purely for display purposes. The tools themselves symbolized the prowess of the deceased woman in textile craft and, hence, her social role in the community, while the precious materials of which they were made expressed her status as a wealthy and high-ranking member of that society. Distaffs found in early Italian tombs, thus, most likely were a status symbol. Although distaffs almost disappear from grave good assemblages after the seventh century BC, spinning and tools associated with it continue to symbolize female social identity and rank well into the Roman period and even later.

Spinning rather than weaving became symbolic of the female sphere for two reasons: first, because, effectively, more time was spent on this task than on weaving (Gleba 2011). And second, because unlike a large, heavy and stationary loom, a spindle and a distaff were small and portable, thus enabling women to perform the task practically anywhere and making it more 'visible'. This daily visibility made distaff and spindle universally recognizable objects, which could easily be reproduced in precious materials and transformed into tangible symbols of female social role and power.

The distaffs expressed the identity of Italian Early Iron Age elite women as textile workers – as such they are depicted on the Verucchio Throne and the Bologna *tintinnabulum*. This is further confirmed by the presence of distaff types, associated with a specific production area outside and sometimes at a considerable distance from this area. Thus, Type A1 distaffs, produced in Bologna/Felsina, are found in Verucchio, Volterra, Cerveteri, Tarquinia, Vulci, Veio, Bisenzio, Narche, Capena and even Rome (Gleba 2011). All of these sites were already becoming major centres during the Early Iron Age and their aristocratic families had extensive connections and probably familial ties with each other. The long-distance movement of distaffs may thus be associated with gift exchange practised among the elite members of these communities, which involved luxury and symbolic goods.

Another likely explanation for the movement of tools is intermarriage, which certainly existed between neighbouring groups and areas throughout the Mediterranean, in particular between the

elite members of these communities. This ensured that the wealth and power remained within a certain strictly defined circle (Bartoloni 2000: 275). Women hence served as a link between aristocratic families of different cities, creating powerful alliances between them. Textile equipment thus allows us to track their movements, as well as the diffusion of textile technology.

Women and the textiles they made

Circulation of women was fundamental in past societies. Besides intermarriage, long-distance movement of women involved their gifting, purchase or capture (Gleba 2014). Captive women likely produced everyday textiles needed for clothing, house furnishings and possibly other specialized purposes, such as sails for ships and linen armour. The latter were likely produced by the women of the household and would have demanded substantial quantities of cloth, since a single corselet may have required a piece of cloth 1.4 x 4.5 m (Aldrete *et al.* 2012: 149). Aristocratic women were also involved in cloth production but they made special items, such as luxury and ceremonial clothes.

The mantles and tunic-shaped garments found at the cemetery of Verucchio, in northern Adriatic Italy, have been demonstrated to be ceremonial garments and their tablet-woven borders appear to be status markers with not only their presence but also their width bearing significance. Production of elaborate ceremonial textiles not only required special materials and skills, available only to the members of the elite classes of society, but also was in itself an exclusive elite female occupation. Etruscan elite families were also intrinsically connected to the religious sphere, priestly offices usually being held by members of aristocratic families (Jannot 2006: 127–128), and sacred cloth production was also controlled by the elite families and carried out by women belonging to these families. If the determination of the long side of the Verucchio mantles as the warp is correct, the tall looms depicted on the wooden throne found in the same burial and the Bologna *tintinnabulum*, are accurate renditions of looms observed in life.

But even the most mundane textiles required time and dedication. A simple linen cloth measuring 1.4×4.5 m, required to construct a single laminated linen corselet, would take 675 hours to produce: 25 hours to hackle the fibres, 575 hours to spin the yarn and 75 hours to weave (Aldrete *et al.* 2012: 150–151). This does not include the time needed to grow, harvest and ret the necessary quantity of flax. In fact,

we do not know to what extent women were involved in fibre procurement, but they certainly did participate in fibre preparation, as indicated by written, iconographic and ethnographic sources. As pointed out in the beginning, for the most part they carried out those activities of the textile production chain that did not interfere with child rearing and did not take them too far away from their home. Spinning was the bottleneck of textile production as can be seen from the numbers mentioned above, with an average of four or more spinners needed to keep a single weaver busy. Unsurprisingly, women dedicated every available moment of their time to spinning yarn, even while walking and accomplishing other tasks that did not require the use of their hands. While spinning could be carried out alone and anywhere, weaving (and especially warp preparation) was often a group activity, giving another, social, dimension to the craft. Many of the iconographic depictions of weaving show at least two women involved in the process. This provided an opportunity for learning: technical expertise in weaving required an extended period of apprenticeship under the supervision of an already skilled craftswoman. It also made an otherwise mostly monotonous task an opportunity for socializing.

Despite the high degree of specialization characterizing this type of textile production in the Early Iron Age, it remained confined to the household level, as indicated by the regular finds of small quantities of textile instruments in settlement sites. By the second half of the seventh century BC, however, a new production mode seems to come into play, with the appearance of sites where large quantities of tools were concentrated in small areas or specific structures, as for example, at Poggio Civitate di Murlo (Gleba 2000). The size, shape, material and, often decoration, of the tools themselves show increasing standardization, and they were most likely produced by specialists. What we seem to have now is something more akin to workshop mode of production. This change coincides with the specialization and professionalization of other crafts, most notably metallurgy and ceramic production (Nijboer 1998). It also coincides with disappearance of precious distaffs and spools from female burial assemblages. But even if by the seventh century BC textiles started to be produced in workshops by slave labour and/or male craftsmen, women continued to dress their households, and the cloth they wove is a tangible testimony of their skill, patience and creativity.

References

Aldrete, G. S., Bartell, S. and Aldrete, A. (2012) *Reconstructing Ancient*

- Linen Body Armor: Unraveling the Linothorax Mystery*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Barber, E. J. W. (1991) *Prehistoric Textiles: The Development of Cloth in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Barber, E. W. (1994) *Women's Work: The First 20,000 Years. Women, Cloth, and Society in Early Times*. New York: Norton.
- Bartoloni, G. (1989) Marriage, sale and gift: A proposito di alcuni corredi femminili dalle necropoli popolonesi della prima età del ferro. In A. Rallo (ed.) *Le Donne in Etruria*. Rome: l'Erma di Bretschneider, *Studia archeologica* 52, pp. 35–54.
- Bartoloni, G. (2000) La donna del principe. In G. Bartoloni (ed.) *Principi Etruschi tra Mediterraneo ed Europa*. Venice, Italy: Marsilio, pp. 271–77.
- Bietti Sestieri, A. M. (1992) *The Iron Age Community of Osteria dell'Osa*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, J. (1970) Note on the division of labour by sex. *American Anthropologist* 72: 1075–1076.
- Ciattini, A. M. (1971) *Itinerari Etruschi*. Pistoia, Italy: Tellini.
- D'Ercole, M. C. (2000) Immagini dall'Adriatico Arcaico. Su alcuni temi iconografici delle stele daunie. *Ostraka* 9: 327–349.
- Gambacurta, G. and Ruta Serafini, A. (2007) Dal fuso al telaio. Profili di donne nella società di Este nell'età del ferro. In P. von Eles (ed.) *Le ore e i giorni delle donne. Dalla quotidianità alla sacralità tra VIII e VII secolo a.C.* Verucchio, Italy: Pazzini, pp. 45–53.
- Gleba, M. (2000) Textile production at Poggio Civitate (Murlo) in the 7th c. BC. In D. Cardon and M. Feugère (eds) *Archéologie des Textiles des Origines au Ve Siècle*, Actes du colloque de Lattes, oct. 1999. Monographies Instrumentum 14. Montpellier, France: Éditions Monique Mergoil, pp. 77–81.
- Gleba, M. (2008) *Textile Production in Pre-Roman Italy. Ancient Textiles Series 4*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow.
- Gleba, M. (2009) Textile tools in ancient Italian votive contexts: Evidence of dedication or production? In M. Gleba and H. W. Becker (eds) *Votives, Places and Rituals in Etruscan Religion. Studies in Honour of Jean MacIntosh Turfa*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 69–84.
- Gleba, M. (2011) Textile tools as indicators of female identity in Early Iron Age Italy. In M. Gleba and H. W. Horsnæs (eds) *Communicating Identity in Italic Iron Age Communities*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 26–32.
- Gleba, M. (2014) Cloth worth a king's ransom: Textile circulation and transmission of textile craft in the ancient Mediterranean. In K.

- Rebay-Salisbury, L. Foxhall and A. Brysbaert (eds) *Knowledge Networks and Craft Traditions in the Ancient World: Material Crossover*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 83–103.
- Grassi, M. T. (1991) *I celti in Italia*. Milan, Italy: Longanesi.
- Jannot, J. R. (2006) *Religion in Ancient Etruria*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Kossack, G. (1999) *Religiöses Denken in Dinglicher und Bildlicher Überlieferung Alteuropas aus der Spätbronze- und Frühen Eisenzeit (9.-6. Jahrhundert v. Chr. Geb.)*. Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Phil.-Hist. Klasse. Abhandlungen N. F., Heft 116. Munich, Germany.
- Lipkin, S. (2012) *Textile-Making in central Tyrrhenian Italy from the Final Bronze Age to the Republican Period*. Oxford, UK: Archaeopress.
- Meo, F., Greco, G. and Ferrara, B. (in press) Loom weights in sacred context: The square building of the Heraion at river Sele mouth. In C. Broens and M.-L. Nosch (eds) *Textiles and Cult in the Mediterranean Area in the First Millennium BC*. Ancient Textiles Series, Oxford.
- Morigi Govi, C. (1971) Il tintinnabulo della “Tomba degli Ori” dell’Arsenale Militare di Bologna. *ArchCl* 23: 211–35.
- Nava, M. L. (1980) *Stele Daunie I*. Florence, Italy: Sansoni Editore.
- Nijboer, A. J. (1998) *From Household Production to Workshops*. Groningen, The Netherlands: PhD thesis.
- Norman, C. (2011) Weaving, gift and wedding: A local identity for the Daunian stelae. In M. Gleba and H. W. Horsnæs (eds) *Communicating Identity in Italic Iron Age Communities*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 33–49.
- Strömberg, A. (1993) *Male or Female: A Methodological Study of Grave Gifts as Sex Indicators in Iron Age Burials from Athens*. Jonsered, Sweden: P. Åström Förlag.
- Toms, J. (1998) The construction of gender in Early Iron Age Etruria. In R. D. Whitehouse (ed.) *Gender and Italian Archaeology: Challenging the Stereotypes*, Accordia Specialist Studies in Italy 7. London: Accordia Research Institute, pp. 157–179.
- Torelli, M. (1997) “Domiseda, lanifica, univira”. Il trono di Verucchio e il ruolo e l’immagine della donna tra arcaismo e repubblica. In M. Torelli (ed.) *Il Rango, il Mito e L’immagine. Alle Origini della Rappresentazione Storica Romana*. Milano, Italy: Electa.
- Von Eles, P. (2002) *Guerriero e Sacerdote. Autorità e Comunità nell’Età del Ferro a Verucchio. La Tomba del Trono*. Florence, Italy: All’Insegna del Giglio.
- Zannoni, A. (1876) *Gli scavi della certosa*. Bologna, Italy: Regia

Tipografia.

THE AGER FALISCUS AND ITS WOMEN

Maria Anna De Lucia Brolli and Jacopo Tabolli

Daughter, wife, and mother, important roles of a woman in family life, are reflected, as in a mirror, in the tomb-groups and in the sanctuaries of the Faliscans. In this chapter we aim to present the complexity and the social significance of the Faliscan archaeological record on women.

The first part of the chapter will focus on the eighth and the first half of the seventh centuries BC, which correspond to the creation of the *Ager Faliscus* as an autonomous and well-defined cultural region in central Italy (De Lucia Brolli and Tabolli 2013: 259–262), a sort of *childhood* for the Faliscan people. During those two centuries, most of the data regarding the sphere of women come from funerary archaeology. Funerary remains represent a complex set of data related not only to the dead but also to the living community and to expressions and renegotiations of identities as well as power, status relations, and gender. As such, female burials are part of a multifaceted reality and constitute, both in terms of their structure and the rituals associated with them, some of the most complex funerary evidence of the ancient world.

The second part of the chapter presents the *maturity* of the Faliscan people, from the mid-seventh century BC to the era of Romanization and especially to the conquest of its capital *Falerii* in 241 BC. Together with data from the mortuary record, which has been only partially affected by the Archaic funerary laws (Modica 2007), and especially from the complex chamber tombs—often used over a long period of time, looted in antiquity or in more recent times, hurriedly excavated under rescue conditions and frequently unpublished or only partially published—the portrait of the world of women is enriched by the evidence from numerous sanctuaries. This is the apogee of the Faliscan history, when the political and religious role of women is strengthened and appears extraordinary when compared to the

neighboring ancient cultures.

The childhood of the Ager Faliscus: eighth to mid-seventh century bc

The majority of the excavations carried out in the cemeteries of the Faliscan territory occurred during the late nineteenth century, immediately after the unification of Italy (Barnabei *et al.* 1894; Gamurrini *et al.* 1972; Cozza and Pasqui 1981). The documentation of those early excavations has allowed us to define in detail the social status and role of women in particular from the mid-eighth century BC and especially in the two main sites of the region: *Falerii* and Narce. Already in the first part of the eighth century, after the long hiatus of occupation of the area corresponding to the beginning of the Early Iron Age (the ninth century, according to the traditional chronology) (after Di Gennaro 1982), the earliest Faliscan tomb-groups consisted of cremations. At this time, cremation was adopted equally for males and females. Around the last quarter of the eighth century, at the passage between the Iron Age and the Early Orientalizing period (c.725 BC), inhumations seem to prevail for aristocratic female burials (Pitzalis 2011), while at the same time cremation still characterizes high-ranking men's burials (with some exceptions of cremated women) with the intention of perpetuating the tradition of their ancestors (De Lucia Brolli 1997: 206–209). During the course of the eighth century, the type of burial changes several times, according to the evolution of the identity of the different social groups: from cremation deposited in stone *custodiae* (or cists), to inhumation in simple trenches, to the dead being placed in stone sarcophagi (De Lucia Brolli and Tabolli 2012). Toward the end of the century, the sarcophagus is replaced by a wooden coffin, often consisting of a single hollowed tree trunk. In the first half of the seventh century, the simple trench for inhumation acquires a more complex structure, which anticipates the earliest chamber tombs (Tabolli and Turfa 2014). We are referring to the so-called “loculus” tombs. In fact, the trench is transformed into a vertical shaft entrance and a lateral space was added on one or both sides of the shaft to hold the body.

During the late nineteenth century, the excavation methods and the preservation of selected grave goods led to the creation of an unrealistic archaeological record. Especially regarding female burials, all the tombs preserved display particularly rich grave goods, creating the false impression of a uniformly rich society. However, in the excavation notebooks, the existence of a large number of other burials

with more modest assemblage of artefacts, or none, testifies to the emergence of a more complex social stratification, already at this early stage of the formation of the Ager Faliscus (Baglione and De Lucia Brolli 1990).

Some osteological data for Faliscan women

Another custom that has influenced our understanding of the archaeological record is the extremely rare preservation of any skeletal remains. While some cremated bones are preserved, almost no bones have been preserved from inhumations. In addition to the acidity of the soil, which often led to the disintegration of the bones, in many cases bones from inhumations were exposed during the excavation, but not collected. On the very rare occasions in which we have both the archaeological and the osteological data, an integrated analysis reveals a balanced social reality (Becker *et al.* 2009; Tabolli 2013). In the earliest necropolis of Narce, I Tufi, dating mostly to the eighth century BC, recent cross analysis of archaeological and osteological data revealed that the population of the necropolis consisted of ten male and eight female burials (nine if we consider the possible provenance from this necropolis of the rich cremation of a mother, to which we will return below), indicated a balanced representation of both sexes (Tabolli 2013: 361–366). Elsewhere, the apparent disproportion in favor of women's graves not only suggests the possibility that men could have died far away from home (Pitzalis 2011), but can be affected by the non-preservation of the osteological remains and by the more visible nature of the female burials. In fact, if we look at the necropolis of La Petrina, and if we exclude the high percentage of indeterminable burials (16), 11 male and 18 female burials have been recognized. These numbers should be regarded as hypothetical in the absence of osteological data (with the exception of tomb A14 (XXVI) (Tabolli 2013: 95).

Archaeological data do not help us elucidate the physical features of Faliscan women. Our preliminary analysis of the diameter of the bronze belts which surrounded some of the *ollae* (spherical or ovoid jars) for cremations as well as some of the inhumed bodies demonstrated narrow hips for most of the cases. Nevertheless, recent analyses of cremated samples have demonstrated the physical features of some of the women of Narce (Becker *et al.* 2009: 47–61). In some cases it was possible to recognize, thanks to the good preservation of the bones, a woman with elegant facial features (as in the case of T3 of I Tufi) or some physical stress, related to working activities (for T6) (Becker *et al.* 2009: 53, 54). Generally, the better preserved samples

have demonstrated good nutrition, with a high percentage of phosphorus, which can be easily connected to a diet based on fish, typical of a site such as Narce, along the most important river of the area, the Treja (L. Salvadei in Tabolli 2013: 362–363). Nevertheless, we should stress that even for the Late Iron Age cremations, the image of the rich and healthy women in the burials is affected by the way the archaeological record was collected in the late nineteenth century.

From cradle to grave among the Faliscans

Even in this early phase of the formation of the Faliscan *ethnos* it is possible to follow the course of the life of a woman, through the different steps and roles that she assumes during her life, from childhood to maturity. Regarding the excavations in the necropoleis of *Falerii*, there are no elements that could help us distinguish the graves of adult women from those of girls. While infant burials were concentrated inside the settlement, following the custom of burying infants among the living (Baglione and De Lucia Brolli 2009), only in a few rare circumstances was it possible to recognize child burials in a necropolis, especially in the necropolis of Montarano N, but without any possibility of assigning to these burials a specific sex. A special burial, which might include a female infant, has been identified in Narce, in a peculiar cremation (De Lucia Brolli 2004a) probably discovered in the necropolis of I Tufi, of a woman who died between her thirties and forties, during the first half of the eighth century. Osteological analysis revealed that this woman was in an advanced state of pregnancy or had just given birth at the time of her death. The high-quality personal ornaments in amber, glass paste, and gold, together with parts of the clothing, portray the lady as belonging to the higher social group of the community. She wore at the time of cremation a cloak or a shroud richly interwoven with many rings and numerous bronze studs found inside the urn. Three studs retain exceptionally preserved remnants of white threads which probably passed through eyelets, linking the studs with the precious garments (Russo *et al.* forthcoming). Only after the cremation ceremony were a rich necklace of amber and glass paste beads placed inside the olla. A number of miniature beads in faïence suggested a comparison with other tomb-groups outside the Ager Faliscus, identified as infant or child female burials. The presence of the miniature beads next to the ornaments of the mother suggests that the fetus might have been born prematurely and that the ceremony of burial has preserved the memory of her rank.

Three young girls at Narce

In contrast to *Falerii*, at Narce, a series of tombs are certainly related to burials of young girls: tomb A3 (XXI) from the necropolis of La Petrina (Tabolli 2013: 81–83), tomb 102F from the necropolis of Monte Lo Greco, preserved in the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology (Dohan 1942; Turfa 2005: 65–66), and one of the two burials in tomb 18 (XXXII), also from the necropolis of Monte Lo Greco (Molas I Fontes 1980; De Lucia Brolli 2012: 43–45). In most cases, there is more emphasis in portraying these girls as “little women” than children. We are probably dealing with girls who have not reached the age of adolescence and definitely not marriage. Their symbolic offerings foreshadow the social role that they would have played if they had become adults. Some specific characteristics occur only in these tombs: (1) there is a systematic dimensional reduction in the scale (but not miniaturization) of the grave goods as well as of some of the ornaments; (2) there is almost no reference to spinning and weaving activities, and any other elements related to work; (3) grave goods testifying to the funerary symposium¹ are often lacking, with some relevant exceptions (as tomb 102F); (4) some ornaments can be associated with childhood, such as the rattle-pendant from tomb A3 (XXI) or the small bullae² from tomb 102F. This last tomb, dating to 700–680 BC, gives us an example of the typical burial of a young lady. The small size of the sarcophagus (85 × 31 cm) suggested to the excavators that it belonged to a child (Dohan 1942: 46–48). Only a fragmentary bone, now disintegrated, remained of her skeleton, but the sarcophagus, according to the excavation notebook, contained all the personal jewelry in the positions in which pieces were initially deposited. Where the shoulders of the young lady would have been, there were two bracelets, two large fibulas decorated with amber, two bronze coil pendants, a small silver ring, beads made of amber and faience, one bronze button, fragments of bronze and gold, and finally thirteen very small fibulae, used to secure and decorate the dress. In the center of her chest were three small bronze bullae, which directly attest to the pre-adult character of the deceased (Zifferero 1995). The ceramic finds consisted of fifteen small vessels, representing the complete set of a funerary symposium. We should mention here, among the red and white coarse ware, a small stand covered by a small bowl.

Tomb A3 (XXI) of the mid-eighth century presents a set of ornaments similar to those of an adult, probably symbolizing the social role that she would have held had she reached adulthood. A band was probably placed on her head and affixed by a series of

fibulae. This burial recalls the princely tomb A30 (XXV), from the same necropolis, especially for the presence of the bronze pectoral and the belt. In fact, like the adult in tomb A30 (XXV), three plaques with swastikas were probably applied to the belt and rectangular plaques decorated the upper portion of the skirt. At Narce as elsewhere, the garments of girls were adorned with metal quadrangular plates (sometimes decorated with swastikas) (Tabolli 2013: 381–382).

From daughter to mother: tomb 18(XXXII) of Monte Lo Greco, Narce

In 1891, on the slopes of Monte Lo Greco, excavation of a special trench tomb—18 (XXXII)—revealed the burial of an older woman together with a young girl (Figure 60.1). Presumably, the two bodies represent a mother and her daughter, buried together at the end of the eighth century BC inside a sarcophagus with “monumental” dimensions, which was probably made specifically for their funeral.

The family connection between the two is even more evident due to the deposition of the grave goods in a single niche. They were both sumptuously dressed, with their clothes fastened with bronze lozenge-shaped belts. The two wore cloaks, or more likely veils, fastened on the left side by a chain of fibulae. The ornaments of the child reproduce, in a reduced scale, those of the mother.³

Amber

Both mother and daughter wore precious jewelry. However, the quantity and quality of the ornaments of the adult show that possession and ostentation were not only related to very high rank, but also to age and social role. Pendants made of amber have been found only in the tomb of the mother. These pendants reproduce female figurines with bare hands on the belly and a monkey (De Lucia Brolli 2012: 65–67), perhaps with the function of protecting fertility and therefore the perpetuation of their ancestry through marriage. The great appreciation for the use of amber appears to be a peculiarity of the princely tombs of Narce, representing the demand for “exotic” goods for the local emerging classes (Baglione and De Lucia Brolli 1997: 158–162). Besides the use in complex necklaces, amber was often used to embellish tools or parts of clothing (presumably bronze plates sewn on fabrics, multi-strand necklaces). At Narce, there is a particular preference for figurines in amber, which were concentrated in female graves (for the males, the presence of amber is limited to a

few beads, used mostly on the arch of fibulas).



Figure 60.1 Narce, necropolis of Monte Lo Greco, tomb 18 (XXXII). Reconstruction of the deposition of a mother with her daughter. (Drawing courtesy of Matteo Gennaro.)

In general, the presence of full-size fibulae and amber ornaments is likely to be related mostly to the burials of females older than 30 years. We are dealing therefore with women in their full maturity (De Lucia Brolli 2012: 65–67). The set of different necklaces in this tomb of Monte Lo Greco, as in other eminent female tombs, forms a complex system of ornaments, following a precise pattern formed by the alternation between composite elements (amber, gold, bronze,

amber, faience), which appears to be similar to a pectoral. This could be interpreted as the female counterpart of the male cuirass found at Narce in tomb 43, where a warrior was buried (Turfa 2005: 111–112).

Spinning and weaving

A spindle, a *forcella* (forked textile implement), and a weaving comb pendant, used in the processing of textiles, accompany only the “mother.” These bronze tools emphasize “women’s work,” showing that the woman had become the “lady of the house” and therefore was responsible for managing the activities of production, especially in the field of producing textiles. The tools for spinning and weaving therefore become a symbol of her social status. Spindle whorls, either functional or symbolic (as in vitreous paste), were distinctive elements within tomb-groups of the adults, always connected to wooden spindles, which are not preserved. Since spears and swords were placed on the left side of males in the tombs, bronze distaffs, the characteristic item in the burials of adults, were placed in the same position for women (Tabolli 2013: 379). Such precious distaffs, often inlaid in amber and gold, were probably not everyday tools, but symbolic items used in the funeral and possibly in public ceremonies during life. The role of the spinner prevails at the time of the funeral ceremony, especially in burials of particular rank which were always also characterized by ornaments and precious objects. In fact, the long branched distaffs were mainly used to spin linen, while the bell-headed ones were used for wool. Similar long branched distaffs characterize two of the richest adult female tombs from the necropolis of Montarano NNE at *Falerii*, tombs 17 (XXVI) (Rizzo 2008–2009) and 15 (XXVII) (Cozza and Pasqui 1981: 43–45). The high status of these burials, comparable to examples from Narce, is emphasized by the presence of symbolic pendants, such as the Lyre Player Group pendant of tomb 17 (XXVI) (Rizzo 2008–2009). The distaff of tomb 15 (XXVII) (G. Ligabue, in Russo 2012: 81) is characterized by precious inserts in amber. We should recall here the tradition of Faliscan linen production recorded by the ancient sources, including the comment of Silius Italicus (4.233), *induti sua lina Falisci*.

Dressing the cinerary urns for women

Linen was probably used for the custom of “dressing” cinerary urns at the end of the Early Iron Age. Recent studies (Tabolli 2013: 378) on the cremations at Narce revealed the presence of fibulae and pendants surrounding the necks of cinerary *ollae* (especially in the 2B period),

such as tombs T5 (III), T9 (II), T2 (VII), T4 (VI), T10 (IV), and A25 (V). The two richest tomb-groups of the necropolis of I Tufi (tombs T3 and T1 [VIII]) belong to women, and stand out for the richness of the dressing of their urns. Ornaments recovered *outside* of the urn denote the presence of a complex garment. In the case of tomb T1 (VIII), the belt encircling the *olla* suggested the anthropomorphic representation of the body of the deceased (Figure 60.2). The presence of razors has recently been shown to characterize both male and female burials throughout the eighth century (phases 1–2a). This phenomenon is also attested sporadically in the later periods.

In the Ager Faliscus, the axe appears as a specific female attribute, recalling the role of the woman or priestess within ritual sacrifices and especially for the division of the meat (after Baglione 1986). In some cases, ritual deposition of the axe in the same place as a man's razor might be, atop the covering bowl, seems to imply the equal importance of their different social roles (Tabolli 2013: 379). In an inhumation burial, tomb A14 (XXVI), a miniature axe was placed on the forehead of the 30- to 40-year-old woman (L. Salvadei in Tabolli 2013: 95).



Figure 60.2 Narce, necropolis of I Tufi, tomb 1 (VIII). Detail of the

“dressed” cinerary olla with bowl and a bronze belt.
(Photo by the authors.)

Faliscan spinners

The presence of the symbolic distaffs and spindles, together with the widespread use of textiles, especially linen, outlines a social environment in which the activity of spinning (and the *domina* performing it) was considered prestigious, with no apparent subordination to weaving (Pitzalis 2011: 40). In fact, the number of tombs where *rocchetti* (small, spool-like weights used in intricate tablet-weaving) have been found is extremely limited (for a list see Baglione and De Lucia Brolli 1997: 150), especially if compared to the nearby Etruscan territories of Veii, Caere, or Volsinii. Only the very few bronze comb-shaped pendants and the *rocchetti*, exceptionally made in ivory, which is rare in the tombs of adult women, address weaving.

Female high-rank burials: the second necropolis of Pizzo Piede at Narce

Toward the end of the eighth century BC, the accumulation of wealth in Faliscan female tombs reaches exceptional levels. The best example is the necropolis of Pizzo Piede in Narce. The monumental size of some niches in these tombs foreshadows the development of chamber tombs. The second area of Pizzo Piede appears to have the tombs of the highest-ranking notables, symbolized by the presence of two-wheeled vehicles (*currus* and *calesse*, chariots and carts), sometimes both types together, as in tomb 2 (XLVI) after Bellomi 2013: 96). Fans and clay shields appear together with precious pottery and metal objects, as well as varied personal ornaments, including jewelry in gold and silver, and figurines in amber. In particular, the rich tomb 3 (XLII), dating to the end of the eighth century, on the top of the hill had a large *loculus* and deep shaft (De Lucia Brolli 2012: 73–75). The deceased was placed in an almost rectangular recess on a sheet which was anchored to the floor and decorated along the edges by square bronze plaques with amber appliqués. The funeral probably involved the display of the body richly dressed.

The tradition of exposing dead women at Narce dates back at least to the mid-eighth century BC. In the necropolis of La Petrina, recent excavations revealed a female burial in a simple trench, which was unfortunately almost entirely plundered by tomb looters (De Lucia

Brolli and Tabolli 2012). The woman was buried in a tufa sarcophagus with a channel carved on its bottom, terminating in a hole in the wall. The channel has been interpreted as a drain for bodily fluids during the exposure of the deceased in the sarcophagus.⁴

Tomb 3 (XLII)

A sumptuous apparatus of personal ornaments characterized tomb 3 (XLII) of the second necropolis of Pizzo Piede. The grave goods were placed by the side of the head, along with the parade chariot and the two-wheeled carts. Two pendant figurines in amber stand out among the other jewels: a nude female figure, with her hands on her hips to indicate the pubis, recalling fertility, and a seated dog, guardian of the house, faithful companion in death as in life. This woman had no textile-working equipment. The presence of the horse-drawn two-wheeled carts recalls the ceremonies of wedding and funeral, different steps in the life of woman, and the move from life on earth to the afterlife.

The maturity of the Ager Faliscus: mid-seventh to third century BC

In the hinterland of Falerii

The presence in later periods of specific groups of women is evident in tomb 22 (XXV) from the second necropolis of Vallone in Corchiano (Cozza and Pasqui 1981: 272–276), a chamber tomb in use from the beginning of the sixth to the first half of the third century BC. The tomb had *loculi* and contained six inhumations and one cremation. Exclusively female items characterize the individual grave goods: mirrors, perfumes, spindle whorls, and loom weights. The rich jewelry recorded by excavators attests to the high social rank of this group. A similar situation occurs again in Corchiano, in the third necropolis of Sant’Antonio. Tomb 4 (XIV) held four female burials, the first of which was a child (Michetti 2013: 177–188). The exclusive use of certain tombs for women prompts the question: was the tomb destined to receive only members of the same family, or were the dead part of a religious association?

Personal adornment

As we have seen, Faliscan women wore dresses adorned with jewelry

made of different precious material. Their elaborate hairstyles followed the fashion of the time (Cosentino 2004: 13 and De Lucia Brolli 2004b: 50–52). Beginning in the sixth century, bronze mirrors appear in women's tombs. They did not ignore the use of cosmetics, as is evidenced by the discovery of a tomb in the necropolis of *Tre Camini*, at *Falerii Novi* (De Lucia Brolli 1995–96: 42–56). Substantial remains of a red powder, perhaps a blush or lipstick, were contained within a simple black glazed cup of the third century BC. Etruscan cosmetics (and perhaps Faliscan ones) involved the use of astringent beauty masks, made from barley flour, lentils, and eggs, mixed with resin and starch. The Roman poet, Ovid, married to a woman from *Falerii*, refers to the recipe in one of his poems (Rallo 1989:177).

The use of cylindrical *cistae* as beauty cases is not as widespread in the Ager Faliscus as in Latium and Etruria—although it is documented by the monumental Aurora Krater, which was made in Falerii around the mid-fourth century BC (after Cristofani 1987: 317). In the scene of the abduction of Thetis, who is taking her bath between her maids, a decorated cista appears, containing two alabastra (De Lucia Brolli 2014a: 228). A typical object in local *ceramica argentata* is sometimes associated with the alabastron: an appliqué representing a female figurine, which was likely part of a spatula for applying the ointment (Michetti 2013: 184).

Hairstyles

“Stands” in *ceramica argentata* representing the head of a woman often occur in the female burials of this period (Michetti 2003: 246–253). These exceptional artefacts might represent wedding gifts and imitate the more precious bronze tools. Once again, these stands should be interpreted as markers of the high-class social status of the women. They attest to a specific type of hairstyle which involved the use of the so-called *sakkòs* (snood) to cover the hair. In some cases, the *sakkòs* presents a complex system of decoration (Michetti 2003: 38), also seen on the Genucilia plates of the third and second centuries BC (mostly produced by Faliscan workshops). The use of the *sakkòs* seems now to be confirmed by the recent analysis of a find from a tomb-group of the mid-fourth century BC from Coste di Manone, in the hinterland of Falerii (Becker *et al.* 2009: 64–67; Turfa 2012: 8), now in Philadelphia. Remains of fabric and hair found on the skeleton of a woman (Gleba and Turfa 2007) have been interpreted as part of a *sakkòs* embroidered with blue or purple thread, according to the fashion of the time.

Women and religious cults

The most ancient Faliscan inscriptions date to the seventh century BC and confirm the prominent position of women in this society. From the necropolis of Colonnnette, the so-called “Olla of ceres” (Bakkum 2009: 393–406, 12.2, EF 1) mentions different deities, such as ceres and Euios, which appears to be an epithet of Dionysus. The same inscription consists of an exhortation: “Pravio, deliver the urn to the beloved partner (*sociae*).” Two small impasto jugs come from an unknown necropolis of *Falerii*, one of which is known as the “jug of the *sociae*” (Bakkum 2009: 406, EF 2). One inscription mentions Leber, who corresponds to Liber, the Latin name of Bacchus, and mentions women who are here called “*sociae*.” Both inscriptions clearly refer to a religious associative group involving women whose high social status is emphasized by the use of writing and literacy.

The sanctuaries are also a most valuable source of information on female Faliscans. It is significant that in *Falerii* the sanctuary with the oldest attestations of worship is dedicated to a warrior goddess, who was responsible for the sphere of motherhood and fertility: Juno Curitis. In honor of this deity, a small chapel was built in the sixth century at celle. The sacred procession that used to take place every year for the goddess followed a traditional scheme of Argive origin. Once again, the Latin poet, Ovid, recounts in his *Amores* (III, 13), the devotion of the female segment of society, even in Roman times. Ovid joined the procession together with his mother-in-law and his wife, who was barren and originally from *Falerii*. The procession of the goddess was preceded by youths of both sexes. The description of *canephorae*, (the young women who during religious ceremonies carried on their heads baskets containing the sacred ornaments) laden with gold and precious stones, with white robes and sandals in gold, highlights the important role that the maidens had in the sacred ceremony as well as their social status.

The sanctuary of Monte Li Santi-Le Rote at Narce

Since the fifth century BC, the Sanctuary of Monte Li Santi-Le Rote at Narce shows a cult strongly linked to female deities, with a particular connotation to the sphere of Demeter (De Lucia Brolli 2014b; De Lucia Brolli and Tabolli 2015), and the presence of a pair of deities representing probably Demeter and her daughter Persephone. After this earliest phase, in the second half of the third century BC, at the dawn of Romanization, an open-air cult was added. Minerva Maia and

Fortuna, as suggested by the inscriptions on two blocks discovered in the area, continue to fulfil the role of guarantors of the family, as in the previous cult. At the same time, the different spheres of influence of the deities attested by Demeter, Minerva Maia, and Fortuna, are largely comparable with regard to marriage and the protection of children. The abandonment of the existing cults in favor of the Fortuna appears as a simple change of ownership of the sanctuary. At the same time, the core of the cult is still focused on offering protection to the family and females in all stages of their growth.

Through time, the transformation of the cult is visible also in the types of votive offerings. In the earlier phases, between the fifth and fourth centuries, the female busts and heads wear tiaras, necklaces, and earrings (Figure 60.3). In this way, the faithful appeared to belong to a wealthy urban class, offering the deity their richly dressed images in order to celebrate their passage to adulthood and marriage.

During later times, the theme of the protection of children prevailed over the others. Special attention was devoted to the development of offspring: the moment of birth, with the offering of statues of swaddled infants; the progress in growth in the second semester of life with children seated; and finally, the phase of full possession of walking ability, with statues of standing children. This evolution was probably determined by the profound social changes involved in the phase of Romanization, as it is shown in the various sanctuaries of the territory (Falerii, Narce, and Corchiano) (Benedettini *et al.* 2005). The Roman conquest of the territory started gradually at the beginning of the third century and ended in 241 BC with the capture of Falerii.



Figure 60.3 Narce, sanctuary of Monte Li Santi – Le Rote. Votive female head. (Photo by the authors.)

However, whereas few cemeteries have been identified and dated to the Roman period, some female tombs preserve artefacts which attest to a rich social and economic status. We can refer here to one cremation tomb in the necropolis of *Tre Ponti*, along Via Amerina. This burial dates to the beginning of the first century AD, and belonged to a young girl, perhaps a teenager, whose personal grave goods included various special elements which have all been found burnt. The presence of knucklebones, which are characteristic of infant burials, could suggest the still pre-adolescent age or the maintenance of elements linked to her childhood. These are certainly personal items as it is shown by the fact that they were burnt together with the young girl (Caretta 2006: 96–98).

Notes

- 1 Early tombs contain symbolic equipment used for a banquet/symposium with wine drinking such as kraters, oinochoai and cups; later painted tombs depict reclining banquets in an amalgam of life and afterlife.
- 2 *Bullae*, well known from Roman family life, are metal lockets designed to hold amuletic substances. They were worn (in gold) by freeborn Roman boys but are found on women, children, and animals as well in Etruscan, Faliscan, and other Italic cultures.

- 3 This burial is not the only example of a double burial within the same trench or loculus tomb at Narce. In the same necropolis, tomb 17 (XXX) hosted two burials (Barnabei *et al.* 1894: 438–440; Pitzalis 2011: 47); at La Petrina, a couple is buried in tomb A 29 (Tabolli 2013), while the male cremation in A 4 (XXXIV) symbolically covers a female deposition in a sarcophagus (De Lucia Brolli 1997; Tabolli 2013); At Pizzo Piede, tomb 17 (XLIV) contained the double burial of women (Barnabei *et al.* 1894: 496–497; Pitzalis 2011: 28–29); tomb 23F, hosted a female inhumation together with a male cremation (Dohan 1942), while the opposite happens for tomb XV at the Chicago Field Museum (Davison 1972). Tomb 73 (LII) is the only small chamber tomb which preserves a contemporary double burial (De Lucia Brolli 1991: 113–114; Pitzalis 2011: 30–31).
- 4 Such knowledge of the post-mortem deterioration processes seems to be a characteristic of the Ager Faliscus, and in particular at Narce, attested in a child's sixth-century BC "funeral bed" at Pizzo Piede (Cavone di Monte Li Santi). Unfortunately, no information survived on the sex of the child lying on this bed (De Lucia Brolli and Tabolli 2012).

References

- Baglione, M. P. (1986) Il Tevere e i Falisci. In *Il Tevere e le Altre Vie d'Acqua del Lazio Antico*, Atti del VII Incontro di Studio del Comitato per l'Archeologia Laziale (*Quaderni di Archeologia Etrusco Italica* 12). Rome: Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, pp. 124–142.
- Baglione, M. P. and De Lucia Brolli, M. A. (1990) Nuovi dati sulla necropoli de I Tufi di Narce. In *La Civiltà dei Fallisci*, Atti del XV Convegno di Studi Etruschi e Italici (Civita Castellana, 28–31 maggio 1987). Florence, Italy: Leo S. Olschki, pp. 61–102.
- Baglione, M. P. and De Lucia Brolli, M. A. (1997) Veio e i Falisci. In G. Bartoloni (ed.) *Le Necropoli Arcaiche di Veio*. Rome: La Sapienza, pp. 145–171.
- Baglione, M. P. and De Lucia Brolli, M. A. (2009) Le deposizioni infantili nell'Agro falisco tra vecchi e nuovi scavi, In G. Bartoloni and M. G. Bendettini (eds) *Sepolti tra i vivi Sepolti tra i vivi/Buried among the living. Evidenza ed interpretazione di contesti funerari in abitato*, Atti del convegno internazionale. *Scienze dell'Antichità* 14(2): 869–893. Rome: Quasar.
- Bakkum, G. C. L. M. (2009) *The Latin Dialect of the Ager Faliscus*. 150 Years of Scholarship. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Barnabei, F., Cozza, A., Pasqui, A. and Gamurrini, G. (1894) *Degli Scavi di Antichità nel Territorio Falisco (Monumenti Antichi dei Lincei IV)*. Rome: Accademia dei Lincei.
- Becker, M. J., Turfa, J. M. and Algee-Hewitt, B. (2009) *Human Remains from Etruscan and Italic Tomb Groups in the University of Pennsylvania Museum* (Biblioteca di Studi Etruschi 48). Pisa, Italy and Rome: Fabrizio Serra.

- Bellomi, M. (2013) Osservazioni preliminari sui carri del territorio falisco. In G. Cifani (ed.) *Identità e Cultura dei Falisci* (Atti del seminario della British School at Rome, Roma, 19 maggio 2011). Rome: Quasar, pp. 85–105.
- Benedettini, M. G., Carlucci, C. and De Lucia Brolli, M. A. (2005) I depositi votivi dell'Agro falisco. Vecchie e nuove testimonianze a confronto. In A. Comella and S. Mele (eds) *Depositi Votivi e Culti dell'Italia Antica dall'Età Arcaica a Quella Tardo Repubblicana*. Atti del Convegno di Studi, Perugia, 1–4 giugno 2000. Bari, Italy: Edipuglia, pp. 219–228.
- Caretta, L. (2006) Via Amerina e necropoli meridionale di Falerii Novi: i risultati delle ricerche in corso. In M. Pandolfini (ed.) *Archeologia in Etruria Meridionale, Atti delle Giornate di Studio in Ricordo di Mario Moretti* (Civita Castellana, 14–15 novembre 2003). Rome: l'Erma di Bretschneider, pp. 65–89.
- Cosentino, R. (2004) La donna si fa bella. Qualche considerazione sulla donna etrusca. In A. M. Moretti Sgubini (ed.) *Moda, Costume, Bellezza nell'Italia Antica*. Rome: Ingegneria per la Cultura Gruppo Zetema, pp. 5–15.
- Cozza, A. and Pasqui, A. (1981) *Carta Archeologica d'Italia (1881–1897). Materiali per l'Agro Falisco*. Forma Italiae s. II, doc. 2. Florence, Italy: Leo S. Olschki.
- Cristofani, M. (1987) La ceramica a figure rosse. In M. Martelli (ed.) *La ceramica degli Etruschi. La Pittura Vascolare*. Novara, Italy: Istituto Geografico De Agostini, pp. 313–331.
- Davison, J. M. (1972) *Seven Italic Tomb-Group from Narce*. Florence, Italy: Leo Olzchki.
- De Lucia Brolli, M. A. (1991) *Civita Castellana. Il Museo Archeologico dell'Agro Falisco*. Rome: Quasar.
- De Lucia Brolli, M. A. (1995–96) Falerii Novi: Novità dall'area urbana e dalle necropoli. In *Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia. Rendiconti*. Vatican City: Tipografia poliglotta vaticana, LXVIII: 21–68.
- De Lucia Brolli, M. A. (1997) Narce, scavi e ricerche in museo: La tomba 4 (XXXIV) de La Petrina A. In *Etrusca et Italica, Scritti in ricordo di Massimo Pallottino*. Pisa, Italy and Rome: Istituti editoriali e poligrafici internazionali, pp. 205–233.
- De Lucia Brolli, M. A. (2004a) Una tomba a cremazione entro custodia litica dall'Agro falisco. In A. M. Moretti Sgubini (ed.) *Scavo nello Scavo. Gli Etruschi non Visti*, catalogo della mostra (Viterbo, 5 marzo-30 giugno 2004). Rome: Ministero per i Beni e le attività culturali, Soprintendenza per i beni archeologici per l'Etruria meridionale, pp. 109–117.

- De Lucia Brolli, M. A. (2004b) Spigolando nell'agro falisco. Testimonianze sul costume femminile dall'Età del Ferro a Lucrezia Borgia. In A. M. Moretti Sgubini (ed.) *Moda, Costume, Bellezza nell'Italia Antica*. Rome: Ingegneria per la Cultura Gruppo Zetema, pp. 47–52.
- De Lucia Brolli, M. A. (2012) Le ambre tra i Falisci. In A. Russo (ed.) *Ambra. Dalle Rive del Baltico all'Etruria*. Rome: Gangemi, pp. 42–45.
- De Lucia Brolli, M. A. (2014a) in G. Sassatelli e A. Russo Tagliente (ed.) *Il viaggio oltre la vita. Gli Etruschi e l'Aldilà tra capolavori e realtà virtuale*. Bologna, Italy: Bononia University Press.
- De Lucia Brolli, M. A. (ed.) (2014b) *Il Santuario di Monte Li Santi – Le Rote. Scavi 1985–1996*. Pisa, Italy and Rome: Fabrizio Serra editore.
- De Lucia Brolli, M. A. and Tabolli, J. (2012) Dimore litiche per i defunti di Narce: Custodie, sarcofagi e letti funebri tra vecchi e nuovi scavi. In C. Regoli (ed.) *Mode e Modelli. Fortuna e Incuscesso nella Circolazione di Cose e Idee*. Officina Etruscologia 7. Rome: Officina Edizioni, pp. 9–76.
- De Lucia Brolli, M. A. and Tabolli, J. (2013) The Etruscans and the Faliscans. In J. M. Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London: Routledge, pp. 259–280.
- De Lucia Brolli, M. A. and Tabolli, J. (2015) *I Tempi del Rito. Il Santuario di Monte Li Santi-Le Rote a Narce*. Rome: Officina Edizioni.
- Di Gennaro, F. (1982) Organizzazione del territorio nell'Etruria meridionale protostorica. *Dialoghi d'Archeologia* 2: 102–137. Milan, Italy: Il Saggiatore.
- Dohan, E. H. (1942) *Italic Tomb-Groups in the University Museum*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Gamurrini, G. F., Cozza, A., Pasqui, A. and Mengarelli, R. (1972) *Carta Archeologica d'Italia (1881–1897), Materiali per l'Etruria e la Sabina* (Formae Italiae s. II, doc.1). Florence, Italy: L. S. Olschki.
- Gleba, M. and Turfa, J. M. (2007) Digging for archaeological textiles in museums: New finds in the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. In A. Rast-Eicher and R. Windler (eds) *NESAT IX Archäologische Textilfunde – Archaeological Textiles*. Ennenda, Switzerland: ArcheoTex, pp. 35–40.
- Michetti, M. L. (2003) *Le ceramiche Argentate e a Rilievo in Etruria nella Prima Età Ellenistica*. Rome: l'Erma di Bretschneider.
- Michetti, M. L. (2013) Appunti sull'agro falisco tra V e III se.a.C. alla luce di un corredo di Corchiano. In G. Cifani (ed.) *Identità e Cultura dei Falisci* (Atti del seminario della British School at Rome, Roma, 19 maggio 2011). Rome, Quasar, pp. 173–216.
- Modica, S. (2007) *Rituali e Lazio Antico. Deposizioni infantili e abitati*.

- Milan, Italy: CUEM.
- Molas I Fontes, M. D. (1980) Un conjunto orientalizante inicial falisco. La tumba XXXII de las Necropolis de Narce. *Cuadernos de Trabajos de la Escuela Española de Historia y Arqueología en Roma* 14: 1–29.
- Pitzalis, F. (2011) *La Volontà Meno Apparente. Donne e Società nell'Italia centrale Tirrenica durante l'Orientalizzante Antico*. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
- Rallo A. (1989) La cosmesi. In A. Rallo (ed.) *Le Donne in Etruria*. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, pp. 173–179.
- Rizzo, M. A. (2008–2009) I sigilli del Gruppo del Suonatore di Lira in Etruria e nell'Agro falisco. *AION ArchStAnt*, n.s. 15/16: 105–138.
- Russo Tagliente, A. (ed.) (2012) *Ambra. Dalle rive del Baltico all'Etruria*. Rome: Gangemi.
- Russo Tagliente, A., De Lucia Brolli, M. A. and Laurito, R. (forthcoming) *Tessuti, Vesti e Ornamenti per una Vita Oltre la Morte*. Proceedings of the XII Convegno di Preistoria e Protostoria in Etruria. Manciano, Italy.
- Tabolli, J. (2013) *Narce tra la Prima Età del Ferro e l'Orientalizzante Antico. L'abitato e le Necropoli I Tufi e La Petrina*. Pisa, Italy and Rome: Fabrizio Serra editore.
- Tabolli, J. and Turfa, J. M. (2014) Discovered anew: A Faliscan Tomb-Group from Falerii-celle in Philadelphia. *Etruscan Studies* 17(1): 28–62. Boston, MA and Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Turfa, J. M. (2005) *Catalogue of the Etruscan Gallery of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.
- Turfa, J. M. (2012) Buried in the height of fashion. *Expedition* 54(2) (Summer): 7–9.
- Zifferero, A. (1995) Rituale funerario e formazione delle aristocrazie nell'Etruria protostorica: Osservazioni sui corredi femminili e infantili di Tarquinia. In N. Negroni Catacchio (ed.) *Preistoria e Protostoria in Etruria. Atti del Secondo Incontro di Studi (Farnese, 1993). Tipologia delle Necropoli e Rituali di Deposizione, Ricerche e Scavi*. Milan, Italy: centro studi di preistoria e archeologia, pp. 59–60.

DAUNIAN WOMEN

Costume and actions commemorated in stone

Camilla Norman

‘Daunian’ is the name given in ancient Greek and Latin sources to the Iron Age inhabitants of northern Apulia, Italy. Such mentions, however, come centuries after the fact and are few and far between. The Daunians themselves did not take up writing and so what little can be gleaned of their social, political and religious life is wholly reliant upon the material record. We do not know if the Daunians shared a single ethnic identity – indications are that they were a society that developed over the course of the Late Bronze Age as migrants from Illyria merged with the local Italic population – yet it is clear that they held a common and strongly defined sense of cultural identity.

Sources typically used to build up an understanding of the lives of people who lived long ago cannot always be found in Daunia. For the Archaic period – a time that in Italy saw the colonization of Magna Graecia and the continued growth in complexity of Etruscan society – we might expect to find epigraphic evidence, substantial domestic, public and funerary architecture, figured ceramics, frescoes, sculptures and assemblages for the grave which speak of social nuance. For the most part, we do not. The Daunians seem to have led relatively modest lives and to have largely resisted external influences; unlike many of their neighbours they did not adopt elements of the Hellenic way of life until well into the fifth century BC. And although they clearly had dealings with the Etruscans, as well as other Italic populations, the Daunians retained their particular way of living for as long as possible, right up until the late fourth century BC and their eventual absorption into the Roman state. The material remains of the region suggest an autonomous people whose outlook took in the peninsula but focused primarily along the coast of the Adriatic and

across the sea to Illyria, the probable land of their ancestors.

If the Daunians did not leave behind many of the accoutrements more characteristic of Iron Age Italic cultures, they left instead an enormous corpus of statue-stelae. These stelae illustrate the lives of a pre-literate community in unexpected and splendid detail. The women especially are given a rare and unanticipated voice.

Daunian society and economy

Architectural and burial remains do not suggest a particularly hierarchical society, but rather one that was run on a chiefdom system. There is little differentiation in the domestic architecture of the Daunians (comprised of wattle and daub huts), almost no discernable civic buildings, and only a limited number of tombs containing more than the standard grave goods. Nonetheless, a small privileged class did exist, which first becomes apparent towards the end of the seventh century BC. It can best be identified by the emergence of so-called ‘princely’ tombs (e.g. Mazzei 2010: 108–113). The precise role this Daunian élite took, whether political, social and/or religious, is, as for much of the make-up of Daunian belief systems and cultural practices, unknown.

Daunian society can be characterized as pre-urban, with settlements generally formed by a loose conglomeration of huts on points of natural defence: on rocky outcrops or hillocks (Ascoli Satriano), promontories (Salapia) and in river bends (Arpi). Although far from densely inhabited, some grew to be very large. Ordona, for example, is estimated at 600 hectares. Town walls or aggers, one of the few expressions of public architecture and signifiers of organized labour, came to enclose many of the settlements. In the case of Arpi, the wall measured 13 km, taking in some 4,000 hectares that included not only the town but a substantial swathe of farming land (Tinè Bertocchi 1985: 26–27, 235–237). The permanent population of any one town was relatively small; it no doubt functioned also as a meeting point and place of refuge for the people living scattered over the surrounding area who farmed the land. The people would presumably have gathered in the towns to conduct commerce, perhaps bartering goods and surplus foodstuffs at open-air markets, and also to celebrate and enact festivals, ceremonies and rituals.

As for many Iron Age communities, the Daunian economy was centred upon farming. The area they inhabited, the northern most reaches of modern Apulia, is dominated by the great fertile plain of

the Tavoliere, today still the richest wheat-producing region of Italy. With this gift of nature, and the blessing of good weather, the Daunians became experts in the cultivation of crops and in animal husbandry. As Strabo comments:

All this coast produces everything in great abundance, it is exceedingly well adapted for horses and sheep, and the wool is finer than that of Tarentum, but less glossy. The district is mild on account of the cup-like situation of the plains.

(Strabo, Geography 96)

The Daunians were renowned as great horsemen, and although their society remained more egalitarian than other contemporary Italian cultures, a small sector did subscribe to the aristocratic ideal of the warrior-élite that permeated west in the Archaic Age. This is most evident in the aforementioned ‘princely’ burials, some of which contained horse gear, and by the bead-rimmed bronze bowls found in certain tombs that indicate the Daunians enjoyed funerary banquets similar to those of the Etruscans on the Tyrrhenian side of the peninsula (D’Ercole 2002: 240–260). A love of horses in southern Italy was a constant in ancient times, but nowhere were horses more revered than in Daunia (Tagliente 1986; Carter 1998). What little figurative art the Daunians produced often feature them, as with the *domatore di cavalli* motif found on a late fifth-century akroterion from Lavello (Tagliente 2002 for extended discussion). The figure is commonly thought to allude to the great hero Diomedes, whom myth recounts eventually settled in northern Apulia after the fall of Troy. It is said that he brought with him the horses he had stolen from Aeneas, descendants of Zeus’s immortal steeds. The horses of Daunia were thus considered by the locals to be of divine lineage, a source of pride and prestige. It is unlikely the legends of Diomedes and his exploits were adopted in Daunia much before the late sixth century BC, but they clearly found a willing audience (Castiglioni 2008).

Fishing would also have contributed to Daunian subsistence, the seas and waterways of the region playing a vastly more significant role in ancient times than today. The now silted over Salpi lagoon was then an important harbour, and various rivers of the region were navigable (Caldara *et al.* 2002). Maritime trade was key to Daunian commerce, both for the export of their own produce and wares – grain, ceramics, wool/textiles, and perhaps salt, livestock and horses – but also for the importation and dissemination of goods from the Balkans, notably amber, iron, copper and tin.

Indeed, it was to the north and across the sea that the Daunians

looked. Relations with the tribes of Illyria and other cultural groups on the East coast of the Adriatic were strong, and together they controlled the 'island bridge' that spanned the sea from the Dalmatia to the Gargano peninsula (Kirigin *et al.* 2010). A trading culture existed between the two shores, likely mediated by the Liburnians, in which the Piceni (directly north of the Daunians in Italy) were also involved (Lo Schiavo 1984: 219–220; D'Ercole 2002, 2008). Although consumables and perishable goods (e.g. wheat, textiles) would have been the driving factors behind the exchange, it is the diffusion of certain metal items (e.g. specific fibula and pendant types) and especially Daunian ceramics that best show these relationships today. Douwe Yntema argues that in Archaic times the Daunians sent only their higher quality ceramics north, while pots of lesser quality were often traded to the south, a detail which nicely illustrates how the Daunians' wider cultural and economic focus was centred on the upper Adriatic during this period (Yntema 1979: 32–38). This is not to say they did not interact with populations elsewhere: they also developed a commercial tie with the Campanian Etruscans, with whom they had overland contact via the Ofanto and Sele River valleys. This is demonstrated, for example, by the importation of bucchero pottery into Daunia, the adoption of the nimbus-head antefix, and certain shared fibula types (Colonna 1984; D'Agostino 1984, 1991).

Maria cecilia D'Ercole argues that by the sixth century, the Daunians were not only capable of producing a surplus with which to trade but had constructed a wide network of allies (reaching down the line to the Aegean and Macedonia) with whom to do so. This level of systematic commercial activity, she posits, could only be achieved through the administration and cooperation of an internally coherent and organized society (D'Ercole 2008). It is entirely possible that the wealth and status of Daunians were not measured in material display but, as Susan Langdon has recently argued, for the eighth-century Cyclades, archaeologically fugitive resources and constructs such as sheep, horses and land ownership (Langdon 2012: 114–15).

One striking aspect of Daunian society is that it remained largely immune to the influence of the Greek colonies in Magna Grecia. Being further north, the Daunians had only limited and casual direct contact with the Greek colonists, and (excepting the Gorgon head antefix and type B Ionic cup) essentially did not adopt Hellenic goods and ways until the fourth century BC, much later than all other Italic societies in southern Italy. In fact the Daunians retained a high degree of cultural autonomy until being subsumed into Roman society in the late fourth/early third century, and only after being weakened by a series of

incursions into their territory by the Osco-Samnites.

It was within this backdrop that Daunian women and men carried out their lives. They lived in humble surroundings, learnt to work the land and to fish, produced fine woollen textiles and geometric pottery; they went to sea, swapping goods and ideas with their Illyrian cousins; they reared horses and even enjoyed the occasional banquet. They presumably lived in kinship groups, worshipped deities, formed economic and political alliances, married and had families of their own. And at some point in their lives – perhaps at death – a number of these Daunian women and men, including a handful of their children, were commemorated with statue-stelae, the likes of which are unparalleled elsewhere in time and place.

Daunian stelae

The stelae are anthropomorphic, each comprised of a single slab of limestone and incised on all sides to show a human figure in richly decorated robes, with arms held symmetrically across the chest. They stand anywhere between 30 and 160 cm in height. The men carry armour and weaponry (a heart protector, sword and shield), while the women are adorned with jewellery (necklaces, fibulae and various pendants), have raised shoulders, wear aprons and have decorated arms ([Figure 61.1](#)). The heads of the stelae are separate, standing atop of the slab. They are either carved with facial features or left plain, and are roughly conical or spherical in shape. All incised elements were further picked out with colour, namely black, red and white, of which today only faint traces remain.

Drawn within the geometric borders of their robes, figured imagery is sometimes present. The subject-matter depicted is varied and far-reaching, encompassing scenes of both quotidian and spiritual life: images of hunting, fishing, weaving, of grinding grain and feasting, of processions and funerary games, of chariots and warfare, arguably even of local legends and myths. In short, the Daunians depicted their customs, rites and cosmological views upon these stelae.

The stelae have been found exclusively in northern Daunia, on the Tavoliere north of the Ofanto River, and up into the Melfese. Not one has been found in its primary context. They have been dated on stylistic grounds and via comparison of the items they carry with actual counterparts in the material record to somewhere between the mid-seventh and early fifth centuries BC (Nava 1988: 180–198; Norman 2013: 223–396). A comparative study of other statue-stelae

show that functionally they were almost certainly linked to death, not necessarily used to mark individual graves but to evoke the memory of ancestors in general (Norman forthcoming – a). Today, there are known some 1,380 Daunian stelae and stela fragments, constituting the largest homogeneous group of proto-historic sculpture in the West.



Figure 61.1 Female Daunian stela (front and back). Manfredonia inv. 717–720. (After Nava 1980: no. 593, pls 178–179.)

The traditional costume of Daunian women

Unusually for statue-stela corpora, which typically comprise predominantly or exclusively male figures, there are five times as many female Daunian stelae than male. This has led scholars to eschew sex-based labels for the two types and instead use descriptive terms: ‘stelae with ornaments’ and ‘stele with weapons’, leaving room for the possibility of a sector of males who were not warriors and whose dress was identical to that of females. (For an extended discussion on sex and gender on the Daunian stelae, see Norman

2009.) The costume depicted upon the stelae is presumably not everyday wear, but ceremonial garb (Figure 61.2), and indeed the tunic worn by the stelae with ornaments is almost identical to that worn by the stelae with weapons. The patterning, colouring and overall construction is the same, with the exception of the remarkable raised shoulders of the stelae with ornaments; small differences are present in details such as yoke trim and the assembly of the hem. Two elements present on the stelae with ornaments do, however, point directly to them all representing biological females: their decorated forearms and their aprons. Both these societal attributes can, through cultural comparanda, be shown to be exclusive to women and to in all likelihood signify the ability to bear children.



Figure 61.2 Reconstruction of the costume worn by Daunian women as depicted on the stelae, by archaeological artist, Kelvin Wilson.

*Tribal Tattoos*¹

The forearms of the stelae with ornaments are decorated with combinations of straight lines, rectangles, simple running meanders and lozenges. For a long time, these markings were thought to represent embroidered or woven gloves. It was an unconsidered idea, taken for granted. On closer reflection, it is clearly far from appropriate. Gloves were rare in European antiquity, and were not used for display. Isaac D'Israeli, writing on the history of gloves in his *Curiosities of Literature*, first published in the early 1790s, dismisses any potential reference to the glove in the Bible as misinterpretation or conjecture, and the few references to them by the ancient authors as only serving to highlight that although gloves were known to people in antiquity, they were certainly not common items. Furthermore, the references indicate that gloves were only ever used for practical purposes: for warmth or protection. Laertes wears them while gardening to guard against scratches (Hom. *Od.* XXIV.230), and there is a suggestion that, at least by Roman times, they may also have been used while picking olives (Varro *Rust.* 1.55). Pliny the Elder's scribe is known to have worn them to ward off the cold so that he might continue writing (Pliny [Y] *Ep.* III.3.V).

Gloves become more frequent in medieval times, when they are used for ceremonial purposes as well as practical reasons. Five-fingered fashion gloves did not however gain purchase until Victorian times, and in climes far less forgiving than southern Italy. Daunian women are unlikely to have worn gloves of any sort, even when dressed in ceremonial regalia, yet it is far from impossible that they adorned their arms with tattoos. Edward Herring suggests a form of body art, be it permanent or temporary, for the symbols that can be found on the elbows of the stelae with ornaments (Herring 2003). There is no reason not to extend this idea to the decoration running down their forearms.

The antiquity of tattoo is attested not only by the designs evident on the skin of various mummies, such as decorate the extraordinary "Chieftain" and "Ice Maiden" of Pazyryk, Russia (c. fifth century BC), but by a number of ancient artefacts and literary sources. 'Goddess figurines', incised with linear and dotted patterns, suggest the practice can be dated back to at least the Neolithic period in central Europe and the Near East. Ancient Egyptian potency figurines also carried tattoos. Red figured pottery shows images of Thracian women decorated by tattoo, a practice which the Greeks considered barbarian. That it was a custom of the peoples of Thrace and Illyria is

corroborated by, among others, Herodotus and Strabo. Pliny speaks of it among the neighbouring Dacians and Sarmatians (*Natural History* 22.2), Virgil and Valerius Flaccus among the Agathyrsi (or Thyrsagetae) (*Aeneid* IV. 136; *Argonautika*, VI. 135). Julius Caesar makes note of the practice further afield, describing the elaborate tattoos of the Picts (*Gallic War*. V.14).

In his survey of modern indigenous societies, *The Tattooing Arts of Tribal Women*, Lars Krutak (2007) traces the custom of tattoo back through the millennia and illustrates the central role women have always played in it. The frequency with which indigenous women in tribal societies are tattooed on the forearms is striking. It is by far the most commonly tattooed part of their bodies, and the women, if carrying only one set of tattoos, will almost invariably carry them here. Krutak identifies it among the Berbers of Morocco and Algeria, the Paiwan culture in Taiwan, the Kayans and Iban of Borneo, the Ainu of Japan, the Kalinga in the Philippines, the King and St Lawrence Islanders in the Arctic, the Ammassalik of Greenland, as well as in Polynesia and the Pacific islands, the Balkans and Iraq. Again archaeological evidence suggests the practice has a long and wide history (Krutak 2007).

Numerous factors pertinent to the Daunian stelae stand out: that tattoos would have been well-known in seventh to fifth centuries BC Europe; that in tribal societies tattoos are predominantly worn by women; that these women more often than not wore them on their forearms; and that Illyrian and Thracian women were known to be tattooed.

Daunians are generally considered to be Iapygian, a peoples of probable Illyrian descent. Of the Iapygians, Strabo writes that they were:

[a] mixed celtic and Illyrian tribe inhabiting Mount Albius, which is the termination of the Alps, [who] reach in one direction to the Pannonii and the Danube, and in another to the Adriatic . . . their armour is after the celtic fashion. Their bodies are punctured like those of the other Illyrian and Thracian people.

(Strabo 7.5.4)

Herodotus, in speaking of the Thracians, remarks “to be tattooed is a sign of noble birth, while to bear no such marks is for the baser sort” (V.6.2) (for further references see Jones 1987: 145). This is quite the opposite for the Greeks, and later the Romans, who thought it a repulsive habit and used it only to mark slaves or as a form of

punishment and humiliation. A number of both Attic and South Italian red figure vases show that the Greeks did indeed recognize tattooing as a Thracian custom as they used the decorated body as a means of conveying this ethnicity (see for e.g. Zimmermann 1980; Sparkes 1997: 141–142).

Edith Durham, in her extraordinary account of life in the Balkans prior to WWI, puts forward a convincing argument for cultural continuity in tattooing practices between ancient Illyrian and Thracian populations and the remote tribal communities of early twentieth-century Bosnia and Albania. Until very recently, this region of the Balkans had been cut off geographically, politically and socially, so that the customs and belief systems she recorded were those of peoples long isolated and insulated from outside influences. It is precisely they who might claim a common ancestry with the ancient Daunians. Again we see that it is the women who were mainly tattooed, and that they bore the tattoos upon their forearms and hands (Durham 1928: 101–143).

Taking into consideration the ethnographical and archaeological data, it becomes apparent that all decoration on the arms of the Daunian stelae is very probably meant to represent tattoos. If we accept this, we must ask why. The ethnographer Alfred Gell theorizes that “tattooing played a distinctive part in social reproduction”. He notes, in loose terms, that the less stratified a society, the more common and elaborate the tattoos. By “modifying the body, tattooing made possible the realization of particular types of ‘subjection’ which in turn allowed for the elaboration and perpetuation of social and political relationships” that would otherwise be propagated through the institutions of a hierarchical society (Gell 1993: 2–7). Altering the body itself is a powerful tool as it also alters a person’s opinion of themselves: it adjusts the ego, and thus prepares the wearer for the tasks required of them as dictated by their socio-cultural milieu. In a society such as Daunia, which does not appear to have been heavily stratified, it is doubtful female tattooing was simply decorative, but rather a way of conveying and controlling specific societal messages and constructs.

*String aprons*²

The stelae with ornaments also wear an apron of a very specific nature, typically comprised of a rectangular or trapezoidal panel with three to six long triangular prongs extending from its lower edge to the hem of the tunic. The panel is quite often decorated with

geometric patterning, incised into the stone. Paint traces indicate the apron was black, the decorations red and white.

Metal aprons built up from beads or coils can be found in contemporary burials of indigenous women throughout southern Italy (e.g. Alianello T.324; Bianco 1996: 65). They offer a valid comparison, yet a better parallel can again be found in the ethnological record of the central Balkans that can be traced right back into antiquity. The elaborately patterned apron panels of later stelae make it clear that the aprons were made from textiles (Figure 61.3). The patterns are woven in or embroidered. The Daunian apron is of a type not found in the ancient material record, because it would have perished long ago.

The apron is one of the oldest known pieces of clothing worn by women and is a dominant feature of traditional dress around the world, but is especially prevalent in traditional costumes of Eastern Europe. Andromaqi Gjergji comments that:

[i]t is not by chance that aprons are amongst some of the most highly decorated items of popular costume . . . Aprons reflected the social and marital status of the wearer, her age and religion, the occasion on which they were worn and regional and local variations.

(Gjergji 1986: 44)



Figure 61.3 Fragment of a female Daunian stela (mid-front) with patterned apron. Manfredonia inv. 1028. (After Nava 1980: no. 796, pl. 266.)

The string skirts (‘panjora’, ‘panjóva’ or ‘përparje’) of Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovenia, parts of Croatia and Kosovo, and Southern Romania, and those of the Serbian Vlachs (Barber 1999: fig. 2.4) show a remarkable resemblance to the aprons on the Daunian stelae. Again it is the pre-Slavic communities, those who have arguably inhabited the region since antiquity, who provide the cultural parallels for the Daunians. In the Albanian highlands, the similarities are particularly striking: a short lozenge-decorated apron with a copious fringe is worn at the front only (Gjergji 1986: 59–61; Barber 1999: 23). Interestingly, these panjóva are principally black, with the most common additional colours being red and white, exactly as for the stelae. That the panjóva has long been typical of the central Balkans is shown by Neolithic figurines from the Vinča culture (fifth millennium BC) and a Late Bronze Age figurine from Kličevac (Barber 1999: fig. 2.3c.).

A very small number of Daunian stelae with ornaments have no aprons. These very same stelae also have no decoration upon their arms (e.g. Manfredonia 1262, 1321; Nava 1988: 63–65, figs. 75–77).

That the two conditions are inexorably linked overwhelmingly suggests that the two traits had a related meaning for the Daunians. Although it cannot be proven archaeologically, the anthropological evidence points in this direction also. The *panjóva* is known to be intimately tied to a female's passage through puberty, her marital status, to childbirth, and to such ceremonies as surrounded those events. Likewise, both Krutak, working among indigenous populations the world over, and Durham, in High Albania, were able to document what was so often at the root of the practice of the tribal tattooing of females: it is done at the onset of menstruation and indicates that a girl has become a woman—that she is of age and is fertile. Both societal attributes, in essence, visibly announce a woman's ability to create humans. It may also have been thus in antiquity: this select group of stelae, without tattoos or aprons but otherwise carrying the full set of female paraphernalia, may represent pre-pubescent girls who were yet to go through the rituals of womanhood.

Both the tattoos and aprons of Daunian women can be traced back to Thracio-Illyrian traditions, demonstrating the cultural affinity between the two groups. The longevity of such customs serves to highlight the inherent conservatism of certain cultural and gender constructs. That we can trace these two societal traits over the millennia is a rare and exciting happenstance.

Activities of Daunian women

The subsidiary figurative imagery present on some of the stelae allows for a glimpse into the actual activities Daunian women and men engaged in. Because Daunians did not otherwise typically depict figures upon their pottery or in wall paintings, nor produce figurines or architectural sculptures, these images provide the only Daunian self-representation we have of this period.

It must always be remembered that the imagery on the stelae, as well as the depiction of the costume, were a conscious projection. Without knowing the precise function of the stelae, or if they were intended only for a particular strata or sector of Daunian society, we must tread lightly. The temptation is to assume that the stelae were funerary in nature and that they were afforded to the upper classes. certainly their erection was most probably an occasion of ritual, and indeed ritual activity is often recorded upon them.

Broadly speaking, imagery that we might expect relates to the male sphere (hunting, horsemanship, war) falls on stelae with weapons, and

imagery pertaining to the female sphere (weaving) on stelae with ornaments (Norman 2009). Closely associated to images of weaving, and overwhelmingly only to be found on female stelae, is the depiction of a particular procession. The rite is shown often, but only twice in full (Manfredonia 1008, 1438; Nava 1980: pls. 256–257, 370–371). It is of two files of women, one headed by a lone male, coming together over an object that is either a handloom or lyre. I have argued in the past that it shows the exchange of gifts between two families prior to a wedding (Norman 2011a). The frequency of this scene on the female stela, and of weaving, indicates how important this ritual must have been in the lives of Daunian women, as well as the prominence the role of textile production must have played to them. To have both recorded for posterity in such a fashion can only mean these two activities were deeply rooted in Daunian female identity, and were most probably a source of great pride to the entire community. There is no shock in this: marriage and textile production are conspicuous themes in the lives of women across many cultures and times. One only has to look to grave goods to know the importance of spinning and weaving to females in Archaic Italy.

Hints of other ritual activity can be seen on the stelae. What may be the production of ceremonial cakes can be seen on the back of one of the stelae showing the full procession (Manfredonia 1008). There is a scene of two women dressing a third person of indeterminate gender in ritual garb (Figure 61.1, upper back) and another showing a woman pouring a libation over/purifying a seated male (Figure 61.4). There are up to seventeen instances of, in its most canonical incarnation, two figures seated on either side of a tripod cauldron (e.g. Manfredonia 1013 and Trinitapoli 112; Nava 1980: pl. 291, 2011: 126–127). The gender of the individuals is not always clear, and can vary, but the scene is only once found on a male stela. It is quite clearly a ritual over which women had the prerogative. In fact, depictions of ritual behaviour, barring martial/funerary games, are exceptionally rare on the male stelae. It would seem Daunian women were responsible for the organization and conducting of ceremonial occasions.

Other images point to moments of secular life, such as a couple taking leave of each other, a motif found on male stelae as well as female (e.g. Manfredonia 804; Nava 1980: pl. 189). Pastoral scenes of hares and birds, often in the company of a dog, suggest the participation of women in the keeping or hunting of small game. Fourteen stelae carry the image of a figure, sling outstretched above the head, about to take down a bird. Eight of these stelae are female, one of which also has the pastoral scene (Manfredonia 1438; Nava

1980: pl. 371). Admittedly the bird catcher is often belted, an attribute in the figurative imagery associated with males, but in this case it may instead be an activity-specific item, worn by both men and women alike. Of the three instances of spear fishing, two are on female stelae (Manfredonia 803, 955–956; Nava 1980: pls.188, 242–243). Other female stelae carry simple horse scenes, alluding perhaps to an involvement in the rearing of these creatures so beloved in Daunia (e.g. [Figure 61.1](#) lower back).



Figure 61.4 Fragment of a female Daunian stela (upper back) with ritual scene. Current location unknown. (After Nava 1980: 25, fig. 12.)

A sail boat capable of long-distance sea faring is depicted twice on a female stela (e.g. Manfredonia 950–951; Nava 1980: pl. 240) and once on a male stela. We might consider that the people these stelae honoured had been active in the trade of the Upper Adriatic, or perhaps that they had themselves come from across the sea, maybe even for an exogamous marriage.

The occasional female stela carries imagery typical to the male sphere, and normally found on the stelae with weapons, such as Manfredonia 955–956, already noted for its spear fishing scene. It has on the back a deer hunt, a joust and an unusual scene of two warriors holding a third aloft upside-down: perhaps scenes from funerary games. It is of course not possible to know if such imagery relates to the activities of these Daunian women or is a reference to the exploits

and achievements of male relatives, but I like to think that, as today, certain Daunian women did not follow societal norms and gender ideals and were not discouraged from doing so. In fact they may even have been celebrated for it.

That the figurative imagery on Daunian stelae related to the role of the person that the stela memorialized is corroborated by the general lack of it on any of the stelae representing young girls. It is as though these children had no defined role and were yet to claim their place in the community.

The Daunian stelae allow for an understanding of life in Archaic Daunia in surprising ways, not the least being the details they offer on ephemeral customs and practices. Skin, textiles, ritual gestures and every day moments come alive once more. We are able to gain a real sense of certain aspects of the female Daunian existence, otherwise long since perished.

Notes

- 1 The following section is a heavily abridged version of Norman 2011b. See this paper for a more detailed discussion on the tribal tattooing of Daunian women, including expanded theory and methodology, the relevant statistics and additional imagery.
- 2 See Norman (forthcoming – b) for additional evidence and an extended discussion.

References

- Barber, E. J. W. (1999) On the antiquity of East European bridal clothing. In L. Welters (ed.) *Folk Dress in Europe and Anatolia. Beliefs about Protection and Fertility*. Oxford, UK and New York: Berg, pp. 13–31.
- Bianco, S. (ed.) (1996) *Greci, Enotri e Lucani nella Basilicata meridionale*. Naples, Italy: Electa Napoli.
- Caldara, M., Pennetta, L. and Simone, O. (2002) Holocene evolution of the Salpi Lagoon. *Journal of Coastal Research* SI 36: 124–133.
- Carter, J. C. (1998) Horse burial and horsemanship in Magna Grecia. In P. Anreiter *et al.* (eds) *Man and the Animal World*. Budapest, Hungary: Archaeolingua Kiadó, pp. 131–146.
- Castiglioni, M. P. (2008) The cult of Diomedes in the Adriatic: Complementary contributions from literary sources and archaeology. In J. Carvalho (ed.) *Bridging the Gaps: Sources,*

- Methodology and Approaches to Religion in History*. Pisa, Italy: Plus-Pisa University Press, pp. 9–28.
- Colonna, G. (1984) I Dauni nel contesto storico e culturale dell'Italia arcaica. In *La Civiltà dei Dauni nel Quadro del Mondo Italico. Atti del XIII Convegno di Studi Etruschi e Italici (Manfredonia 1980)*. Florence, Italy: L. S. Olschki, pp. 263–277.
- D'Agostino, B. (1984) Apputi sulla posizione della Daunia e delle aree limitrofe rispetto all'ambiente tirrenico. In *La Civiltà dei Dauni nel Quadro del Mondo Italico. Atti del XIII Convegno di Studi Etruschi e Italici (Manfredonia 1980)*. Florence, Italy: L. S. Olschki, pp. 249–261.
- D'Agostino, B. (1991) La Daunia arcaica e i suoi rapporti con la Campania. *Profili della Daunia Antica* 7: 35–48.
- D'Ercole, M. C. (2002) *Importuosa Italiae litora: Paysage et Échanges dans l'Adriatique Méridionale à l'Époque Archaique*. Naples, Italy: centre Jean Bérard.
- D'Ercole, M. C. (2008) La Daunia nel quadro del commercio adriatico arcaico. In G. Volpe, M. J. Strazzulla and D. Leone (eds) *Storia e Archeologia della Daunia: In Ricordo di Marina Mazzei*. Bari, Italy: Edipuglia, pp. 95–103.
- Durham, M. E. (1928) *Some Tribal Origins, Laws and Customs of the Balkans*. London: Unwin Brothers Ltd.
- Gell, A. (1993) *Wrapping in Images: Tattooing in Polynesia*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.
- Gjergji, A. (1986) Aprons in Albanian popular costume. *Costume* 20: 44–62.
- Herring, E. (2003) Body art and the Daunian stelae. In J. B. Wilkins and E. Herring (eds) *Inhabiting Symbols. Symbol and Image in the Ancient Mediterranean*. London: Accordia Research Institute, University of London, pp. 121–136.
- Jones, C. P. (1987) Stigma: Tattooing and branding in Greco-Roman antiquity. *JRS* 77: 139–155.
- Kirigin, B., Miše, M. and Barbarić, V. (2010) Palagruža. The island of Diomedes. Summary Excavation Report 2002–2008. *Dal Mediterraneo all'Europa. Conversazioni adriatiche, Hesperia* 25.
- Krutak, L. (2007) *The Tattooing Arts of Tribal Women*. London: Bennet and Bloom/Desert Hearts.
- Langdon, S. (2012) Seeking social life in the Early Iron Age Cyclades. *Meditarch* 25: 107–118.
- Lo Schiavo, F. (1984) La Daunia e l'Adriatico. *La Civiltà dei Dauni nel Quadro del Mondo Italico. Atti del XIII Convegno di studi etruschi e italici (Manfredonia 1980)*. Florence: L. S. Olschki, pp. 213–247.

- Mazzei, M. (2010) *I Dauni. Archeologia dal IX al V secolo a.C.* Foggia, Italy: Claudio Grenzi Editore.
- Nava, M. L. (1980) *Stele Daunie* I. Florence: G. C. Sansone Editore Nuova S.p.A.
- Nava, M. L. (ed.) (1988) *Le Stele della Daunia*. Milan, Italy: Electa.
- Nava, M. L. (2011) *Stele Daunie da Trinitapoli*. Foggia, Italy: Claudio Grenzi Editore.
- Norman, C. R. (2009) Warriors and weavers: Sex and gender in Daunian stelae. In K. Lomas and E. Herring (eds) *Gender Identities in Italy in the First Millennium BC*. Oxford, UK: British Archaeological Reports (International series S1983), pp. 37–54.
- Norman, C. R. (2011a) Weaving, gift and wedding: A local identity for the Daunian Stelae. In M. Gleba and H. Horsnæs (eds) *Communicating Identity in Italic Iron Age Communities*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow Books, pp. 33–49.
- Norman, C. R. (2011b) The tribal tattooing of Daunian women. *EJA* 14(1/2): 133–157.
- Norman, C. R. (2013) *The Iron Age Stelae of Daunia (Italy)*. PhD thesis. University of Sydney.
- Norman, C. R. (forthcoming – a) European statue-stelae: From deity to individual in Renate Storli (ed.) *TO ATOMO. Representation of the Individual*. Astrom Editions.
- Norman, C. R. (forthcoming – b) Women and girls of Daunia: Societal attributes as agents of sex, age and role. In N. Sojc, G. Saltini Semerari and G.-J. Burgers (eds) *Investigating Gender in the Ancient Mediterranean*. Rome: Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome.
- Sparkes, B. A. (1997) Some Greek images of others. In B. L. Molyneaux (ed.) *The Cultural Life of Images: Visual Representation in Archaeology*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 130–158.
- Tagliente, M. (1986) I signori dei cavalli nella Daunia di età arcaica. *AnnPerugia* 23: 305–321.
- Tagliente, M. (2002) La cavalleria e i giochi funebri. In S. Bianco *et al.* (eds) *Sport e Giochi nella Basilicata Antica*. Taranto, Italy: Scorpione Editrice, pp. 22–36.
- Tiné Bertocchi, F. (1985) *Le Necropoli Daunie di Ascoli Satriano e Arpi*. Genoa, Italy: Sagep.
- Yntema, D. (1979) Background to a south Daunian krater. *BABesch* 54: 1–43.
- Zimmermann, K. (1980) Tätowierte Thrakerinnen auf Griechischen Vasenbildern. *JDAI* 95: 163–196.

FEMALE SLAVES AND SLAVE-OWNERS IN ANCIENT ETRURIA

Enrico Benelli

Etruscan slavery has been the subject of a long debate; a highly controversial body of evidence has often allowed the insurgence of ideologically biased interpretations which dominated scholarly literature until relatively recent times (Benelli 2013). The role of women, as slaves and as slave-owners, is even more elusive. In the following pages, a brief summary of the available evidence will be attempted; its scantiness does not allow much more than very limited guesswork.

Iconographic evidence

A number of characters depicted in Etruscan art are usually identified as slaves. For instance, in the nearly ubiquitous banquet scenes, concentrated especially in the archaic and late-archaic periods, people attending dining aristocrats are thought to be slaves. This assumption is supported by the representation of many male servants as naked youths: nudity is extremely uncommon in Etruscan art, except for deities or mythological characters (Bonfante 1993), and it is possible that it was employed as a conventional representation of a servile status (Bonfante 2000: 278). In the famous scene of meal preparation in the Golini I Tomb at Porano, near Orvieto, many (male) slaves are depicted while working half-naked, with a simple cloth wrapped around their loins (Feruglio 1995: figs 3.2–3.4); on the other side, all female servants acting in this same fresco are thoroughly dressed and wear sandals (while most men are barefoot), although they are identified by captions with their names attesting that they shared the same social standing enjoyed by their male colleagues. Actually, all female individuals usually thought to be slaves because of the duties they perform (table servants, flute-players, dancers, jugglers and so

on) are always completely dressed, so that a typical servile attire has been tentatively recognized (Rallo 1989: 149–150, 153–155). The almost complete absence in Etruscan art of naked – or half-naked – female individuals performing typically servile duties makes it extremely difficult to identify what is usually the best defined activity for female slaves in the ancient world – prostitution. Only the women depicted in the erotic groups on the poorly preserved right wall of the Tomba della Fustigazione may be tentatively recognized as prostitutes, although the Dionysiac aura of the painted scenes makes this interpretation far from certain (see especially D’Agostino and Cerchiai 1999: 28–29). It is reasonable to think that prostitution did exist in the Etruscan world, as anywhere else in the ancient Mediterranean, but evidence for this typical form of slave exploitation is at present as good as non-existent – and even the reality of sacred prostitution, usually assumed to have been practised at least in the sanctuary of Pyrgi, has been seriously challenged (Budin 2008: 247–254). If slaves can be identified tentatively in iconography, their masters cannot. All of the captions from the Tomba Golini I seem to refer to male owners only; female owners can be postulated safely enough only for the servants attending their mistresses in the scenes of toilette engraved on bronze mirrors (Figure 62.1).

Epigraphy: female slaves

Epigraphic evidence for Etruscan slaves is extremely scanty; only five individuals can be safely recognized as being of a servile status, and only one of them was probably a woman, one *Tasma Šatnas* (i.e. “*Tasma* [slave] of *Šatna*”) buried near Bagnoregio, in the territory of Volsinii/Orvieto (ET Vs 1.257). (Slave names in Etruscan, as in Latin, are formed by an individual name (here *Tasma*) followed by the master’s gentilicial [clan] name in the genitive case – as if they were slaves of the whole household and not of a single individual.) The individual name *Tasma* is probably an Etruscan transcription of *Dazima*, a name attested in Messapic¹ epigraphy (MLM 3 Ro.), together with its more common male form *Dazimas*/*Dazomas* (MLM 4 Cae., 6 Cae., 21 Gn., 27 Gn., 23 Ro.), thus probably betraying the slave’s geographic origins (from Apulia). Wider epigraphic evidence for female slaves can be found only through some dozens of freedwomen’s epitaphs. Women amount to little more than one-third of all freedpersons known through Etruscan epigraphy (fewer than 150, nearly all of them from second- and first-century northern Etruria, with four exceptions only). The number is too low to understand whether the imbalance between males and females is the

result of hazard in archaeological discoveries. But if epigraphic evidence mirrors what actually happened in northern-Etruscan society of the later period, it will mean that either female slaves were less numerous than their male counterparts, or they were manumitted less frequently. In any case, the only freedperson known from the archaic period is a woman: one *Kanuta*, freedwoman of a *Larecena* and wife of one *Aranθ Pinie*, who dedicated a stone base (and the unknown object originally standing upon it) in the Volsinian sanctuary at Campo della Fiera (REE 74, 140). Her marriage with a freeborn individual (although belonging to a family unknown in Volsinian epigraphy, and thus probably of a lesser social standing than the *Larecena*, owners of at least one chamber tomb in the Crocifisso del Tufo necropolis) may have been a quite exceptional event, allowing her to attain epigraphic visibility through a conspicuous votive offering. Epigraphic features suggest a late-archaic chronology for this inscription, in line with the most ancient evidence about slaves (Colonna 1975: 184–186). In the funerary inscriptions of the later period (late-third to mid-first century BC) it is possible to recognize at least four freedwomen married to apparently freeborn husbands (ET Cl 1.768 = CIE 1570, Cl 1.777 = CIE 1589, Cl 1.1459, Pe 1.198 = CIE 3679). A marriage of this kind may also explain why in a lead curse tablet from Populonia one freedwoman is mentioned together with ten freeborn individuals, most of them males (CIE 5211 = ET Po 4.4; Massarelli 2014: 196–213).



Figure 62.1 Scene of toilette engraved on bronze mirror.

Etruscan freedwomen, like freedmen, seem usually not to have shared tombs with their masters' families, although evidence for this behaviour is anything but plentiful, since most inscriptions lack any indication of provenance. Sometimes, contexts have been confused either by previous grave-robbing (as is the case of the group CIE 1167–1172 = ET Cl 1.15–20) or by the antiquarians who excavated (or acquired) inscribed urns and tiles for their collections. This is why, for instance, it is impossible to understand if the freedwomen mentioned in the inscriptions CIE 1570 (= ET Cl 1.768) and 1589 (= ET Cl 1.777), both belonging to a large group of epitaphs found in the neighbourhood of cetona (CIE 1563–1607), had been buried together with their freeborn husbands' relatives known through a number of other texts of the same group. In any case, none of those inscriptions can be referred to individuals belonging to the families *Vipi* or *Purni* (like the former master and mistress of CIE 1589 = ET Cl 1.777, Hatrunia freedwoman of *Vipi* and CIE 1570 = ET Cl 1.768, Phila freedwoman of *Purnei* respectively). It is possible that marriage with freeborn men enabled freedwomen to be accepted into the family

tombs of their husbands. At Perugia, for instance, the freedwoman mentioned in the epitaph CIE 3679 (= ET Pe 1.198) had been buried in a small chamber tomb together with her freeborn husband (CIE 3678 = ET Pe 1.197). But freedpeople seem to have been more frequently buried in common tombs, and not in family ones. Evidence of this custom is relatively abundant for freedmen, but there is at least one instance for freedwomen as well (at Val d'Acqua, in the Clusine territory: CIE 4790–4794 = ET Cl 1.22–26, Thanicu “freedwoman” [*lutnitha*] of Vetī). Tombs of this type could be sometimes reserved for freedpersons only, but they were more usually shared with freeborn individuals. Etruscan freedpersons exceptionally buried together with their former masters – or, at least, with individuals belonging to their former masters’ families – are known in only four, or possibly five instances (as far as our evidence goes). Interestingly enough, all these cases involve freedwomen manumitted by former male masters (CIE 1405 = ET Cl 1.314; CIE 3779 = ET Pe 1.327), or freedmen manumitted by women, which we will look at further in this chapter.

Slaves manumitted after 90/89 BC became, of course, “Roman” rather than “Etruscan” freedpersons, since their enfranchisement took place following the Roman law, which replaced the Etruscan ones after incorporation of all the Etruscan cities into the Roman State. But it is possible that older customs, especially regarding intermarriage with freeborn individuals and the freedpersons’ status inside the community, persisted for some time. Epigraphy allows us to reconstruct some success stories of immigrant freedpersons, like the two fellow-freedmen *Papirii*, who married freeborn wives from lesser Clusine families, building up a rather complex family network which brought their descendants in close intimacy with many native gentilicial groups (Benelli 2012: 107–108). Another is the *Pontia T. l. Salvia*, who arrived at Clusium together with her former master, took a freeborn native husband, and finally succeeded in marrying her daughter to the last scion of an old, high-ranking Clusine family (Benelli 2014: 28–29 with references). Stories like these ones were probably atypical – it is reasonable to think that most freedwomen (and freedmen alike) lingered far outside epigraphic visibility.

Epigraphy: female slave-owners

Epigraphic evidence for the existence of female slave-owners in the archaic period has been recognized by Giovanni Colonna (Colonna 1993) in the word *kvsnaillise* painted on a Late-Orientalizing white-on-red pyxis from a Caeretan workshop (ET Cr 7.2, c.630–620 BC), and in the (ostensibly) proprietary inscription *mi cusul puīunal* incised before

firing on a roof tile from Nepi (CIE 6719), perhaps employed to close a loculus in a chamber tomb. Neither of these inscriptions is entirely unproblematic. The first one has turned out to be a forgery (Geppert and Gaultier 2000: 217–218), albeit it is possible that it was intended to reproduce a faded genuine one, as is the case with at least some portions of the vase decoration (this is why it has not been definitely excluded from the ThLE I²). The word *kvsnailise* has been interpreted by Colonna as meaning “in the (house) of *Kusnai*”, the last word being a female personal name – whether a gentilicium or a praenomen, it is impossible to say, since in that early period a *-na* ending is documented in both cases. The serious doubts about the authenticity of this inscription suggest some caution in using it as sole evidence for female owners of pottery workshops in that very early period. Colonna’s interpretation of the Nepi tile is also far from straightforward. The Etruscan text reads literally “I (belong to) *cus* of *Puiunai*”.² According to Colonna, the possibility of employing a proprietary inscription as an artist’s signature would be confirmed by the text *mi larices crepus* incised on a pictorial cylinder stamp employed to decorate some braziers from San Giovenale (Colonna 1993: 67, 1997).³ Nonetheless, it is equally possible that the name referred to “someone who commissioned the work” (i.e. the stamp itself, or better the whole series of braziers decorated with it: Pieraccini 2003: 146). In my own opinion, this alternative explanation seems more plausible, since inscriptions of this kind are not uncommon in Etruscan orientalizing and archaic epigraphy: craftsmen could be commissioned to inscribe gift or proprietary texts, the latter also employed to identify a donor (see for instance Benelli 2007: 182–184, 192–194). Moreover, the identification of “*cus* of *Puiunai*” as a slave named *cus* is highly questionable, since *-l* genitive endings of personal names are always preceded by an *-a-* (with the only remarkable exception of the genitive form *Larzl*). Other vowels – or no vowel at all – are on the contrary typical for nouns and theonyms (Benelli 2015). Only in a considerably later period is it possible to find unquestionable evidence for female ownership of slaves involved in pottery production (and also probably of the pottery workshop itself), thanks to the stamps *Vel Numnal* (“Vel [slave] of a Numnei”) and *Θansesca Numnal acil* (“This [is the work] of Θanse [slave] of a Numnei”) found on some askoi belonging to Beazley’s “Ruvfies Group” (see ThLE I², ss. vv.; Briquel 2014: 449).

About 10 per cent of all freedpersons documented by late-period inscriptions (late-third to mid-first century BC) had belonged to a female owner; about half of the freedpersons (or maybe a little more) were females. This evidence is extremely important, since it attests

that Etruscan women were able to own (and free) slaves, and that these slaves were both males and females. Thus the mistress's reach was not limited only to servants employed in her personal care, but extended probably into the household as a whole. At the same time, the remarkable imbalance between the number of male and female (former) owners attested by freedpeople's names seems to suggest that women usually controlled a smaller number of slaves compared to their male relatives. What is interesting is that the only three epitaphs of women-manumitted freedmen whose provenance is known may have been buried together with at least some of their former mistresses' relatives. The bilingual inscription CIE 3692 (ET Pe 1.211), belonging to one *Lucius/Larnθ Scarpe* freedman of a *Scarpia* (and thus manumitted according to the Roman law, since he took his former mistress's gentilicium), was buried into the tomb of the *Vlesi* family; a woman of this family had married one *Scarpe* (CIE 3691 = ET Pe 1.210). Two different scenarios can be reconstructed from this evidence: *Vlesia*'s husband was either the *Scarpe* freedman himself (who therefore succeeded in marrying a woman not only of freeborn status, but also of conspicuous social standing), or he was a relative (maybe a brother) of the freedman's former mistress (*Scarpia*). We do not know the names of all the people buried into the *Vlesi* tomb, since it contained at least three uninscribed ash-urns; both explanations are equally possible. The second instance is a freedman whose name was reconstructed by Karl Pauli as *Larθ lautni Titias Puplas* (CIE 1413). The final part of the inscription has unfortunately been lost and was inaccurately recorded by its first editors, and Helmut Rix has proposed a minimal reading (ET Cl 1.1317: *Larθ lautni Tutnas*) that does not take into account all the signs preserved in the drawings. Pauli's proposal seems therefore much more compatible with the evidence available (and it has been retained in ThLE I²). According to this reading, *Larθ* was manumitted following the Roman law, and his former mistress was a relative (probably a sister) of the *C. Titius L. f. Pupillus Arria natus* buried into the same tomb (CIE 1411–1412), shared by people belonging to various (and apparently unrelated) families (CIE 1400–1417). Among them, there is also a freedwoman (CIE 1405 = ET Cl 1.314; see above), together with her former master. The third example is one *Zerapiu*, freedman of a *Fraucnei* (CIE 475 = 4514; ET Cl 1.374), buried in the family tomb of the *Tetina*, especially remarkable for the magnificent bronze helmet found near the ash-urn of its founder (see, especially, Batino 2014). There is no mention of the freedman's former mistress in any other epitaph. It has been assumed that she had been the wife of one *Tetina* (Batino 2014: 68–69), although she was apparently not buried in the same tomb.

Evidence is too scanty to draw any conclusion, and some doubts about its interpretation cannot be safely resolved. For example, since two of the epitaphs cited above belong to the first century BC, it is not entirely clear if the inclusion of freedmen burials in tombs somehow related to their former mistresses' families resulted from the influence of Roman behaviours or not. In any case, it is undoubtedly interesting that the very few instances of freeborn people seemingly sharing their family tombs with their freedpeople involved only male slaves manumitted by female owners, or female slaves manumitted by male owners, thus raising the suspicion that the existence of some especially close ties between masters/mistresses and their slaves could be somehow openly acknowledged by allowing them to share a family tomb after their enfranchisement.

Notes

- 1 "Messapic" is a conventional definition for the language of non-Greek pre-Roman Apulia (a region encompassing not only Messapia, but also Peucetia and Daunia).
- 2 "cus" is a noun, its meaning unknown.
- 3 Literally "I [belong to] Larice Crepu": but this kind of formula in the Etruscan language could convey a number of different meanings. For example, here Colonna intended it as "I [am the work] of Larice Crepu", while Pieraccini prefers to intend it as "I [am a gift] of Larice Crepu". In this case, no precise translation can be given.

References

- Batino, S. (2014) *L'Ipogeo dei Tetina di Sigliano. Frammenti di Memoria dall'ager Clusinus Orientale*. Rome: Quasar.
- Benelli, E. (2007) *Iscrizioni Etrusche. Leggerle e Capirle*. Ancona, Italy: SACI Edizioni.
- Benelli, E. (2012) Matrimoni misti e identità in cambiamento: Chiusi da città etrusca a municipio romano. In S. Marchesini (ed.) *Matrimoni Misti: Una Via per l'integrazione tra i Popoli. Atti del Convegno (Verona-Trento 2011)*. Trento, Italy: Provincia Autonoma di Trento, pp. 103–109.
- Benelli, E. (2013) Slavery and manumission. In J. M. Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 447–456.
- Benelli, E. (2014) Etruria, terra di migranti. Mobilità e integrazione di elementi allogeni dalla documentazione epigrafica. In S. Marchesini et al. (eds) *Seconda e Terza Generazione. Integrazione e Identità nei Figli di Immigrati e Coppie Miste*. Verona, Italy: Alteritas, pp. 25–32.

- Benelli, E. (2015) Un titulus Populoniensis dal saggio XX. *Materiali per Populonia 11*. Pisa, Italy: ETS, pp. 189–207.
- Bonfante, L. (1993) Etruscan nudity. In L. Bonfante (ed.) *Essays on Nudity in Memory of Otto Brendel. Source. Notes in the History of Art* 12: 47–55.
- Bonfante, L. (2000) Classical nudity in Italy and Greece. In D. Ridgway et al. (eds) *Ancient Italy in its Mediterranean Setting. Studies in Honour of Hellen Macnamara* (Accordia specialist studies on the Mediterranean, 4). London: Accordia Research Institute, pp. 271–293.
- Briquel, D. (2014) Les askos portant des marques au nom d'Atrane. In L. Ambrosini and V. Jolivet (eds) *Les Potiers d'Étrurie et leur Monde. Contacts, Échanges, Transferts. Hommages à Mario A. Del Chiaro*. Paris: Colin, pp. 439–450.
- Budin, S. (2008) *The Myth of Sacred Prostitution in Antiquity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Colonna, G. (1975) Firme arcaiche di artefici nell'Italia centrale. *Römische Mitteilungen* 82: 181–192.
- Colonna, G. (1993) ceramisti e donne padrone di bottega nell'Etruria arcaica. In G. Meiser (ed.) *Indogermanica et Italica. Festschrift für Helmut Rix zum 65. Geburtstag* (Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Sprachwissenschaft, 72). Innsbruck, Austria: Institut für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Innsbruck, pp. 61–68.
- Colonna, G. (1997) Larice Crepu vasaio a San Giovenale. In B. Magnusson et al. (eds) *Ultra terminum vagari. Scritti in onore di Carl Nylander*. Rome: Quasar, pp. 61–76.
- D'Agostino, B. and cerchiai, L. (1999) *Il Mare, la Morte, l'Amore. Gli Etruschi, i Greci e l'Immagine*. Rome: Donzelli.
- ET – H. Rix (1991) *Etruskische Texte*. Tübingen, Germany: Narr Verlag.
- Feruglio, A. E. (1995) *Porano. Gli Etruschi*. Perugia, Italy: Quattroemme.
- Geppert, K. and Gaultier, F. (2000) Zwei Pasticci und ihre Folgen: Die Bildmotive der caeretaner Pyxiden D 150 und D 151 im Louvre. In F. Prayon and W. Röllig (eds) *Akten des Kolloquiums zum Thema Der Orient und Etrurien. Zum Phänomen des 'Orientalisierens' im westlichen Mittelmeerraum (10.-6. Jh. v. Chr.)* (Tübingen 1997) (Biblioteca di 'Studi Etruschi', 35). Pisa, Italy and Rome: Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali, pp. 211–218.
- Massarelli, R. (2014) *I testi etruschi su piombo* (Biblioteca di "Studi Etruschi", 53). Pisa, Italy and Rome: Fabrizio Serra.
- MLM – C. de Simone, S. Marchesini (eds) (2002) *Monumenta Linguae Messapicae*, Wiesbaden, Germany: Reichert.

- Pieraccini, L. C. (2003) *Around the Hearth: Caeretan Cylinder-Stamped Braziers* (Studia Archaeologica, 120). Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
- Rallo, A. (1989) Classi sociali e mano d'opera femminile. In A. Rallo (ed.) *Le Donne in Etruria* (Studia Archaeologica, 52). Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider, pp. 147–156.
- REE – *Rivista di Epigrafia Etrusca in Studi Etruschi*.
- ThLE I² – *Thesaurus Linguae Etruscae, I. Indice lessicale*. Pisa, Italy and Rome: Fabrizio Serra Editore (2009).

PART VIII

Rome

ROMAN MOTHERHOOD

Lena Larsson Lovén

Motherhood was fundamental in Roman society, in the personal lives of women and men, and as part of a generic female identity. The biological role of women was their most important social role, and motherhood increased the status of a woman, especially for mothers with male offspring. In Roman perceptions of a female life-course, marriage and motherhood were closely intertwined, and girls would grow up with the prospect of a future marriage, childbearing and motherhood as central in their lives.¹ Females on all social levels experienced motherhood, but as the future mothers of new generations of Roman citizens, daughters in citizen families had a particular social responsibility for procreating.

Venturia, Cornelia, Aurelia, Atia, and more – Roman history is populated by mothers of illustrious men. Such mothers, normally from elite families, have been seen as important role models in forming the good, or the opposite – the evil – characters of their famous sons. As ancient historians were essentially not interested in mothers and other female categories per se, women themselves have rarely been allowed a leading role in historical writing.² As mothers, however, they were important in forming the characters of Roman state leaders and their politics. Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi brothers, politicians and reformers in second-century BCE Rome, has come to personify the ideal of a Roman mother. As the daughter of Scipio Africanus the Elder, politician and conqueror of Hannibal in the Second Punic War, Cornelia came from a famous and very influential family. She married Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, a politician from another elite family and, according to ancient sources, they had twelve children, six sons and six daughters (Pliny, *Natural History* 7.57; Seneca, *De Consolatione ad Helviam* 16–6).³ Regardless of whether the number of children is correct or not, the role as mother has been made very prominent in the iconic construction of Cornelia who, in a well-known story, is said to have valued her children as her most precious jewels (Valerius

Maximus 4.4.). There are several stories of Cornelia which comprise a mixture of myths and legends, and with some germs of historical facts which have made her the paragon of Roman mothers and a female ideal.⁴ For most mothers in the past, however, the details of their lives remain anonymous to us. Still, we can assume that mothers on various social levels had many vital roles in the lives of their children and families. Ancient sources provide evidence of the status and ideals of motherhood, often exemplified by the mothers of famous men, but ideas and norms that shaped the image of Roman motherhood may have been quite different from the day-to-day realities of a mother's life. In this chapter, an attempt will be made to discuss aspects of both the ideals and realities of Roman motherhood, although it is more challenging to identify the realities, especially for mothers from groups other than elite circles.

Marriage and childbearing

Marriage was a rite of passage that marked the transition to adulthood.⁵ The ultimate purpose of a Roman wedding was to beget legitimate children, who could only be born within a lawfully acknowledged marriage, a *matrimonium iustum* (Ulpian 5.2).⁶ Fecundity and motherhood were publicly promoted, but as childbearing also implied female sexuality, social control was necessary and was only accepted within wedlock and in order to produce legitimate offspring.⁷ At her first marriage, a young girl was expected to be a virgin bride to secure the legitimacy of the (husband's) children who were the purpose of marriage. The age of marriage for Roman females has been debated over the years. Keith Hopkins in his study from 1965 argued that daughters in Roman families of higher social circles tended to marry as younger teenagers and in Hopkins' view usually before the age of 16.⁸ A first-time marriage for girls as teenagers is supported by evidence from literary sources, often of well-known women, and from funerary epigraphy, but mostly of women otherwise unknown to us. The latter may be exemplified by a funerary altar from the mid-first century CE, raised to the memory of a female named Minucia Suavis. She was married, but died at the age of not quite 15. The altar is decorated with her portrait and a short inscription which tells her name and age but not the cause of death.⁹ As many females became mothers for the first time in their mid-teens, the cause of death for the young married Minucia Suavis may well have been complications related to pregnancy or childbirth. A well-known example of a teenage mother is Livia (c.58 BCE–CE 29), the wife of Augustus and Rome's first empress, whose ancestry was the

aristocratic family of the *Livii*. She was married to her first and much older husband, Tiberius Claudius Nero, probably at the age of 15 or 16 and had her first child the year after. It was a son, the later emperor, Tiberius, born in 42 BCE.

The dangers of pregnancy and parturition

Outside elite circles, marriage in the later teens seems more regular, but at any social level Roman females commonly experienced motherhood for the first time as teenagers. Pregnancy represents a liminal stage in the life of a mother to be, especially if it is a woman's first child, and becoming a Roman mother was a risky business. Ancient sources, both texts and funerary epigraphy, regularly testify the deaths of young married women. Sometimes the reason for death is clear, but even when it is not explicitly stated the combination of a married woman deceased at a fertile age strongly points in the direction of a death caused by complications from pregnancy or at childbirth. What today in Western societies may be considered minor and curable problems related to pregnancy, could then have been lethal for both mother and child. Pregnancy and childbirth were risks not only for teenage mothers but for women in general, as deaths from childbearing occurred at all ages and in all social classes, including women of wealthy families. They may, however, have had a slightly better prospect of survival than women of the lower classes.¹⁰

An example from an elite family is Julius Caesar who experienced the death from childbirth of both his first wife, Cornelia, the daughter of Cinna, and years later of their daughter, Julia. Cornelia died in 69 BCE, at the age of not yet 30, and at her funeral Caesar presented a eulogy in praise of the dead, a *laudatio funebris*, to her, the first known to be held over a young woman and mother (Plutarch, *Caesar* 5.2). In 54 BCE, probably in her early twenties, Caesar's daughter Julia died from childbirth and her baby, Caesar's grandchild, died shortly after the mother (Suetonius, *Caesar* 26.) From the writings of Cicero, we are familiar with the tragedy in his own family when his daughter Tullia died. In her marriage to Dolabella, Tullia had given birth to a son in 49 BCE, who did not survive.¹¹ Thus, Tullia shared the experience with many other Roman mothers of all social classes of losing a child prematurely. At the time of her own death in February 45 BCE, Tullia was in her early thirties and was recently divorced from Dolabella. She died a short time after having given birth to their second son and it seems that her death was caused by complications from childbirth.¹² This child, however, survived.¹³ With Tullia gone, the child was left motherless from infancy, but is mentioned by Cicero, the maternal

grandfather, and included in his will (*Ad Atticum* 12.18a.2). More examples are known from literary sources and from funerary epigraphy, mostly of less illustrious women, but the perils of childbirth were omnipresent. In one of Pliny the Younger's letters is mentioned the tragedy of the Helvidius family, of which two sisters died when each of them gave birth to a baby girl, in the late first century CE (*Epistle* 4.22).

Examples of women dying from childbearing also come from epigraphy. In addition to the above-mentioned Minucia Suavis, another example from the epigraphic record is an inscription from Ricina, Italy, of a married female, Herennia cervilla, who died at the age of just over 18. At that young age, she had already given birth to three children. The inscription was set up by her husband and the cause of death is not explicitly stated, but it says that she died "in pain", which is not unlikely to be equal to dying in childbirth.¹⁴ Considering the age of death of the mother at only 18, the children must have been very young, a situation not unfamiliar to many Roman children. As these examples show, death from pregnancy and childbirth could strike in any family and at any time during a woman's fertile period.

Roman motherhood was a life-long commitment which had several different faces. One of them included the regular and unhappy fate of surviving one or even several children. Infant and child mortality was high in Roman society, which means that a mother of several children could expect to lose one or more of them prematurely. Again, Cornelia, *mater Gracchorum*, can serve as an example. She is said to have borne twelve children but only three of them lived to be adults: two sons, the politicians, Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus, and the daughter, Sempronia.¹⁵ If the total number of children is right, and with only three of them living to adulthood, it means she buried nine of her children. Furthermore, she outlived both her adult sons who were victims in political riots, the older Tiberius in 133 BCE and Gaius, the younger, in 123 BCE. Another example from another social class of a mother who survived several children is an otherwise unknown woman documented in a funerary inscription from Aquincum (Pannonia). The inscription was made by a Roman legionary to his wife, named Veturia who had given birth to six children. By the time of her death, aged 27, only one child was still alive (*CIL* 3.3572). Five lost children, a mother dead at the age of 27 and the only surviving child left motherless. This was the harsh reality for many Roman mothers, fathers and children.

Iconography

In contrast to the personal and social centrality of marriage and childbearing, scenes related to these crucial stages in life are rare in the visual repertoire. There are numerous examples of married couples, especially in Roman funerary art, signifying the importance of the married state, but the Roman marriage ceremony itself is only rarely represented. Likewise, examples of pregnant women are very few in the visual arts. One well-known instance is a terracotta plaque from Isola Sacra at Ostia, with a scene of a woman in labour. This is, however, not primarily an image of a pregnant woman as this is the memorial of a midwife whose professional identity is illustrated here by a typical work-scene.¹⁶ The woman delivering the baby is placed in a birth-chair, in front of her is a midwife on a low stool and she appears to be helping the baby out. This is in accordance with the recommendations of Soranus who in his medical text advised the midwife to sit in front of the mother to be able to see her face and to calm her (*Gynecology* 1.67–69). Another woman, who could be an attendant or a midwife, is standing behind the pregnant woman. Babies too are almost completely absent in the visual arts. It is not until the second century CE, on the decoration of sarcophagi that infants appear more regularly. They are often seen in the decoration of biographical sarcophagi where birth is the first stage and symbolised by a scene where the baby is given its first bath, attended by several women.¹⁷

Motherhood and family life (*paterfamilias* vs. *materfamilias*)

For a woman, marriage normally meant that she would move to live in the husband's household. Given the marriage contract with or without *manus*, and family situation, a newly wed female could be either subordinated to her own family (*sine manū*), or to older members of the husband's family (*cum manū*) or she could be the female head of the household. As a young and inexperienced bride in her first marriage, the new family situation may have been difficult, but after becoming a mother, her status improved. As a mother, a woman had fulfilled the ultimate purpose of marriage: producing legitimate offspring. If a mother and daughter were not separated by long distances, it appears to have been regular for them to be in close contact even after a daughter's marriage.¹⁸ In particular as a young and first-time mother, it may have been a comfort to have her own mother, or possibly other female relatives from her family, around in

the new household. Later in marriage and for a mother with several children, her familial situation could be quite different in terms of authority and status.

Motherhood was a central part of family life where mothers had a key position. Women would have a guardian, *tutor*, even after marriage who could be either the husband, if in a marriage *cum manū*, or another male relative if the marriage was *sine manū*.¹⁹ The latter form became more frequent from the second century BCE and in the first century BCE, in the time of Cicero, most marriages were apparently without *manus*.²⁰ Whatever the kind of marriage contract, it was always a man who was head of the family. The most important familial position was as *paterfamilias* and, as such, a man had extensive powers over the members of his family (Gaius, *Institutes* I.48).²¹ A woman married to a *paterfamilias* could be a *materfamilias*, a position which gave her a certain status as mistress of a household, but she was not necessarily a mother.²² When a woman became a biological mother, *mater*, her status, within the family and in public, would be more elevated.²³ Legally, a mother had a position inferior to that of a father: it was for instance in his legal capacity, or that of the *paterfamilias*, to make the formal decision to keep a newborn child in the family. The mother who had given birth to the child did not hold that right as the *paterfamilias* had power over life and death, *ius vitae necisque*, over the members of his family (Gaius, *Institutes* 1.148). A slave mother had no legal claim to her children as they were the property of her owner, who also had the right to decide whether or not to keep the baby.

Tending small children

After a baby was born and the decision was made to keep it, a wet-nurse may have been hired. This was a common practice at least in many upper-class families, but children of various social classes grew up surrounded by different caretakers.²⁴ Information about how relations to mothers were formed in early childhood is not very substantial in ancient sources. With a wet-nurse feeding the baby, a mother may have had more of a role of fostering and providing the child with ethical standards. But if both parents were alive, they would be involved in the upbringing of the child and the mother could be very influential in this role.²⁵ According to Tacitus in his biography of his own father-in-law, Agricola, Julia Procilla, the mother of Agricola, was a woman of exceptional moral integrity, and she devoted her time to her son's education, moral guidance and his political career, which made Agricola a man of good moral standards

Continuing the family line

The search for a future bride or groom could start early in the child's life, for sons and daughters, as parents or guardians would plan ahead for a wedding to secure a partner from a suitable family. Various reasons directed the choice of the partner such as rank, wealth and status of a family.²⁶ The descent of both the mother and the father could also be of interest in choosing a partner for the child.²⁷ An accepted marriage alliance could be manifested by a betrothal some time before the wedding took place.²⁸ It was the formal role of the father to choose a future husband or wife for his children, and to arrange the marriage contract, but at the same time, it was expected of mothers to be involved in this process too. Mothers would take an active role in arranging marriages for sons as well as for daughters but, generally speaking, they appear to have played a more prominent role in planning marriages for their daughters.²⁹ In reality, it appears to have been possible for a mother to arrange a wedding with only a minor partaking of the father, if any. One well-known example is the aforementioned marriage of Tullia and Dolabella. It was Tullia's third marriage, arranged by herself and her mother, Terentia, during Cicero's absence in Cilicia. He wrote letters to them with advice about suitable marriage candidates, but the engagement was apparently announced without Cicero being consulted first. The marriage took place in 50 BCE, probably before the return of Cicero from Cilicia to Rome.³⁰

Evil stepmothers

Many children experienced the loss of a mother at an early age, a situation which could make a notable difference in the child's upbringing.³¹ An example mentioned above is the young Julia, Caesar's daughter, who was left motherless probably around the age of 7. A child whose mother was deceased could expect the father to remarry and to grow up in an extended family, with a stepmother, half-siblings, other adults and relatives. Roman stepmothers were traditionally seen as mother substitutes, but without the affections of a biological mother.³² The stepmother, *noverca*, was a stereotyped image of an evil character and a word that evoked very negative associations of a woman who at any cost would promote her own children at the expense of her stepchildren. Wicked stepmothers appear regularly in Roman literature, with the portrait by Tacitus of

Livia as an ingenious example.³³ Livia is portrayed as a woman without scruples who made way for her oldest son, Tiberius, to gain power by eliminating all who were a threat to him, i.e. the biological heirs or favourites of Augustus (*Annals* 4.71.4). She succeeded, and Tiberius became the next man to hold imperial power (CE 14–37), but with a complicated relationship with his mother. Another example from Tacitus of a wicked stepmother is Agrippina the Younger, who married her uncle, Claudius, in CE 49. Brought to the marriage was her natural son, Nero, the future emperor, from a previous marriage. In her greed for power, Agrippina strongly favoured her son, instead of her stepson (Tacitus, *Annals* 12.65.2). Like Livia, she succeeded in promoting her own son to become the successor as emperor (CE 54–68), and like Tiberius, Nero appears to have had a complicated relationship with his mother.

The malevolent stepmother is a literary stock character whose existence in real life is difficult to prove.³⁴ For instance, other evidence such as tomb inscriptions only attest to a very limited extent any relations between stepmothers and children, which does not have to mean that the literary evil-minded *noverca* was a complete fantasy creature.³⁵ However, a stepmother could also be a caring person who was close to her stepchildren.³⁶ The opposite type of stepmother to Livia is her sister-in-law, Octavia, the sister of Augustus. In 40 BCE she was married to Mark Antony as the sign of a political alliance between the leading politicians of the time, her brother Augustus (then still Octavian) and her new husband. By then, Mark Antony already had a relationship with Queen Cleopatra of Egypt with whom he had twins, Alexander Helios and Cleopatra Selene. When still married to Octavia, he had another child with Cleopatra in 36 BCE. Octavia divorced him in 32 BCE, and after Mark Antony's death in 30 BCE she is said to have taken care of several of his children, at least two sons from his previous marriage to Fulvia³⁷ and the daughter of Cleopatra. In ancient sources, Octavia is presented as impeccable in her role as stepmother, mainly through the portrait of Plutarch, but this may be as much fiction as the portrait of the evil stepmother Livia (Plutarch, *Antony* 87).

As Roman females usually married young and to men older than themselves, a regular feature in the lives of females who survived childbirth was to experience widowhood, sometimes at a young age and with small children. For instance, Atia, the mother of Octavian, was married as a teenager to Gaius Octavius who was about 15 years her senior. Early on in their marriage, they had a daughter, Octavia, and a couple of years later a son was born, the future emperor Augustus. When Octavian was only 4 years old, his father died and

Atia was widowed, at the age of probably 26. She was a young widow, still fertile and after only a couple of months as a widow, Atia remarried. Her second husband was Lucius Marcius Philippus, a politician and consul of 56 BCE.³⁸ The new family situation implied for Atia the role of stepmother for her husband's children from a former marriage, and a stepfather for Atia's children. He was a stepfather with whom they appear to have had a good relationship. It is interesting to note that there is no male parallel to stepmothers, and stepfathers do not have an equally bad reputation in Roman literature as the terrifying stepmothers.³⁹

Motherhood and divorce

Divorce had a long tradition in Roman law and society, and the reasons for divorce were several.⁴⁰ If a married woman did not produce children that could be a reason for a man to divorce his wife. The earliest known example of only a few caused by infertility, is that of a man called Spurius Carvilius. He divorced his wife around 230 BCE, because she could not beget children (Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* 17.21.44; Valerius Maximus 2.1.4). In case of divorce in families with children, a father could claim his lawful right to the children and keep them in his household. Livia divorced her first husband when their son Tiberius was 3, to marry Octavian (Augustus). At the time of her new marriage, Livia was pregnant with her second child. It was to be another son, Drusus, but from her first marriage and he was born early in 38 BCE. Even to high-class circles in Rome, accustomed to contemporary political and moral scandals, this was not in accordance with the ideals of a mother. The baby was returned to its natural father but after his death, both Tiberius and Drusus came to live with their mother in her household and with Octavian.

Divorce sometimes happened under dramatic circumstances as appears to have been the case of Scribonia, the wife of Octavian prior to Livia. In the autumn of 39 BCE, probably in October, she gave birth to a baby girl named Julia, who was to be Octavian's only legitimate child. The marriage between Julia's parents was short, based on political interests rather than a happy union and they divorced immediately after their child was born. Julia was not Scribonia's first child as she had been married before and had older children. Scribonia seems to have borne three surviving children of whom Julia was the youngest.⁴¹ Little is known of where Scribonia went after the divorce from Octavian, and of Julia's childhood. She may have been allowed to spend time with her mother in early childhood and was later taken into her father's household.⁴² A divorce was not

necessarily as dramatic as that of Scribonia, but it demonstrates the inferior position of women, the social and legal vulnerability of a mother, and in this case, also of someone who had recently given birth.

Motherhood in public and private life

Motherhood was regularly promoted in public. There was a particular focus on motherhood in the reign of Augustus with the introduction of the Julian marital laws, with demands for increasing nativity among Roman citizens (Cassius Dio 54.16). To stimulate higher birth rates in citizen families, freeborn mothers of three children were rewarded with being released from a guardian, *ius (trium) liberorum*. Freedwomen had to give birth to four children after manumission to obtain the same rights (Gaius, *Institutes* 1.154, 1.194). How this worked in reality for women's legal rights is, however, not altogether clear.

Both before and after the Julian laws were introduced, famous mothers could be honoured in art and by public buildings and monuments. At some point after Cornelia's death, an honorific statue was dedicated to her and put up in a public place in Rome (Plutarch, *Gaius Gracchus* 4.4), an honour seldom bestowed upon women before imperial times. Another example of officially honouring a mother is the portico of Octavia, an architectural construction in the southern part of the field of Mars in Rome. Octavia, the older sister of Augustus and mother of his appointed heir, Marcellus, was also a mother of four daughters from two different marriages, but it is primarily the role of the mother of Marcellus that was emphasised in public. After he died in 23 BCE, it is said that Octavia was disconsolate and never recovered from her loss (Seneca, *De Consolatione ad Marciam*). The statue of Cornelia appears to have been placed in the portico named after Octavia (Pliny, *Natural History* 34.31).⁴³ The coupling between the two idealised mothers was made clear by this arrangement.⁴⁴ The statue of Cornelia was possibly set up at the end of the second century BCE and it may have been restored, or even razed, in the age of Augustus.⁴⁵ Only its base remains, on display in the Capitoline museum in Rome, with the inscription *CORNELIA AFRICANI F GRACCHORUM* (CIL 6.31610). It emphasises Cornelia's roles as daughter of an iconic Roman leader and mother of her famous sons and politicians.

Roman motherhood, or parenthood, was important in all social classes, and the family was the central social institution in Roman

antiquity in which children were important. Children of legitimate status, especially sons, were the ultimate purpose of marriage, and they were vital for the continuity of the family line. However, it was not everybody's right to form a legal family since this was normally coupled with the status of citizenship. Slavery was firmly established in Roman society (Dionysios of Halikarnassos 4.24.1–4). Slave men and women did have families, but not of a legal status, and such a family could be split up by the owner. From the first century BCE, Roman slaves were regularly manumitted and if this was done properly through a legal procedure, they acquired the right of marriage and the possibility of having legitimate children. A family with legal status was an important mark of status, and family groups are a regular motif in funerary art, and especially for those of manumitted status, which demonstrates their success in life. Portraits of freeborn families appear in funerary art as well.⁴⁶

Conclusion

Motherhood implied obligations through the life-cycle, but the maternal role also changed over a lifetime. In a society where authority increased by age, the experiences of motherhood may gradually have made a woman a more powerful person.⁴⁷ Most of our information regarding Roman motherhood comes from sources of the late Republic and early Empire which tend to present the (ideal) Roman mother from elite families as a severe, disciplinarian figure in the family and in contrast to real contemporary life where divorce and remarriage were common, at least in the upper social circles. This resulted in new, and sometimes short-lived, family constellations which could affect the relations between mothers and their children, and in a long-term perspective, possibly also how the social roles of motherhood were regarded. Still, marriage and motherhood as such continued to be long-lasting fundamental institutions in society and in the lives of Roman women.

Notes

- 1 For intellectual training of daughters in Roman elite families, see Hemelrijk 1999.
- 2 Dixon 1988: 109–110; Fantham 2006: 18; Hallet 2006: 119–120.
- 3 The information in ancient sources about the number of Cornelia's children has recently been discussed by Suzanne Dixon in her biography of Cornelia. See Dixon 2007: 51.
- 4 Dixon 2007: 1–14.

- 5 Treggiari 2007: 19.
- 6 Treggiari 1991: 11–13.
- 7 Hallet 2006: 169.
- 8 Hopkins 1965, but see, also, Shaw 1987 for a discussion of Hopkins' arguments.
- 9 *CIL* 6.22560, in Palazzo Massimo delle Terme in Rome, inv. no. 30.
- 10 Treggiari 2007: 111.
- 11 Treggiari 1991: 404, 2007: 111.
- 12 Treggiari 2007: 13.
- 13 Treggiari 1991: 468.
- 14 *L'Année Epigraphique* 1985: 355.
- 15 Dixon 2007 passim.
- 16 Kampen 1981: 69–72, no. 6, fig. 58.
- 17 Kampen 1981: figs. 10–12.
- 18 Hallett 1984: 258–262; Dixon 1988: 217.
- 19 See Treggiari 1991: 16–34, with further and detailed references to ancient sources.
- 20 Treggiari 1991: 34.
- 21 Gaius (whose full name is unknown to us) was a Roman jurist writing in the second century CE. His work *Institutiones* is a full exposition of Roman laws and from this, we have good knowledge about the Roman legal corpus.
- 22 Treggiari 1991: 7, 28.
- 23 Dixon 1988: 44.
- 24 Bradley 1986; Hallett 2006: 141.
- 25 Dixon 1988: 121.
- 26 Treggiari 1991: 83–160; Caldwell 2015: 105–133.
- 27 Treggiari 1991: [chapter 3](#).
- 28 Harlow and Laurence 2010.
- 29 Dixon 1988: 215–217.
- 30 Dixon 1988: 315; Treggiari 2007: 83–99.
- 31 Dixon 1988: 32.
- 32 Gray-Fow 1988.
- 33 Dixon 1988: 49; Vidén 1993: 18–19.
- 34 Watson 1995: 135f, 140f.; *CIL* 12.810 of a tombstone where both a biological mother and a step-mother are mentioned.
- 35 Treggiari 1991: 394; Watson 1995: 174f.
- 36 Hallet 1984: 257–258.
- 37 Fulvia, wife of Mark Antony, after whose death in 40 BCE he married Octavia.
- 38 Treggiari 1991: 502.
- 39 Dixon 1988: 155–159; Vidén 1993: 18–19.
- 40 See Evans Grubbs 2002, [chapter 4](#), esp. pages 187–202 for reasons to divorce as presented in ancient legal texts and others.
- 41 Fantham 2006: 19.
- 42 Fantham 2006: 22f.
- 43 For a discussion of the placement of the statue, see Dixon 2007: 56–59;

Hänninen 2007: 82.

44 Woodhull 2012: 226–230.

45 Dixon 2007: 62 for a further discussion of the statue.

46 Michele 2001.

47 Dixon 1988: 31, 176.

References

- Bradley, K. (1986) Wet-nursing in Ancient Rome. A study in social relations. In B. Rawson (ed.) *The Family in Ancient Rome. New Perspectives*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, pp. 201–229.
- Caldwell, L. (2015) *Roman Girlhood and the Fashioning of Femininity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Dixon, S. (1988) *The Roman Mother*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Dixon, S. (2007) *Cornelia. Mother of the Gracchi*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Evans Grubbs, J. (2002) *Women and the Law in the Roman Empire: A Source Book on Marriage, Divorce and Widowhood*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Fantham, E. (2006) *Julia Augusta. The Emperor's Daughter*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Gray-Fow, M. J. G. (1988) The wicked stepmother in Roman literature and history. An evaluation. *Latomus* 47: 741–757.
- Hallett, J. P. (1984) *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society: Women and the Elite Family*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hallett, J. P. (2006) Introduction. Cornelia and her maternal legacy. In J. P. Hallett (ed.) *Roman Mothers*. *Helios* 33(2): 119–148.
- Hänninen, M-L. (2007) How to be a great Roman Lady: Cornelia in ancient literary tradition. In L. Larsson Lovén and A. Strömberg (eds) *Public Roles and Personal Status. Men and Women in Antiquity*. Sävö, Sweden: Aastrom Editions, pp. 73–88.
- Harlow, M. and Laurence, R. (2010) Betrothal. Mid-late childhood and the lifecourse. In L. Larsson Lovén and A. Strömberg (eds) *Ancient Marriage in Myth and Reality*. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, pp. 56–77.
- Hemelrijk, E. (1999) *Matrona Docta. Educated Women in the Roman Elite from Cornelia to Julia Domna*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Hopkins, K. (1965) The age of Roman girls at marriage. *Population Studies* 18: 309–327.

- Kampen, N. B. (1981) *Image and Status: Roman Working Women at Ostia*. Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag.
- Michele, G. (2001) A Roman funerary monument with a mother and a daughter. In S. Dixon (ed.) *Childhood, Class and Kin in the Roman World*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 178–189.
- Shaw, B. (1987) The age of Roman girls at marriage: Some reconsiderations. *Journal of Roman Studies* 77: 30–44.
- Treggiari, S. (1991) *Roman Marriage: Iusti Coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon.
- Treggiari, S. (2007) *Terentia, Tullia, and Publilia, the Women of Cicero's Family*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Vidén, G (1993) *Women in Roman Literature: Attitudes of Authors under the Early Empire*. Gothenburg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis.
- Watson, P. A. (1995) *Ancient Stepmothers: Myth, Misogyny, and Reality*. Leiden, The Netherlands, Cologne, Germany and New York: E. J. Brill.
- Woodhull, M. L. (2012) Imperial mothers and monuments in Rome. In L. Hackworth Petersen and P. Salzman-Mitchell (eds) *Mothers and Motherhood in Ancient Greece and Rome*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, pp. 226–251.

WOMEN'S DAILY LIFE IN THE ROMAN WEST

Emily Hemelrijk

Writing a chapter on 'women's daily life in ancient Rome' is a challenge, since it involves three questionable categories: 'women', 'daily life' and 'ancient Rome'. First, 'women' is such a vast category as to be almost unmanageable. Roughly half the population of the Roman world consisted of women, who were divided by class, juridical status, domicile, language, ethnic background, wealth, age and marital status as much as they were united by the privileges and constraints of their sex: their ability to give birth and breastfeed, and their exclusion from the army (at least from its fighting ranks) and from political and juridical office. Second, 'daily life' is a highly elusive notion. It encompasses the daily routine of individuals that is obvious to the person in question and considered uninteresting for others; therefore, it is usually unrecorded. A person's 'daily life' is in part occupied by the basic need for food, sleep and shelter, which are alike for all human beings. Yet, cultural values interfere, for instance, by allotting women a smaller share of the food when the amount is connected with social esteem (Hemelrijk 2015). It further consists of the daily occupations to earn a living, which were of prime importance for all but the leisured class. In the Roman world, work was certainly divided by gender, but perhaps less so than the ancient evidence suggests; gender norms tended to push women back into their domestic tasks much more than most women could actually afford to do.¹ Since women's work is dealt with elsewhere in this volume, I shall not discuss it here. Women's 'daily life' will therefore be defined here as their day-to-day activities apart from possible work to earn a living. Lastly, the term 'ancient Rome' can be used for the city of Rome in antiquity and for the Roman world at large. I shall here take an intermediate position and focus on the Roman Empire, particularly on its western part. Because of the lack of evidence for women in the rural areas, the main concern of this chapter will be

women living in the numerous Roman cities of Italy and the western provinces in the first three centuries of the Empire.

Norms and daily practice

What did these urban women have in common to justify a communal discussion of their daily lives? With the exception of female slaves, most of them had Roman citizenship or received it at some stage between the foundation of their cities and AD 212, when it was granted to virtually all free inhabitants of the Empire. Thus, they were subject to Roman law, which allowed those who had no living *paterfamilias* and had borne three or more children to control their own finances without male interference.² It also made them answerable to Roman gender norms which emphasized modesty, chastity and domesticity. These norms, advertising a retired way of life devoted to the home and family, were reflected in funerary inscriptions for women and were symbolized by their wool work. 'She spun wool, was pious, modest, frugal and chaste; she stayed at home' reads the epitaph of Amydone, the 'excellent and very beautiful' wife of Marcus (Rome, *CIL* 6, 11602). Similarly, a husband addressed his deceased wife, whom he married as 'a virgin of 14' and who died at 21: 'to my sweetest wife, most loyal, chaste and faithful, who never wanted to go out in public without me, either to the baths or anywhere else' (Ostia, *AE* 1987, 179). These traditional ideals are reflected in the standardized dress of female portrait statues covering the body with voluminous layers of cloth which emphasized their modesty (but also their wealth!) and impeded their freedom of movement. How, and to what degree, these norms affected women's daily lives is another matter. As we shall see, juridical status, class and wealth competed with gender in shaping the lives of women.

Despite Roman values prescribing female domesticity, we may assume that, in daily practice, most women had little opportunity to stay at home. Depending on their wealth and status, they had to go out to earn a living, travelled to visit family and friends, helped their husbands in their trade or in tilling the fields. This does not mean that they did not observe the traditional norms, but, under the veil of domesticity, women could lead much more variegated lives. An epitaph in Roman Africa set up by a merchant for his wife 'full of modesty' may be taken as an example:

In Rome, Urbanilla was my companion and partner in business supported by her frugality. When all had been completed successfully and she returned with me to my fatherland, Carthage snatched away my pitiable companion. I have

no hope of living without such a wife; she kept my house and helped me with her advice. Deprived of the light of life, the poor woman now rests enclosed in marble.

(CIL 8, 152; late second–early third century)

Clearly, Urbanilla's life in business was not felt to be at odds with her female virtues. In epitaphs for women of the working classes, their industry is often praised together with their traditional female virtues. Postumia Matronilla, for example, was commemorated by her husband in Roman Africa as:

an incomparable wife, good mother and most dedicated grandmother, chaste, pious, hardworking, frugal, efficient, watchful, careful, true to one husband, a *matrona* full of industry and trustworthiness.

(CIL 8, 11294)

Instead of the cumbersome dress of Roman statues, such women wore a simple tunic, which allowed them to perform manual labour. Both in norms and in dress, therefore, we should not mistake ideals for reality and assume that, in daily practice, Roman women stayed at home spinning wool and wearing the *tunica*, *stola* and *palla* (mantle) that we find in the literary sources and in portrait statues.³

In sum, the relationship between norms and daily practice was a complicated one: Roman women at once observed, reproduced *and* manipulated the traditional norms (cf. Cohen 1991). We find a similar tension in the education of Roman women. In daily practice, a good education was appreciated for women of the upper classes and among families who aspired to high status, since these women were expected to participate in the social and cultural life of their class. They received guests, accompanied their husbands to dinner parties and other social events, informed their husbands (when they were abroad) about the social and political developments in Rome, and administered their property. This required not only basic literacy and numeracy but also a good cultural education, which was so important for the upper classes. At the same time, prejudices against educated women, accusing them of sexual licentiousness, ostentation and meddlesomeness, forced these women to perform a balancing act, hiding their education behind the traditional female virtues. Plutarch's portrait of Pompey's fifth wife Cornelia shows the mixed feelings women's education provoked:

She was well versed in literature, in playing the lyre, and in geometry, and had been accustomed to listen to philosophical discourses with profit. In addition to this, she had a nature which was free from that unpleasant meddlesomeness which such accomplishments are apt to impart to young women.

Though appreciated for reasons of status and convenience, women's education should be unobtrusive; the traditional female virtues remained the ultimate standard of their lives (Hemelrijk 1999).

A life of leisure or daily toils?

What can we know, or infer, about women's daily lives? For instance, what does their exclusion from political, military and juridical office and their limited participation in trade and in the professional occupations imply for their daily routine? Were women fully occupied with domestic concerns and the care for their families, or did they perhaps lead a life of leisure? Obviously, there is no description of women's daily lives in our male-authored sources; in as far as they wrote about women at all, most ancient authors were more interested in what women were supposed to do, or what they feared they would do, than in what they actually did. In the following, I shall therefore try to piece together some of the patchy evidence for women's daily lives differentiating between them according to their social and juridical status.

An upper-class life: Ummidia Quadratilla

Let us start with Pliny's obituary of Ummidia Quadratilla, a senatorial woman in Casinum who died in the early second century AD at the age of almost 79. Sketching her life, Pliny writes that: 'as a woman with the many idle hours of her sex she used to relax her mind by playing draughts and watching her pantomimes' (Pliny, *Ep.* 7.24.5). Though mildly critical about the unconventional way she filled her empty hours, Pliny takes the leisure of her sex for granted. From his perspective, as a man of politics and juridical affairs, hers was a life of leisure indeed, but we should not mistake it for a life of idleness. Apart from having a busy social life, Ummidia Quadratilla raised her orphaned grandchildren in her house, supervised their education and properly provided for them in her will. Pliny calls her the leading lady (*princeps femina*) of the town, and her popularity is reflected by the excited response of the crowd when she visited the theatre where her troupe of pantomimes performed. He does not spend a word, however, on her main claim to fame. As is shown by inscriptions, she was an important civic benefactress, donating a temple and an amphitheatre to her hometown, and repairing the local theatre, at the dedication of which she gave a banquet to the city-councillors, the people and the

women of the town. Obviously, as a woman of wealth and high rank, she had a large staff of slaves and freedmen who performed all household chores as well as the manual labour on her estates. This left her with a lot of free time. Yet, she supervised her extensive household and administered her possessions herself, probably – as was common for a Roman woman of substance – with the help of a freedman steward. Judging by the great sums she spent on her city, her elegant lifestyle and the excellent provisions for her grandchildren, she must have been a keen businesswoman.⁴ Clearly, there was more to her life than playing draughts and watching pantomimes.

Ummidia Quadratilla stands for a number of wealthy women in the cities of Italy and the western provinces who used their resources for the benefit of their cities as benefactresses, civic priestesses and patronesses or ‘mothers’ of cities and civic associations. Though all were women of substance, their social standing ranged from wealthy freedwomen to women of the senatorial elite and from women of indigenous background to descendants of ancient Roman stock. Their motives to spend their money, time and energy on their cities varied with their social background and personality, but the effect of their activities was to some extent similar: they were exposed to the public eye to a much higher degree than was common for women according to the traditional ideals. From the official promise of a donation to its eventual realisation, a benefactress was at the centre of public attention. During the period of construction, her name was attached to the building she donated and at its dedication, she added to the festivity and to the number of attendants by offering a banquet or a distribution of food or cash to all present. Priestesses presided at sacrifices, headed processions and supervised other cult activities, and patronesses favoured the cities and associations that co-opted them by bestowing benefactions or intervening on their behalf with the authorities.⁵ Public statues portray these women in full Roman dress with an inscription recording their civic merits and high standing. Thus, they present them not only as virtuous *matronae* but also as responsible, and respectable, Roman citizens. In sum, in the towns outside Rome, women of wealth could acquire great public esteem by munificence, civic priesthoods or patronal activities. Such activities must have occupied at least part of their spare time.

Women’s civic roles as sketched above permit the conclusion that, but for political office, the daily lives of male and female members of the upper classes were more alike than we tend to assume. Part of their routine activities was parallel. Women (and men) of the upper classes spent much time at their toilet, especially when going out,

using specialized slaves to fashion their clothing and hairstyles ([Figure 64.1](#)).

Further, they attended to their financial affairs, checking the accounts of stewards and overseers. Last but not least, there were countless social events and obligations which involved banqueting, visiting the theatre and amphitheatre, meeting friends and acquaintances and receiving clients and dependents during the morning *salutatio*. The relative leisure that their exclusion from politics and jurisdiction allowed was at least partly filled by supervising their large households and caring for their families; the manual work was, of course, left to attendants.⁶ Finally, there was time to relax and perhaps play draughts, which was a favourite pastime for men as well (Balsdon 1969: 144–159). Gossipy sources tend to assume that the ample free time of wealthy women gave rise to illicit love affairs. Luxury and idleness would have corrupted their minds. For example, in his sixth satire Juvenal contrasts the self-indulgent and licentious women of his time with their sober and chaste predecessors in the good old days. And Lucian ridicules women's zeal for philosophy and education, suggesting that it was only a pretence for their real interest: a secret love affair. Though love affairs did of course occur in the Roman world, these satirical sources, uncritically followed by some scholars in the past, misleadingly present them as women's main pursuit.⁷ Their stories of women's sexual licence tell us more about male preoccupations than about women's daily life.



Figure 64.1 Marble relief of a funerary monument from Noviomagus in Gallia Belgica (late 2nd – early 3rd c.) showing a Roman lady attended at her toilet by four female slaves. Rheinisches Landesmuseum Trier, photo Th. Zühmer.

The working classes

In the classes below the elite, life was harder and more constrained. The daily lives of women of the artisan classes, and probably also those of the wives of farmers about whom we know next to nothing, must have been full of toil. Apart from a possible profession of their own, or as a co-working wife, these women had to look after their households and children with little or no slave assistance. Depending on whether they lived in the city or in the countryside, they had to draw water, grind grain, bake bread, cook, clean the house, spin, weave, wash and mend the clothing of the family, bear and rear the

children, feed the animals and perform innumerable other household chores. No wonder that funerary inscriptions for women of these classes praise their frugality, industry and efficiency in addition to the conventional chastity, modesty and obedience to their husbands; these were important – even essential – qualities in a household of modest means. ‘She was the first to rise and the last to go to bed, after she had put everything in order. Her wool-work was never out of her hands without good reason; no one surpassed her in obedience’, reads the tombstone of the freedwoman, Allia Potestas, in Rome. Though praised for her industry, domesticity and obedience, Allia Potestas seems to have led a highly unconventional life. Her extraordinary epitaph shows that she had lived harmoniously with two lovers and was praised for her physical qualities as well as for her maternal virtues (CIL 6, 37965, with Horsfall 1985).

According to ‘middle-class’ ideals, a good wife was sober and hardworking, and obedient to the wishes of her husband:

She wanted what I wanted and what I did not want she shunned. She had no secret that was unknown to me. She did not eschew hard work nor was she unaccustomed to wool working. She was parsimonious, but generous in her love for me, her husband. Without me she did not enjoy food nor the gifts of Bacchus.

(CIL 3, 7436; Nova, *Moesia Inferior*)

Many epitaphs present husband and wife as partners in life’s daily struggle. The conjugal love and harmony (‘without any quarrel’) expressed on their tombs agree with the contemporary ideal of *Concordia* (Treggiari 1991: 229–261). Yet, since she was expected to put her husband first, the wife was held responsible for the success of the marriage. In sum, women of these classes were hard pressed by manifold obligations; unlike women of the elite, their daily lives knew little leisure. At the same time, the funerary inscriptions show pride in their achievements, their families and their domestic qualities. Modelled on those of the elite, most grave reliefs portray them not as the working (freed)women they were, but as the *matronae* of wealth and leisure they aspired to be (George 2005).

Slavery and poverty

The daily lives of the women of the freeborn poor, both urban and rural, usually go unrecorded. Compared to them, female slaves stood a better chance of leaving a record, particularly in the *columbaria* (collective tombs) of large households. Fewer female than male slaves

were commemorated in these inscriptions. Though partly due to the underrepresentation of women in the epigraphic evidence, this suggests that not only in rural estates but also in upper-class urban households most of the menial work was performed by male slaves and freedmen. Female slaves were usually employed for various household chores, in childcare, for instance as wet-nurses (*nutrices*), and in the personal care of their mistress, for instance as hairdressers (*ornatrices*).⁸ Some of the more specialized tasks required training, which gave these women – once freed – a better start than women of the freeborn poor. The daily lives of female slaves were not only filled by work, but for the younger among them also involved childbearing – with the risk of being separated from their partner or children – and the misery of being sexually available for their masters. Yet, domestic slaves enjoyed a certain measure of protection and had a reasonable chance of being manumitted. Moreover, the large staffs of wealthy urban households formed a complex social world of their own composed of slaves, under-slaves (*vicarii*) and freed men and women, all of whom might be organized in *collegia* for sociability and for the sake of burial (Mouritsen 2013). In these domestic associations of large Roman households, we meet numerous female slaves and freedwomen not only as members, but also as office-holders: female *decuriones*, *curatores*, *quaestores*, a *sacerdos* and even a *quinquennalis* all fulfilled administrative and religious functions in these associations (Hemelrijk 2015: ch. 4). Being elected to such an office was an honour which was considered important enough to be recorded in their brief epitaphs; we may assume that it also gave them a more rewarding social life.

The drunken old woman

Poor freeborn women, especially those who had no male relatives to support them, had to fend for themselves. Without education or job training, they had little means to sustain themselves and, without surviving children, many older women must have been reduced to poverty. In late antiquity, the support of deserving widows was an important element of Christian charity, but this was a novel feature in the ancient world (Atkins and Osborne 2006: 2–3; Brown 2012: 39–45). In pagan society, benefactions were not intended as poor relief, but benefitted especially the wealthy and highly placed among the citizens. The miserable lot of poor elderly women, especially widows, is perhaps reflected in the literary and artistic topic of the *anus ebria*, the drunken old woman (Figure 64.2).

Numerous sculptures and terracotta flasks of a crouching old

woman clinging to her enormous flask of wine and showing clear signs of drunkenness, illustrate the popularity of the theme from the Hellenistic period to the third century AD. Combining prejudices against old women, poverty and lack of self-control, the *anus ebria* was portrayed in the ancient sources with little empathy as a stock figure, both funny and disgusting. Though the clothes of the statues show that she had known better days, the overwhelming impression is one of abandon and destitution.⁹ Ugly, emaciated and alone, the *anus ebria* was the opposite of the dignified elderly *matrona* of the wealthier classes, whose familial authority grew with her age and the number of her children (Dixon 1990). Respectable *matronae* were not supposed to drink, or only modestly and in the company of their husbands. Yet, proverbs, comedy and satirical sources portray elderly destitute women as having the bottle as their only friend, ridiculing her as a ‘wine-soak’ or a ‘much-drinking old hag drinking unmixed wine’.¹⁰ The relation between a stereotype and reality is rarely clear-cut. Yet, for the type to become as popular as it was – not only in the Hellenistic world but also in the Roman Empire (as numerous copies in various materials demonstrate) – the *anus ebria* must have been a recognizable figure in contemporary society. As an example of the misery and loneliness of the unprotected, the stock figure of the *anus ebria* may have served as a warning for all respectable *matronae* not to transgress the restrictions of their sex.



Figure 64.2 Marble statue of the drunken old woman (second century AD; Roman copy of a Greek original). Munich Glyptothek inv.no. 437. (Photo: Christa Koppermann.)

Conclusion

Despite the freedom of movement of Roman women, their financial capacity under Roman law and their regular contribution to the family income, daily life in the Roman world was segregated not only by class but also to some extent by gender. Men and women of the various classes led partly separate lives, meeting at social and religious events, banquets and even in the baths, but also having their own social gatherings and, probably, separate seating in the theatre and amphitheatre.¹¹ Being primarily responsible for their homes and families, women had respected familial roles, but in public life they

were of secondary importance despite the prominence of a small group among them. This was expressed, for instance, by their exclusion from most distributions of food or cash in Roman towns – if mentioned at all, they were last and received least – and has greatly contributed to their underrepresentation in our evidence. Their position in public life has only in exceptional circumstances led to protest, a protest which confirmed the traditional norms (Hemelrijk 1987). In their daily lives, most Roman women seem to have identified with the moral codes of their class and gender and with the values of Roman society at large.

Notes

- 1 For working women, and the tension between the need to work and the ideal of domesticity of the Roman *matrona*, see e.g. Kampen 1981, Flemming 2013, Groen-Vallinga 2013, Holleran 2013.
- 2 Gardner 1990 and 1995; on Roman marriage and the *ius liberorum*, Treggiari 1991: 60–80.
- 3 For the ideals and reality of Roman female dress, see, among others, Scholz 1992, Davies 2002, Edmondson 2008: 22–26 and Olson 2008.
- 4 Sick 1999; for her benefactions, see *CIL* 10, 5183 = *ILS* 5628 = EAOR 4, 46 and *AE* 1946, 174 = *AE* 1992, 244 with Hemelrijk 2013.
- 5 Hemelrijk 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2015 with references.
- 6 Treggiari 1991 and 2007. On slaves within the Roman household, see Edmondson 2011.
- 7 *Juv. Sat.* 6; *Luc. de mercede conductis* 36, followed by Carcopino 1939: 112–124. Hemelrijk 1999: 37, 84–92 on ancient criticism of women’s education.
- 8 Edmondson 2011. See Mouritsen 2013: 49–53 and Treggiari 1975a and b on the gender imbalance among the staff of large Roman households.
- 9 Salomonson 1980; Zanker 1989; Cokayne 2003: 145–149; Parkin 2003: 86–87, 224–226, 247. For a thorough discussion of the varying responses to the *anus ebria*, see Masségliia 2012.
- 10 *Plaut. Curculio* 76–77: *anus . . . multibiba atque merobiba* and 79: *vinossissima*; see further *Hor. Od.* 4.13.4 and, for more examples, Cokayne 2003: 145–146 and Parkin 2003: 350 notes 121–125. For the prohibition to drink: *Aulus Gellius, Noctes Atticae* 10.23.1–2; *Plutarchus, Quaestiones Romanae* 6; *Plutarchus, Lyurgus et Numa* 3.5; *Dionysius of Halicarnassus* 2.25.6; *Valerius Maximus* 2.1.5 and 6.3.9; *Cicero, De Re Publica* 4.6.6; *Plinius, Historia Naturalis* 14.89–90 with Hemelrijk 2009.
- 11 For mixed or separate bathing for women, see Ward 1992 and Fagan 2002: 24–29; on dinner parties and seating arrangements in the theatre and amphitheatre, Hemelrijk 1999: 10–11, 42–47, Rawson 1987 and Edmondson 1996.

References

Atkins, M. and Osborne, R. (eds) (2006) *Poverty in the Roman World*.

- Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Balsdon, J. P. V. D. (1969) *Life and Leisure in Ancient Rome*. London: Bodley Head.
- Brown, P. (2012) *Through the Eye of a Needle. Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350–550 AD*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Carcopino, J. (1939) *La Vie Quotidienne à Rome à l'Apogée de l'Empire*. Paris: Hachette.
- Cohen, D. (1991) *Law, Sexuality, and Society. The Enforcement of Morals in Classical Athens*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Cokayne, K. (2003) *Experiencing Old Age in Ancient Rome*. London: Routledge.
- Davies, G. (2002) Clothes as sign: The case of the large and small Herculaneum women. In L. Llewellyn-Jones (ed.) *Women's Dress in the Ancient Greek World*. London: Duckworth, pp. 227–241.
- Dixon, S. (1990) *The Roman Mother*. London and New York: Routledge (first edition, 1988).
- Edmondson, J. C. (1996) Dynamic arenas: Gladiatorial presentations in the City of Rome and the construction of Roman society during the early Empire. In W. J. Slater (ed.) *Roman Theatre and Society. E. Togo Salmon Papers I*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, pp. 69–112.
- Edmondson, J. (2008) Public dress and social control in late Republican and early Imperial Rome. In J. Edmondson and A. Keith (eds) *Roman Dress and the Fabrics of Roman Culture*. Toronto, Canada: Toronto University Press, pp. 21–46.
- Edmondson, J. (2011) Slavery and the Roman family. In K. Bradley and P. Cartledge (eds) *The Cambridge World History of Slavery, Volume 1: The Ancient Mediterranean World*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press (online), pp. 337–361.
- Fagan, G. G. (2002) *Bathing in Public in the Roman World*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Flemming, R. (2013) Gendering medical provision in the cities of the Roman west. In E. A. Hemelrijk and G. Woolf (eds) *Women and the Roman City in the Latin West*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill (*Mnemosyne Supplements*, Vol. 360), pp. 271–293.
- Gardner, J. F. (1990) *Women in Roman Law and Society*. London: Routledge (first edition, 1986).
- Gardner, J. F. (1995) Gender-role assumptions in Roman law. *EMC/CV* 39, n.s. 14: 377–400.
- George, M. (2005) Family imagery and family values in Roman Italy. In M. George (ed.) *The Roman Family in the Empire: Rome, Italy and*

- Beyond*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 37–66.
- Groen-Vallinga, M. (2013) Desparate housewives? The adaptive family economy and female participation in the Roman urban labour market. In E. A. Hemelrijk and G. Woolf (eds) *Women and the Roman City in the Latin West*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill (*Mnemosyne* Supplements, Vol. 360), pp. 295–312.
- Hemelrijk, E. A. (1987) Women's demonstrations in Republican Rome. In J. Blok and P. Mason (eds) *Sexual Asymmetry. Studies in Ancient Society*. Amsterdam: Gieben, pp. 217–240.
- Hemelrijk, E. A. (1999) *Matrona Docta. Educated Women in the Roman Élite from Cornelia to Julia Domna*. London and New York: Routledge (paperback edition, 2004).
- Hemelrijk, E. A. (2005) Priestesses of the imperial cult in the Latin west: Titles and function. *Antiquité Classique* 74: 137–170.
- Hemelrijk, E. A. (2006) Priestesses of the imperial cult in the Latin west: Benefactions and public honour. *Antiquité Classique* 75: 85–117.
- Hemelrijk, E. A. (2007) Local empresses: Priestesses of the imperial cult in the cities of the Latin west. *Phoenix* 61(3/4): 318–349.
- Hemelrijk, E. A. (2008) Patronesses and “Mothers” of Roman *Collegia*. *Classical Antiquity* 27(1): 115–162.
- Hemelrijk, E. A. (2009) Women and sacrifice in the Roman Empire. In O. Hekster, S. Schmidt-Hofner and C. Witschel (eds) *Ritual Dynamics and Religious Change in the Roman Empire. Proceedings of the Eighth Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire (Heidelberg, July 5–7, 2007)*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill (*Impact of Empire*, Vol. 9), pp. 253–267.
- Hemelrijk, E. A. (2013) Female munificence in the cities of the Latin west. In E. A. Hemelrijk and G. Woolf (eds) *Women and the Roman City in the Latin West*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill (*Mnemosyne* Supplements, Vol. 360), pp. 65–84.
- Hemelrijk, E. A. (2015) *Hidden Lives – Public Personae. Women and Civic Life in the Roman West*. Oxford, UK, and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hemelrijk, E. A. and Woolf, G. (eds) (2013) *Women and the Roman City in the Latin West*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill (*Mnemosyne* Supplements, Vol. 360).
- Holleran, C. (2013) Women and retail in Roman Italy. In E. A. Hemelrijk and G. Woolf (eds) *Women and the Roman City in the Latin West*. Leiden, The Netherlands and Boston, MA: Brill (*Mnemosyne* Supplements, Vol. 360), pp. 313–330.
- Horsfall, N. (1985) CIL VI 37965 = CLE 1988 (Epitaph of Allia

- Potestas): A commentary. *ZPE* 61: 251–272.
- Kampen, N. B. (1981) *Image and Status: Representations of Working Women in Ostia*. Berlin: Mann.
- Masségli, J. (2012) Reasons to be cheerful? Conflicting emotions in the drunken old women of Munich and Rome. In A. Chaniotis (ed.) *Unveiling Emotions. Sources and Methods for the Study of Emotions in the Greek World*. Stuttgart, Germany: Steiner, pp. 413–430.
- Mouritsen, H. (2013) Slavery and manumission in the Roman elite: A study of the *Columbaria* of the Volusii and the Statilii. In M. George (ed.) *Roman Slavery and Roman Material Culture*. Toronto, Canada: Toronto University Press, pp. 43–68.
- Olson, K. (2008) *Dress and the Roman Woman. Self-presentation and Society*. London: Routledge.
- Parkin, T. (2003) *Old Age in the Roman World: A Cultural and Social History*. Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Rawson, E. (1987) *Discrimina Ordinum: The Lex Julia Theatralis*. *PBSR* 55: 83–114.
- Salomonson, J. W. (1980) Der Trunkenbold und die trunkene Alte. *BABesch* 55: 65–106.
- Scholz, B. I. (1992) *Untersuchungen zur Tracht der römischen Matrona*. Cologne, Germany and Vienna, Austria: Boehlau.
- Sick, D. H. (1999) Ummidia Quadratilla: cagey businesswoman or lazy pantomime watcher? *Classical Antiquity* 18(2): 330–348.
- Treggiari, S. M. (1975a) Jobs in the household of Livia. *PBSR* 43: 48–77.
- Treggiari, S. M. (1975b) Family life among the staff of the Volusii. *TAPA* 105: 393–401.
- Treggiari, S. (1991) *Roman Marriage. Iusti Coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.
- Treggiari, S. (2007) *Terentia, Tullia and Publilia. The Women of Cicero's Family*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Ward, R. B. (1992) Women in Roman baths. *HThR* 85: 125–147.
- Zanker, P. (1989) *Die trunkene Alte. Das Lachen der Verhönten*. Frankfurt, Germany: Fischer-Taschenbücher 3960.

STRAINED RELATIONS, GENDER DIFFERENCES, AND DOMESTIC IDEALS

The significance of two Roman family festivals

Fanny Dolansky

Introduction

As a recent survey of scholarship on women and Roman religion shows, interest in the subject since the 1990s has been steady with important studies appearing on topics such as women's participation in the cults of Vesta and Bona Dea (the "Good Goddess") and their religious activities during the archaic and republican periods.¹ In histories and sourcebooks on Roman religion that have become standard introductions, the many entries for "women" in the indices suggest they are in no way marginal to the study of Roman religion.² Valuable as these contributions are, they tend to concentrate on women's involvement in the civic sphere through public cults and special ceremonies. Women's participation in the so-called Bacchanalia of 186 BCE in which unsanctioned rites for the god Bacchus were suppressed by the Senate remains a perennial scholarly interest, and likewise the six Vestal Virgins, civic priestesses of Vesta. Yet an unusual event or a unique priesthood open to a very small segment of the female population offers little insight into the religious roles and practices that defined most women's lives.

It was in the private sphere that the majority of Roman women could, and it seems regularly did, participate in religious ritual through personal acts of devotion such as vows and dedications, and domestic festivals. Women's private religious acts reflect what was particularly important to them such as their health and that of loved ones. Inscriptions are especially helpful in this regard, as they were authored by women themselves and document the activities from

different juridical and socio-economic strata, whereas literary sources are mainly interested in the upper classes. Some examples from Italy dating to the Republic are illustrative. A wet nurse named Paperia, most likely a slave or freedwoman by her name and occupation, dedicated a bronze spike bearing a short inscription along with a bronze replica of a breast to the goddess Diana in her grove at Nemi (*CIL* 12.45). At Placentia, Tullia Superiana offered a terracotta head carved to show new hair growth in fulfillment of her vow to Minerva Memor “willingly and with just cause, on account of the restoration of her hair” (*CIL* 11.1305; Schultz 2006: 101). From Rome, an undated inscription declares, “I, Numisia Aphrodite, set up this gift to Hercules on behalf of the health of my son and my family” (*CIL* 6.286; Schultz 2006: 104).

Annual festivals draw attention to other areas of concern for women as well as ways rituals helped differentiate on the basis of age or status. On the Lupercalia, a civic festival celebrated on February 15, young noble men struck women of childbearing age with strips of goatskin in the hopes of ensuring their fertility. The December rites for Bona Dea held in the house of a leading magistrate were exclusive to women and principally elite women, including the Vestal Virgins who accompanied the magistrate’s wife in performing a civic sacrifice. Such rituals focused on securing the gods’ favour for the welfare of the state while domestic festivals aimed at gaining divine support for individual households instead. Most domestic festivals addressed household dynamics and relations between members. The Saturnalia, for instance, celebrated in mid-December, sought to reduce tensions between male masters and their slaves by affording slaves a period of temporary license and exemption from labour. The Matronalia on March 1 when mistresses feasted their slaves had similar goals, but also entailed sacrifices by husbands to achieve marital concord.

The present chapter seeks to expand our knowledge of women’s religious activities within the domestic sphere specifically by examining two festivals in which women were the primary participants: the Matralia celebrated on June 11 and the Nonae Caprotinae on July 7. Ancient authors, who provide most of the information for determining the composition and significance of domestic rites, predominantly report on celebrations by freeborn, propertied Romans like themselves: members of the upper classes whose households consisted of a freeborn married couple living together with their children, a large slave staff often numbering several dozen, and sometimes former slaves as well. Given such diverse membership, it is not surprising that domestic rituals tended to concern the inner workings of upper-class households and thus offer

valuable insights into interpersonal relationships both between and among the sexes and those of different ages and juridical statuses. The two rituals assessed here illustrate well how studying domestic religion can enhance our understanding of the complexities of relationships within upper-class households and the ways gender and juridical status shaped experiences therein. Both the Matralia and Nonae Caprotinae festivals involved *matronae* (married women) and *ancillae* (slave women) as principal participants, and seem to be associated with the sexual use of female slaves by masters and the dynamics that ensued. These festivals are revealing about attitudes and relationships within the domestic sphere, especially regarding women. Perhaps surprisingly, they have received rather limited attention from historians of the Roman family and specialists in the study of gender and sexuality. Building upon research from these fields in conjunction with scholarship on Roman religion, I aim to highlight the complexity of these festivals and determine some of their significance for freeborn and slave members of upper-class households. In addition to addressing interactions between *matronae* and *ancillae*, these festivals raise questions about the relationships of husbands and wives, the vaunted ideals of marital *concordia* (harmony) and the *univira* (a woman married only once), matrons' relations with their siblings, and women's loyalties within the domestic community.

In my analysis, I also hope to demonstrate the benefits of three aspects of my methodological approach. The first concerns the use of ancient evidence and advocates paying closer attention to the subtleties Greek and Roman authors employ either to distinguish smaller groups within the broad category of "women" by juridical or socio-economic status, age, or other defining characteristics, or instead to elide such distinctions. Related to this is the value of situating rites within their appropriate context; in the present case, that means the household and regarding the Matralia and Nonae Caprotinae as domestic rites that involved and concerned the household as a whole rather than viewing them as "women's rites" which suggest women alone were affected. Using gender as well as juridical status as analytical categories enables a fuller appreciation of these festivals to emerge. Finally, while some earlier studies focused primarily or even exclusively on a single component of these rites, I maintain that they need to be treated holistically, with as many elements taken into consideration as possible.³ Examining only one feature deprives these rites of much of their richness and complexity which in turn denies some of the experiences and significance for their celebrants.

The Matralia

The rites of the Matralia were celebrated at the temple of Mater Matuta who was also identified with the Greek goddesses Ino and Leucothea. Matuta had temples in the Forum Boarium in Rome and in Satricum about 60 km south of the capital. Leucothea had a temple in Chaeronea in central Greece, the hometown of the philosopher and biographer Plutarch who was active in the late first and early second centuries CE. From Plutarch's general familiarity with the festival and the particular proceedings in Chaeronea, it seems the Matralia may have regularly been observed outside Italy. Inclusion of the festival in a calendar dated to 354 CE and illustrated by Filocalus, calligrapher to the late fourth-century CE Pope Damasus I, points to the Matralia's continued relevance in late antiquity and an increasingly Christian environment.⁴ On June 11, *matronae* gathered at Matuta's temple where they admitted a single female slave into the sanctuary, slapped her on the head and beat her, then drove her out. The women, whom authors specify were mothers and not simply married women, then offered prayers on behalf of their nieces and nephews rather than their own children. Plutarch (*Camillus* 5.2, *De fraterno amore* 492D) indicates that when praying, they embraced these children who therefore must have been in the temple; since Plutarch is not specific about the children's ages and uses a generic Greek term (*ta tekna*), there is no reason to believe the children were necessarily infants as one scholar maintains.⁵ According to Varro (*De Lingua Latina* 5.106), a first-century BCE scholar of religion and language, and Ovid (*Fasti* 6.476), a late first-century BCE/early first-century CE poet, *matronae* also gave sacrificial cakes to the goddess which they had baked in special earthenware pots. The early third-century Christian polemicist Tertullian adds in his treatise on monogamy (*De monogamia* 17.4) that only *univirae*, women who had married just once, could crown Matuta's cult image. Although he is unique in reporting this and only addresses adorning the cult statue, a number of scholars have nevertheless insisted the entire festival was celebrated by *univirae* alone.⁶ However, aside from the problems of overly extending a single piece of evidence and from a hostile source no less, there is the further issue of the implausibility of *univirae* being the only freeborn celebrants. Given the apparent ease and frequency of divorce in Roman society, combined with demographic realities and legal injunctions for women to remarry after the death of a spouse or divorce, the number of *univirae* available to celebrate the rites would have been rather small.⁷

Greco-Roman authors themselves struggled to make sense of some

of the customs observed on the Matralia and turned to myth for explanation, centring their aetiologies on the figure of Ino whose tragic family history is worth reviewing. Ino's sister Semele had perished after an encounter with Zeus, a punishment orchestrated by Hera for Zeus' infidelities. Dionysus, born from this union, was left for Ino to raise, though her track record with children – both her own and other people's – was highly suspect. While suffering from divine madness, she had helped her sister Agave murder her son Pentheus, and in a fit of jealousy she was plotting to kill her step-children Phrixus and Helle by inducing a famine that could only be averted if the children were sacrificed. Ino's husband Athamas, driven mad by Hera in her unceasing vengeance on Ino as Dionysus' nurse, murdered their son Learchus, while Ino, in a similar rage, snatched her infant son Melicertes and plunged them both into the sea whereupon they were saved by water nymphs and became gods.

One aspect of Ino's troubled past especially interested Plutarch and Ovid for its potential to explain barring slave women from Matuta's temple. Plutarch suggests this act may serve as a symbol of prohibition because "Ino was incredibly jealous of a female slave on account of her husband" (*Quaestiones Romanae* 16; Babbitt 1936: 29). Ovid elaborates regarding the source of the jealousy:

One of your female attendants, Cadmeis, often enjoyed your husband's embraces. Evil Athamas loved her in secret. She revealed that you gave the farmers roasted seeds. You deny it of course, but it is locked in rumour. This is why you hate a slave girl's service.

(Fasti 6.553–558; Boyle and Woodard 2000: 154)

Athamas' sexual use of Ino's maid, combined with the maid's indiscretion, constitutes a double betrayal of Ino and concerns over such behaviour are proposed to lie at the heart of the Matralia's rites. In historical times, the *ancilla* brought into the temple then beaten accepts punishment on behalf of other slave women for their sexual and verbal transgressions against *matronae*, a punishment perhaps also intended to warn other *ancillae* to avoid such entanglements in the future, if they could.

Kraemer (1992: 67) proposes that the Matralia can be viewed as "a convenient vehicle for the expression of . . . [the] dilemma faced by married Roman women, namely their relationships with their female slaves" and the antagonisms that developed as a result of the latter's sexual liaisons with their masters. Although these liaisons were lawful and wives were expected to tolerate them, ancient authors indicate they caused dissension as wives viewed *ancillae* as rivals.⁸ Even male

opinions about their appropriateness were divided. Plutarch advised new brides and grooms that if a husband sought out a mistress or slave woman to satisfy pleasures he labels “intemperate and tasteless”, his wife should not be angry but see this as a sign of respect for her since he has chosen to “share his intemperance or violent behavior with another woman” (*Moralia* 140B; Pomeroy 1999: 7). The first-century CE philosopher Seneca (*Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales* [= *Epistulae*] 95.37) remarks that though a man may realize that keeping a *paelex* (mistress) is the worst kind of insult (*iniuria*) to his wife, his lust prevents him from behaving otherwise. Along with his contemporary, the Stoic philosopher, Musonius Rufus, Seneca criticized the double standard that existed whereby husbands could have mistresses and male and female slave lovers, but respectable women committed adultery if they had sex with slaves (Sen. *Epistulae* 94.26, 95.37, 123.10; Musonius Rufus 12). Such ideas had a long history as Plautus (*Mercator* 817–829), a comedic playwright of the early second-century BCE, expressed similar sentiments by having the character of an old slave woman commiserate with freeborn wives about the sexual double standard.⁹

An additional factor may have contributed further to the tensions between *matronae* and *ancillae* – the possibility that children could have been produced from slaves’ unions with their masters, as Kraemer (1992: 67) has suggested. Such children would have followed the servile status of their mothers and not posed a formal threat to legitimate offspring born to *matronae*. Yet the presence in households of *vernae* (home-born slaves) sired by masters might have presented other challenges to *matronae* by exposing insecurities they felt about their place in the household and perhaps that of their children as well. Just as *matronae* viewed *ancillae* as rivals for their husbands’ affections, so too might they have worried *vernae* would be rivals to their own children in the same regard.

In his brief discussion of the Matralia, Saller proposes that both its ritual practices and aetiologies contributed to differentiating women within the domestic sphere by separating the honourable wife from the honourless female slave. Both, he points out, belonged to “the subordinate category of the passive” in the symbolic system of Roman males, but a wife, he contends, “had the power to initiate divorce and walk away from an abusive husband, and the powerless slave, female or male” (Saller 1998: 89). Theoretically, Roman wives could “walk away” from husbands who routinely sought sex from their slaves, but the question remains how often they actually did. The existence of the Matralia, especially when considered within the context of a literature that widely recognized problems arising from sexual double standards

and the use of female slaves in particular, strongly suggests that in practice many Roman wives instead put up with this behaviour while resentment and tensions grew presumably towards both their spouses and certainly their slaves. For *matronae*, the Matralia enabled a temporary diminishing or dissolution of these tensions within the safe space of ritual after which the cycle must have resumed. Thus while distinguishing *matronae* from *ancillae*, the ritual beating and expulsion of a slave from Matuta's temple also reinforced the shared condition of both groups of women within the domestic hierarchy, for a wife and a female slave were each essentially powerless in the face of a husband and master's sexual choices.

Shifting away from relations with slaves, the second main component of the Matralia, matrons' prayers for their nieces and nephews, also puzzled ancient authors. Before assessing the theories they put forth, however, it is important to address a misconception in some modern treatments of the festival. A number of scholars and translators maintain that women prayed specifically for their sisters' children because Ovid and Plutarch link the festival's aetiology to Ino, Dionysus' maternal aunt.¹⁰ Bettini (1991: 77, 85ff) goes one step further and insists *materterae* (maternal aunts) prayed only for their nephews, arguing this was an aspect of the special relationship between maternal aunts and their sisters' sons. Yet both Ovid and Plutarch employ language that is decidedly ambiguous. Ovid (*Fasti* 6.559–562) advises a pious mother to pray for *alterius prolem*, “the offspring of another”, instead of her own, while Plutarch (*Quaest. Rom.* 17, *Camillus* 5.2, *De frat. amor.* 492D) refers repeatedly to *ta tekna tōn adelphōn*, which could mean “siblings' children” rather than sisters' specifically.

Though both associate the custom with Ino looking after her sister's son and having better success with him than her own children, Plutarch offers another rationale that lends itself more readily to the interpretation of siblings' children. He suggests simply “the custom is morally excellent and produces much goodwill among kin” (*Quaest. Rom.* 17; Babbitt 1936: 31). One modern explanation locates the custom and Plutarch's statement within Rome's culture of frequent divorce (at least among the upper classes). Kraemer (1992: 64) notes that the frequency of divorce meant mothers were often separated from their children who normally remained in the father's household. She proposes that the Matralia, which linked elite women with their siblings' children, “guaranteed the preservation of ties with the natal family, as well as assuring that siblings (probably sisters) would continue to care for each other's children in the event that mothers and children were separated”. There are some difficulties with this

interpretation, but it does point us in a promising direction. The desire to secure divine protection for a sibling's children may reflect some recognition of the vicissitudes of life – divorce but also death – which surely would have had an impact on children. Praying for and embracing nieces and nephews expresses a commitment to children's future welfare outside the conjugal family unit. Kraemer's insistence on the rites linking *matronae* and their natal families also raises a further dimension: the potential of the festival to bring together sisters, but also women related through marriage, as well as women of different generations, who all shared the status of being matrons and likewise aunts, and the common cause of seeking Mater Matuta's aid in protecting the young.

Though the rituals of the Matralia are relatively easy to reconstruct, their possible meanings and significance are much more complex. I have suggested that the beating and expulsion of a single female slave from Matuta's temple functioned as a combined punishment and warning to *ancillae* about their sexual and verbal indiscretions, and that through this ritual *matronae* could release some of the tensions that had accrued. The prayers seeking divine support for their siblings' children perhaps addressed concerns about their security and future prosperity. But what did the festival accomplish for slave women? Though other festivals that involved slaves such as the Matronalia and Saturnalia can be understood to have offered slaves a reward for service and provided "a release for social antagonisms", it is difficult to interpret the Matralia in the same vein.¹¹ For slave women, it entailed a double exclusion, first from Matuta's temple and then from prayers for nieces and nephews. Kraemer (1992: 67) makes the important observation that slave women could not be *bonae matres* ("good mothers"), as Ovid calls the Matralia's freeborn celebrants, and so were disqualified from prayers to Mater Matuta which would have placed their children in her protection. Both the limited inclusion and concomitant exclusion of slave women from the rites reinforced their abject position within the domestic hierarchy and thus arguably reinforced the stability of the household as slave women were reminded that they were powerless outsiders despite the intimacy some shared with their masters.

The Nonae Caprotinae

The significance of the Matralia becomes even more complicated when we consider it in relation to the Nonae Caprotinae festival which, less than a month later, celebrated the very quality *ancillae* were punished for during the Matralia: their sexual exploitability.

Though largely excluded from the rites of the Matralia, *ancillae* played a central role in the Nonae Caprotinae. In fact, alternate designations for the festival current in late antiquity reflect slave girls' centrality in the actual rites and their aetiology. Macrobius, whose late fourth-century CE dialogue *Saturnalia* treats Roman religious lore and the calendar among other topics, and Polemius Silvius' calendar of 448 CE which he dedicated to the bishop of Lyon, both designate the seventh of July "the slave girls' holiday" (*dies festus ancillarum*, *Sat.* 1.11.36; *ancillarum feriae*). According to Plutarch (*Romulus* 29.2), in Rome the rites were celebrated outside the city in a place called the Goat's Marsh. Mention of the festival in a late fourth-century CE poem of Ausonius (*Eclogarum Liber* 16.9–10) and in Polemius Silvius' calendar, both Gallic sources, suggests the rites may have been regularly observed outside Italy as well, or at least by the late fourth century. Though Plutarch provides considerable detail, he is imprecise about the components and their order. He (*Romulus* 29.6, *Camillus* 33.6) reports that "women" enjoyed a feast held in booths made from fig trees or under a fig tree; it seems most likely *ancillae* partook and possibly *matronae* too perhaps in a similar fashion to the Matronalia when they put on a feast for their slaves. *Ancillae* dressed up in finery and ran around in small groups staging a playful mock battle either before or after the feast (Plut. *Camillus* 33.6); Ausonius (*Ecl.* 16.9–10) adds that they wore their mistresses' clothing. The primary association of the day for Varro (*Ling.* 6.18) was the sacrifice women in Latium offered to Juno Caprotina under a wild fig tree (*caprificus*); he employs a generic term for women (*mulieres*), but Macrobius specifies that freeborn and slave women alike sacrificed (*liberae pariter ancillaeque sacrificant*, *Saturnalia* 1.11.36).

All these customs were traced back to the festival's aetiology which appears in several different accounts. There are certain basic elements to the story, though the variations are particularly interesting for what they suggest about individual authors' attitudes regarding gender and juridical status. The rites commemorated events following the sack of Rome by the Gauls in 390 BCE. An army of Latin allies, led by Livius Postumius, planned to attack the weakened city. Postumius sent a message to the Romans proposing intermarriage as a means of securing peace and insisted they send a large number of women: unmarried daughters, legitimate wives and widows. In some accounts, women from more than one group were requested with the important common attribute that all were honourable, freeborn women.¹² The Romans thus faced an impossible dilemma: surrender their female relations or endure a war. However, a slave girl variously named Philotis, Rhetana or Tutela/Tutula spared them the decision by

offering that she and other attractive *ancillae* dress as freeborn women and go to the enemy, substituting for their mistresses. Once her companions had entertained and disarmed the Latin soldiers – in one version simply inducing them to drink excessively so they would fall asleep, in others exhausting them through sex – the author of the plan gave the signal to the Romans from a wild fig tree and they launched a successful attack. A festival was established in commemoration and Macrobius (*Sat.* 1.11.40) claims the Senate also freed the slaves, gave them dowries from public funds and allowed them to continue wearing the clothes of their freeborn mistresses in recognition of their kindness/service (*beneficium*). While the historicity of the tale is surely questionable – and even some ancient sources doubted the authenticity of the events – its value lies in the attitudes it reflects and how it informs the celebration in historical times.¹³

The slaves' participation in the feast and especially the mock battle look back to events believed to underlie the rites in which the availability of the slave's body was a crucial factor. The rites celebrate the slave women's voluntary sacrifice of their bodies for dishonourable purposes (sex in most versions, heavy drinking with strange men in Macrobius') in order to preserve the *dignitas* or honour of their freeborn mistresses. A slave woman devises the plan, her fellow *ancillae* agree and, in a reversal of the norm, the Roman authorities obey the slaves' wishes. As Saller (1998: 89) points out, "[i]n this legend, as in the real world, the slave woman's lack of honor removed moral inhibitions to give her space for independent action, at the same time as it denied her certain protections". We may wonder, though, how *ancillae* felt about celebrating a festival that recognized their willing self-sacrifice in the remote past when in the present they had no choice but to submit to their masters' desires.

Associated with the slaves' self-sacrifice, neatly encapsulated in Macrobius' use of *beneficium* with its dual meanings of "kindness" and "service", is the emphasis in several accounts on their physical beauty and libidinous nature. The slave girls in Plutarch and Polyaeus' versions are pretty, even noble in appearance, beginning with the variously named author of the ruse. Her identity further reinforces the sexual dimension as she is generally called Philotis, "She who loves", or Tutela/Tutula, "Protection", which plausibly refers not to the protection of her own virtue but rather that of her master's freeborn wife or daughter. In one of Plutarch's treatments (*Mor.* 313A), the Latins are even exhausted "by unremitting intercourse". Perhaps these emphases on the slave girls' sexuality were attempts in part to explain and even excuse the sexual use of female slaves in historical times by making them complicit in their own exploitation: they were pretty,

lusty and willing to be used in the past, which helped justify masters' relations with them in the present. Yet in regard to freeborn women and specifically *matronae*, the focus on how desirable and desirous the slave girls were reminds us of the jealousies and anxieties *matronae* are said to have harboured which the Matralia sought to address and at least temporarily alleviate. The aetiology also draws attention to the slaves' treacherous nature, which is likewise a feature of the aetiology of the Matralia; although their cunning ultimately benefitted both their freeborn mistresses and masters in the case of the events underlying the Nonae Caprotinae, this quality was cause for concern and raises questions about loyalties within the domestic community. It is difficult, therefore, to appreciate fully what the rites on the Nones were intended to accomplish for *matronae* who were expected to celebrate the slaves' legendary sacrifice and essentially endorse behaviour that strained the very household dynamics they had attempted to ease less than a month earlier.

In one of the more extensive recent treatments of the festival, Bremmer classifies the Nonae Caprotinae as a "rite of reversal", a type of ritual in which participants assume roles and engage in practices that are opposite the norm. He identifies several such elements on the Nones including the communal sacrifice of *matronae* and *ancillae* to Juno Caprotina, and the special attire worn by *ancillae*. Joint sacrifices were unusual since slaves were generally observers rather than participants when freeborn members of the household performed sacrifices, though Bremmer is not correct when he states that "matrons normally had their own cults and festivals, such as the Matronalia" since on this occasion slaves were certainly involved, as *matronae* sponsored a feast for them.¹⁴ Thus during the sacrifice on the Nones, it initially appears that status distinctions were momentarily disregarded and *matronae* and *ancillae* were simply women honouring Juno, as Varro's generic *mulieres* perhaps intended to signal. Yet differences could not be ignored as *ancillae* performed the sacrifice dressed in *stolae*, the quintessential garments of Roman *matronae*. A complete reversal, however, does not seem to have occurred, as there is no evidence that matrons wore slaves' clothing in return. Bremmer (1987: 79) suggests this was not accidental, for "the reality of everyday life had to remain visible enough for the slaves not to get ideas which might lead to a permanent reversal of the social order". This is likewise the case during other family festivals, such as the Saturnalia, in which slaves were granted a degree of freedom, yet the limited and artificial nature of the licence, while providing some relief from their condition, arguably helped reaffirm the hierarchical structure of the household and their place within it.¹⁵ In this regard,

we cannot forget that not only juridical status but also gender helped define Roman social order. Therefore, when *ancillae* enjoyed a day of temporary freedoms and reversals by feasting and staging mock battles while dressed as matrons, they commemorated events that celebrated their expendability and reinforced their position at the bottom of the domestic hierarchy by virtue of their status and gender.

Conclusions

The Matralia and Nonae Caprotinae festivals both concerned the inner workings of the household and its complex interpersonal relationships. In particular, the rites addressed dynamics between *matronae* and *ancillae* that seem to have been challenged, if not compromised by, masters' sexual liaisons with their female slaves. The rites, therefore, cast doubt on the notion of marital *concordia*, a celebrated ideal in Roman society that appears to have been difficult to attain. Indeed, only about three months earlier, households celebrated the Matronalia when husbands performed sacrifices specifically with the object of preserving their wives and their marriages.¹⁶ Overall, the June and July rites reveal how the combination of gender and juridical status could complicate a range of domestic relationships involving women. Through the distinct rituals that comprised the two festivals, matters of significant concern for *matronae*, such as jealousies towards female slaves and anxieties about the fate of siblings' children, were raised and at least temporarily resolved. Yet for *ancillae*, though holidays afforded some respite from the severity of the servile condition, the Matralia and Nonae Caprotinae kept their status clearly in view through the composition of the rites and the stories told to explain their unique customs. These festivals highlight female slaves' lack of honour and powerlessness in contrast to freeborn women in the household and wives in particular, and dramatically recall the impossible choices *ancillae* faced as they were unable to refuse sex with their masters though likely to incur the resentment and mistrust of their mistresses for whom such unions were associated with disloyalty and betrayal.

Notes

- 1 Holland 2012. Among the works highlighted, those new to the study of women and Roman religion may find especially useful Richlin 1997 (updated in Richlin 2014: 197–240); Staples 1998; Schultz 2006; Takács 2008.
- 2 See Richlin 2014: 28–33, however, on the state of the question. Standard English-language histories and sourcebooks include Beard *et al.* 1998; Warrior 2002; Rüpke 2007.

- 3 E.g. Boëls-Janssen 1993: 341–353; Saller 1998; Smith 2000.
- 4 Salzman 1991: 124 (table 3) and 128.
- 5 Boëls-Janssen 1993: 344.
- 6 E.g. Boyle and Woodard 2000: 301 *ad* 6.551–562; Smith 2000: 139, 149; Littlewood 2006: 153 on Ov. *Fast.* 6.475. Cf. Kraemer 1992: 62, 67.
- 7 Treggiari 1991a, 1991b: 232–236.
- 8 Ripat 2014: 347–353.
- 9 See Richlin 2014: 180, 222–223 on the sexual use of *ancillae* as a subject treated in Roman comedies.
- 10 E.g. Babbitt 1936: 31; Hembold 1939: 325; Kraemer 1992: 62; Boëls-Janssen 1993: 342; Takács 2008: 50.
- 11 Bradley 1979: 116; Dolansky 2011a: 201–208, 2011b: 495–500.
- 12 Unmarried daughters: Plut. *Rom.* 29.4, *Camill.* 33.2; Polyaeus, *Stratagems* 8.30. Legitimate wives: Plut. *Mor.* 313A; Macrobian *Sat.* 1.11.37. Widows: Plut. *Rom.* 29.4.
- 13 For instance, Plutarch (*Camill.* 33.2) describes the aetiological story as “fabulous” (*muthōdē*).
- 14 Bremmer 1987: 82; Dolansky 2011a: 204–205 for the probable inclusion of slaves of both sexes.
- 15 Dolansky 2011b: 495–500.
- 16 [Acro] on Hor. *Carm.* 3.8.1; Dolansky 2011a: 196–197 and 200–201.

References

- Babbitt, F. C. (trans.) (1936) *Plutarch Moralia*. London: William Heinemann.
- Beard, M., North, J. and Price, S. (1998) *Religions of Rome*, 2 volumes. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bettini, M. (1991) *Anthropology and Roman Culture*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Boëls-Janssen, N. (1993) *La Vie Religieuse des Matrones dans la Rome Archaique*. Rome: École Française de Rome.
- Boyle, T. and Woodard, R. D. (2000) *Ovid Fasti*. London: Penguin.
- Bradley, K. R. (1979) Holidays for slaves. *Symbolae Osloenses* 54: 111–118.
- Bremmer, J. N. (1987) Myth and ritual in Ancient Rome: The Nonae Capratinae. In J. N. Bremmer and N. M. Horsfall (eds) *Roman Myth and Mythography*. London: Institute of Classical Studies, Bulletin Supplement 52: 76–88.
- Dolansky, F. (2011a) Reconsidering the Matronalia and women’s rites. *Classical World* 104(2): 191–209.
- Dolansky, F. (2011b) celebrating the Saturnalia: Religious ritual and Roman domestic life. In B. Rawson (ed.) *A Companion to Families in*

- the Greek and Roman Worlds*. Malden, MD: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 488–503.
- Hembold, W. C. (trans.) (1939) *Plutarch Moralia*. London: William Heinemann.
- Holland, L. L. (2012) Women and Roman religion. In S. L. James and S. Dillon (eds) *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*. Malden, MD: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 204–214.
- Kraemer, R. S. (1992) *Her Share of the Blessings*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Littlewood, R. J. (2006) *A Commentary on Ovid's Fasti, Book 6*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Pomeroy, S. B. (1999) *Plutarch's Advice to the bride and groom and A consolation to his wife*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Richlin, A. (1997) Carrying water in a sieve: Class and the body in Roman women's religion. In K. L. King (ed.) *Women and Goddess Traditions*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, pp. 330–374.
- Richlin, A. (2014) *Arguments with Silence*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Ripat, P. (2014) Cheating women: Curse tablets and Roman wives. In K. B. Stratton and D. S. Kalleres (eds) *Daughters of Hecate*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 340–364.
- Rüpke, J. (2007) *Religion of the Romans*. Malden, MA: Polity Press.
- Saller, R. P. (1998) Symbols of gender and status hierarchies in the Roman household. In S. Joshel and S. Murnaghan (eds) *Women and Slaves in Greco-Roman Culture*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 85–91.
- Salzman, M. (1991) *On Roman Time*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Schultz, C. (2006) *Women's Religious Activity in the Roman Republic*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.
- Smith, C. (2000) Worshipping Mater Matuta: Ritual and context. In E. Bispham and C. Smith (eds) *Religion in Archaic and Republican Rome and Italy*. Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press.
- Takács, S. (2008) *Vestal Virgins, Sibyls, and Matrons*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Treggiari, S. (1991a) Divorce Roman style: How easy and how frequent was it? In B. Rawson (ed.) *Marriage, Divorce, and Children in Ancient Rome*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 31–46.
- Treggiari, S. (1991b) *Roman Marriage*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Warrior, V. (2002) *Roman Religion: A Sourcebook*. Newburyport, MA:

ROMAN WOMEN IN THE URBAN ECONOMY

Occupations, social connections, and gendered exclusions

Hilary Becker

The Roman epigraphic habit, much like Roman literature and history, favors the story of its male inhabitants. Consider, for example, this women's epitaph from Rome which focuses on the male of the family:

Marcus Octavius Primigenius, a hair-plucker (*alipilus*) at the baths by the Triton, made (this funerary plot) for Ancharena Aphe, his very pious and very dear wife (*coniugi sanctissimae et carissimae*), concerning whom nothing grieved him unless her death, (and made this) for himself, for their freedmen and freedwomen and for their descendants.¹

Marcus Octavius was probably a freedman who did well enough to in turn own slaves and free some of them. Ancharena Aphe's association with Octavius suggests that she, too, might have once been a slave. While her husband's occupation is listed, no details are recorded about Ancharena's status or occupation. And while there are many similar women who are commemorated in their epitaphs only with superlative adjectives, such as *sanctissima et carissima*, there is so much more to be said about Roman women, especially those who participated in the commercial work force. Herein, the Roman urban world is fleshed out with the aim of examining the occupations of female slaves, freedwomen, and free women in the urban economy.

This study surveys the different types of jobs in the urban economy that a Roman woman might have been able to hold. The pendant question throughout will be what types of positions and socio-economic opportunities women could not access, whether due to social *mores* or codified law. Throughout, the interest will be to

recognize the very real social and legal restrictions that were a part of daily life for a Roman woman, and the many, varied jobs women nevertheless undertook. Understanding Roman working women within their ancient social and legal contexts allows us better to understand their economic agency and influence.

A survey of female professional employment

The city of Rome provides a rich body of evidence for the presence of women in the economy. The most useful tools for understanding types of female employment are funerary epitaphs of the late Republican and Imperial periods (first century BC–AD third century), which occasionally list the occupations held by women. While inscriptions listing one's occupation can be found in many locations around the empire, the greatest concentration comes from Rome, where the practice was clearly en vogue. Sandra Joshel has collected 1,470 funerary inscriptions listing occupations from Rome.² Out of this corpus, only 14 percent (for a total of 208) belonged to women. Similar percentages hold with epigraphical practices across the empire. It is first fitting to consider whether this percentage reflects the number of women actually working in proportion to men. Were fewer women really working?

Women were more likely to be commemorated for certain womanly virtues than for their occupations. Perhaps this reflects a patriarchal ideal that rewards a man for providing for his family, perhaps in hopes that his wife did not have a demonstrable need to work outside of her expected domestic roles. It may even be that a woman's accomplishments in terms of her family life were more valued by her (and also by her husband). In addition, not all trades seem to be proportionally represented. The number of trades devoted to luxury and foreign imports represented in this sample seems disproportionately high, but it is these individuals who might have been better able to afford a funerary epitaph.

Domestic occupations were some of the most popular professions for women, whether they were slaves, freedwomen, or (rarely) free-born.³ In Rome, more than 40 percent of women whose occupations are known from their epitaphs were in the domestic industry; one popular job was hairdresser (*ornatrix*). Hairdressers could be slaves attached to a particular household, or in other instances work as independent contractors.⁴ Based on extant inscriptions from Rome and Ostia, roughly 20 percent of women with occupational inscriptions were *ornatrices*.⁵ Some other domestic positions include personal attendant,

dresser, and masseuse.

Roman women, whether slaves, freedwomen, or free, also found employment as midwives (*obstetrices*), wet nurses (*nutrices*), and doctors (*medicae*), either attached to a household staff or independently.⁶ Slaves with medical training had a high market value, and no distinction was made as to their value whether they were male or female (*Codex Justinianus* 7.7.1.5a). Male doctors were highly regarded and praised for their expertise. While this same high regard applied to female doctors, it happens occasionally that the praise for a *medica* is qualified, that she is good even though she is a woman.⁷ Ausonius (*Parentalia* 6.6) praises Aemilia Hilaria, who was *more virum medicis artibus experiens*, “knowledgeable in medical arts according to the custom of men.”⁸ In a similar fashion, in a Greek inscription from Roman Pergamon, Glycon, a doctor, praises both his father and wife, who are also doctors, and comments on Pantheia, his wife, stating “you raised high our common fame in the art of medicine, and even though a woman, you did not fall short of my skill” (*IGRR IV.507*).⁹

Other women served basic sensual and entertainment needs in professions that were generally low paying and considered base. There were female singers, dancers, even gladiators (see McCullough, this volume). Prostitution was a legal, but debased, profession in the eyes of both Roman society and law (see Åshede, this volume). Many women also worked in bars and inns serving food. Such work was generally considered less than reputable, and these women might provide sex along with hospitality. Graffiti in such locations at Pompeii speak to the ready sexual availability of some bar maids and waitresses, while Roman jurists equate such women with prostitutes so long as they are selling sex.¹⁰

Professions in retail and commerce

A common form of employment for women (and even girls) was in retail settings. Little prior experience or education (save for the ability to do basic math) was needed for such a position.¹¹ Among the many painted and carved scenes depicting Romans at work, women are most often depicted in retail situations. For example, a stone shop sign from Ostia advertises the wares of a small grocery store. Behind the counter, a woman sells products such as hares, dead fowl, and other materials stacked in baskets to waiting customers.¹²

In Pompeii two painted scenes from the House of Marcus Vecilius Verecundus, a *vestiarius* (clothes maker and seller), depict the industry

of his shop.¹³ One scene shows male felt combers working, as well as Verecundus, who is labeled and holds up a cloth produced at his shop. The other panel shows an anonymous woman, who might be his wife, at work in the shop (Figure 66.1). This saleswoman holds shoes in her hands, and has other shoes as well as cloth wares on tables and shelves, ready for sale. A customer sits nearby, looking at the saleswoman making it clear that she, and her wares, constitute the focus of this composition.

Women retailers sold a variety of specialized products. To list just a few: Aurelia Nais was a *piscatrix* who sold fish in the mercantile area near the Tiber at the Galban warehouse (*Horrea Galbae*) in Rome (*CIL* VI.9801).¹⁴ There was a female dealer in seeds (*seminaria*), another dealer in beans (*fabaria*), and others who sold barley, preserved foods (*conditaria*), and honey (*mellaria*).¹⁵ While Aurelia Nais and many other saleswomen included their shop location on their epigraphs, many women may not have worked from a permanent location and may have been street hawkers or sold from temporary locations.¹⁶

A relief from Trastevere in Rome (now in Dresden) allows us to imagine yet another role for a woman in the retail workplace (Figure 66.2).¹⁷ On the right is a butcher cutting meat in his workshop while a well-coiffed woman sits writing on a wax tablet on the left. It has been suggested that she could be a freelance accountant. But these two figures are placed in pendant positions on a funerary stele, so it seems more likely that she was his wife rather than hired help. It could be that his wife did all kinds of work as needed in his butcher shop, including retail, and that one of these tasks might have been keeping the books. Indeed, a woman's responsibility would depend on her degree of literacy and prior experience, as well as on the family's wealth (and whether she only needed to work occasionally). A large shop or workshop with a number of employees might allow a woman to specialize in particular tasks all the more.

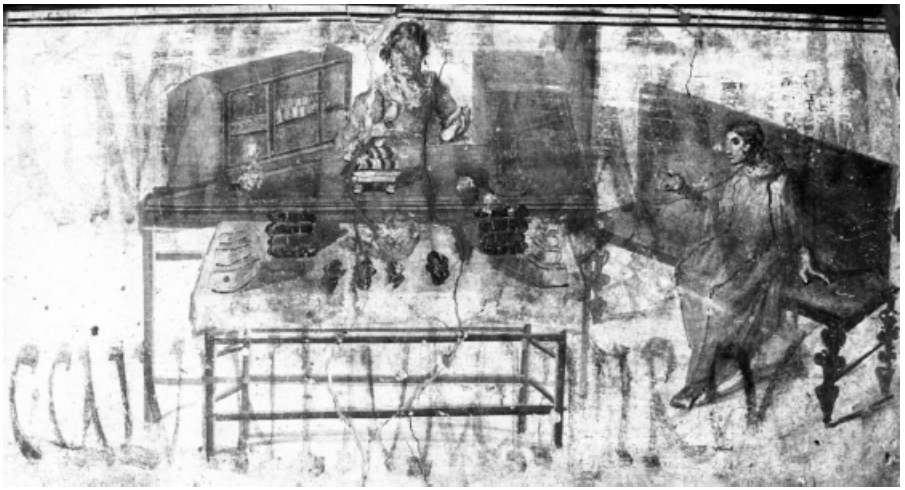


Figure 66.1 House of Marcus Vecilius Verecundus. Via dell'Abbondanza, Pompeii (IX,7, 6–7). After 62 AD shop scene of a cloth and shoe saleswoman. In Stefani and Varone (2009). (Permission from the Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli e Pompei.)



Figure 66.2 Marble relief of a butcher and a woman keeping records. First half of the second century AD Skulpturensammlung, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, inv. no. ZV44. (Photo: Elke Estel. Found in Trastevere, Rome.)

Evidence for physical labor in the workplace

The Dresden relief and the potential flexibility of Roman women in

the workplace raise the question of whether the anonymous woman in the relief could have been a butcher herself.¹⁸ More to the point, did Roman women have jobs that required physical labor or exertion? It is likely that the girls and women who worked with gold (i.e., *auri netrix*, *auri vetrix*) did it themselves, as with the pearl and gem setters.¹⁹ An epitaph in Rome lists ten individuals as *ferrari[i]* (blacksmiths), most of whom are freed persons bearing the name of the *gens Titia* (CIL VI.9398). Presumably, most learned their trade during servitude. There are two freedwomen, Fannia Calliste and Fannia Pieris, included in this group. While the Fannias were clearly part of the group of *ferrarii*, it is not clear whether they worked iron or only sold it.

Similar questions might be asked of Cornelia Venusta and Publius Aebutius, a married couple who were both part of the nail-making industry (*clavarii*) (CIL V.7023). Did Cornelia and Publius both manufacture nails and sell them, or did he manufacture them while she sold them?²⁰ Likewise for the baker (*furnaria*) Valeria Euterpia in Carthage, married to a *furnarius*, and of a woman in the lime industry (*calcaria*) in Pompeii.²¹ Is the only function of perfumers, such as Biena Cor[?] in Rome or Licinia Primigenia in Puteoli or an anonymous *unguentaria* mentioned by Pliny the Elder to sell perfumes? (Pliny the Elder *Naturalis historia* 8.5; CIL VI.10006; CIL X.1965). A now missing painting of Cupids and Psyche at work in a perfume shop from Pompeii may provide helpful evidence (Figure 66.3).²²



Figure 66.3 Cupids and Erotes in a perfume shop (fresco now lost). House VII.7.5, Pompeii. (After Von Trendelenburg 1874, pl.3.2b.)

This painting depicts one Cupid using a mallet at a wedge press to make perfumed oil. There are many depictions of Cupids working wedge presses in Roman art and they are always male (i.e., Psyche does not do this work). In this scene, other Cupids do other manufacturing

work, while it is the Psyche who assist a customer with trying a new perfume. However, it must be noted that a similar composition, the famous perfume workshop from *oecus q* in the House of the Vettii in Pompeii, does show a female Psyche working: she is seated and stirring a heated concoction.²³ If such imaginary work scenes are accurate, the perfume industry gives evidence of women selling—and also working—in the workshop, even if they may not be doing the most labor-intensive tasks.

A relief from Roman-Gaul, from Grand (Vosges, France), depicts a woman surrounded by symbols of industry in her workshop ([Figure 66.4](#)).²⁴ The central figure rests her foot on a pedestal and holds a book or tablet on her left knee. It seems that this woman is about to stir a pot, which sits on a furnace in a manner not unlike that of the perfumist Psyche from the House of the Vettii. Behind her, a second woman works on a particular mixture and there are containers and glasses at different levels. Is she a local pharmacist? Scholars have also suggested that she could be making soap, or beer, or even glass. One of the most popular interpretations is that this relief depicts Meditrina, the personification of medicine, the daughter of Asclepius. Even if this relief does depict Meditrina, could it not represent a real female pharmacist or soap maker, especially since this is a funerary relief?

Similarly, a partially preserved funerary relief from Ostia depicts a woman, Septimia Stratonice, holding up a cobbler's last for making shoes ([Figure 66.5](#)).²⁵ Natalie Kampen found it highly unlikely “that Septimia Stratonice is depicted only as the personification of craft.”²⁶ But is Septimia a *sutrix*, (a cobbler)? No inscriptions attest to female cobblers, only male, but that is not exceptional given that there are so few extant occupational inscriptions for women. While the inscription is damaged, a word beginning with the letter “S” follows the name of Septimia—could this have been the term *s[utrix]*?

The Roman textile industry was traditionally associated with women at home, but it offered numerous jobs to women and men in both domestic contexts and commercial workshops. It offered numerous jobs for women that involved spinning raw material, sewing finished products, or selling cloth.²⁷ In the fulling industry, women may not have carried out the more demanding tasks such as treading on and treating the cloth, but rather jobs such as inspecting the final product.²⁸ Overall, defining the breakdown of gender differentiation in the textile industry (especially for work done outside the home) remains difficult.²⁹ Indeed, in Rome and beyond, the presence of women in certain textile occupations can be demonstrated only by singular epigraphical examples, such as a *linaria* (linen weaver) or a

textrix (weaver).³⁰ So if no women are clearly attested in the ranks of *vestiarii tenuarii*, tailors of fine clothing, does this mean that women were not doing such tasks?³¹



Figure 66.4 Limestone relief of a female pharmacist or soap maker. Mid-second century AD *Épinal*, Musée Départemental des

Vosges, inv. no. 61. Found near the amphitheater in Grand (Vosges), France.

Importantly, there is little evidence of female participation in some more physical and labor-intensive fields, such as woodworking, architecture, and construction. Out of 112 names connected to the building industry in Rome, none is female.³² However, a terracotta tile found at Pietrabbondante (in the region of Molise) provides archaeological evidence of girls in the construction industry at some level. In the early first century BC, two teenage girls, Detfri and Amica, left inscriptions (each, it seems, in her own hand) on a tile (CIL I.3556a) (Figure 66.6).



Figure 66.5 Marble relief of Septimia Stratonice, *sutrix* (?). Second century AD Ostia, Museo Ostiense, Magazzino. Inv. 1418.

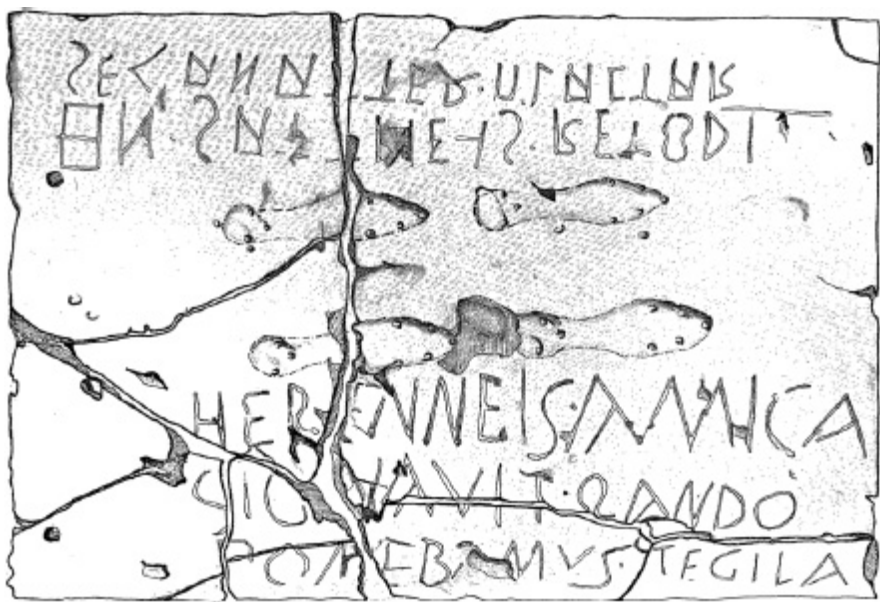


Figure 66.6 Terracotta tile from Pietrabbondante signed by Detfri and Amica. Early first century BC. La Regina 1976: 285.

A: *eíre]n[neís] sattíeís detfri seganatted playtad*

B: *herenneis amica signavit q[u]ando ponebamus tegila(s)*

A: Detfri, (slave) of Herennius Sattius, signed (this) with the sole of her shoes

B: Amica, (slave) of Herennius signed (this)

Detfri and Amica are identified as slaves because they list their own names followed by that of Herennius Sattius in the genitive, which indicates that these girls are his property. Evidently, Herennius operates the tile workshop in which they worked.³³ The girls' age has been estimated due to the size of the footprints they used to "sign" the tile—clearly Detfri and Amica were having a playful day at the workshop. Due to their literacy and perhaps their gender, it has been suggested that these girls were overseeing the production, in a manner like the *institutores* discussed below.³⁴ And yet, the Latin inscription (B) left by Amica leaves a bit more information, for she explained that she signed it, "when we were setting down the tiles." This phrase surely describes action and it is not inconceivable for two teenagers to be helping to pour wet clay into tile molds, or even to lift the finished product (the tile measures 94 by 66 cm).³⁵ The unparalleled

inscriptions of Detfri and Amica hint that many women's responsibilities and occupational activities are unattested.

Feminae remotae et opera virilis (excluded women and men's work)

Both long-standing custom (*mos maiorum*) and explicit Roman law excluded Roman women from several jobs, with only particular exceptions. Women were not allowed to hold civic or public offices which, although unpaid, are positions of influence and power (Ulpian *Digest* 50.17.12; Paulus *Digest* 5.1.12.2).³⁶ Additionally, they were not allowed to serve as judges (*iudices*) in courts (Paulus *Digest* 5.1.12.2), nor to represent someone else in court.³⁷ Ulpian's explanation for this exclusion considers such roles to be explicitly *opera virilis*—quite literally “the work of men.” He went on to write that getting caught up in someone else's lawsuit was *contra pudicitiam sexui congruentem* or “exactly the reverse of the modesty suitable for their sex” (Ulpian *Digest* 3.1.1.5).³⁸ Thus there is a clear idea of suitable men's work in ancient Rome and a woman's need to maintain *pudicitia* precluded her participation in these jobs and roles.

Roman law also outlined specific, protected rights in the commercial sphere. At times, the jurists state outright that the laws they are defining also apply to women. When Ulpian discussed the basic protections if *anyone* (*si quis negotia alterius . . . gesserit*) had conducted business for another person, he defines emphatically (*non dubitatur*) that he includes women in his definition of ‘anyone,’ and that women have the right to sue (and be sued) over business matters (Ulpian *Digest* 3.5.3).³⁹

While all of the legal capacities that women held would have been important for all business women, there were other restrictions. Due to the cultural and social perception that a woman has *infirmitas* and *inbecillitas* (in both cases: weakness), a *senatus consultum Velleianum* was enacted during the reigns of Augustus and Claudius, which would serve to protect a woman's (and her family's) financial resources (Ulpian *Digest* 16.1.2.2–3).⁴⁰ This resolution would have certainly restricted a business woman's ability to broker deals, as she was not allowed to offer herself as a surety for someone else.⁴¹ If a woman could not cover the debts of her clients, it follows that women were not allowed to be bankers.⁴² The jurist Callistratus explains (*Digest* 2.13.12):

Feminae remotae videntur ab officio argentarii, cum ea opera virilis sit.

“It seems proper that women are debarred from the office of banker, since this is a man’s task.”

Nikolaus Benke observes that one reason for this was to exclude “women from the increased social standing and control that would have ensued from successful performance as a banker.”⁴³ While women could not be bankers, there are numerous references in literature to women giving loans and taking loans.⁴⁴ Cicero provides the story of Sassia, an elite woman from Larinum, who lent money to a doctor (a freedman) to set up a shop (Cicero *Pro Cluentio* 178).⁴⁵ Valuable evidence for this industry comes from nearly 170 waxed wooden tablets of the Sulpicii archive from Pompeii, which preserve banking transactions from the mid-first century AD.⁴⁶ The Sulpicii lent and borrowed money, and even worked to recover debts. Euplia, a Greek woman from Melos appearing in the archive, borrowed money on three different occasions (all of which she repaid) between AD 42–43 (*Tabulae Pompeianae Sulpiciorum* 60–62).⁴⁷ For one of the loans, the money that Euplia borrowed ultimately came from one Titinia Anthracis (*TPS* 60). Evidently, the banker Gaius Sulpicius Cinnamus brokered the loan and repayment on Titinia’s behalf, serving as an intermediary between the debtor and the source of the capital. While Titinia could not have been an *argentaria*, Jane Gardner points out that there was no legal reason why Titinia could not have made a personal loan to Euplia. Indeed, if Titinia had needed to sue Euplia on her own, she would have had every right to do so. Instead, Titinia let the Sulpicii handle the transaction because it was more convenient for her.⁴⁸ While not all of the texts are totally legible, it appears that all or most of the women taking out loans did so accompanied by a tutor.⁴⁹ Women were assigned tutors to protect their property due to the aforementioned fears of women’s ability to deal with serious financial matters (e.g., accepting inheritances, wills, selling certain land).⁵⁰ Suzanne Dixon explains that, when making such transactions, a tutor would “bestow his *auctoritas* for certain specified actions (most involving a legal ritual) which might reduce the estate drastically.”⁵¹ For example, a tablet preserved from Herculaneum explicitly states that Pompeia Anthis took on debt with the authorization of her tutor (*Tabulae Herculanenses* 70).⁵²

Although it was a public function of the Roman state, there is one attestation of a female tax collector: the jurist Paulus refers to Moschis, because she died in debt, but, importantly, no comment is made about the suitability of a woman for such a profession (Paulus *Digest* 49.14.47). Gardner speculates that Moschis inherited the position from a family member and because the job was so important to the state, she was allowed to carry out the duties.⁵³ Just as with

women taking out loans, Moschis likely would have needed to have a tutor assist her.

Social restrictions to commerce

Not only legal strictures, but also conventions for social networking served to limit women's access to political and commercial possibilities. As Benke explains, "women are excluded from economic activities that could strengthen their societal presence in a way that would consequently lead to their becoming significant players in the state's politics and administration."⁵⁴

Commonly, working-class Romans gathered in guilds or clubs known as *collegia*, which were organized to serve different trades and also religious groups. Paul Veyne stresses that membership in *collegia* was reserved for men and that women were not admitted as members.⁵⁵ *Collegia* were useful because they furnished opportunities for individuals in similar fields to banquet and worship together, and even to be buried together. Such clubs offered opportunities for men in the same field to make connections, which certainly may have had ramifications in the business world.

Why was membership in occupational *collegia* not allowed for women? Perhaps the principal reason is that there were socio-political offices within the *collegium* which, as Veyne describes it, "mimicked the political organization of the cities."⁵⁶ Roman women were never allowed to vote or run for office, thus even these offices would be unimaginable for women. Since these clubs served as men's banqueting clubs, the exclusion of women might have been part of the point.

While women could not be a part of a *collegium*, elite women could show favor to a particular trade guild. Both male and female elites could adopt a particular professional *collegium* and bestow offerings such as meals or buildings for *collegium* meetings, or a burial ground.⁵⁷ *Patronae* lent their prestige and connections to their chosen *collegium* and would, in turn, be honored for their patronage and favor, with symbols such a statue of the patroness in their clubhouse or an honorific inscription. While male patrons of *collegia* are much more common (there are only 14 known patronesses compared to over 400 patrons) this is a socially prominent position with a connection to the working sector of the economy.⁵⁸

Mulieres enim . . . ipsae sibi negotia tractant (Sisters are doin' it for themselves)

There clearly were limitations to the jobs and social benefits (like the *collegia*) in which women could participate. Nevertheless, women served in a number of very key roles in a number of sectors, positions that in many cases required independent decision-making, managing staff, and the like. The Roman jurist Gaius acknowledged that there was a common belief that women had a natural weakness and needed protection. But Gaius believed that this opinion was belied by the active participation of women in the Roman economy. He says that *mulieres enim quae perfectae aetatis sunt, ipsae sibi negotia tractant*, “indeed women themselves, who are of mature age, are handling business matters for themselves” (*Institutes of Gaius* I.190–9).⁵⁹

Roman women served in many managerial and supervisory roles in the work force, as agents for someone else or managing their own workshop, shop, ship, or other commercial concern. The terminology and precise obligations of these tasks vary, but they share the managerial function and a status, in general (except for those enslaved), of independent entrepreneurs. Ulpian explains that the umbrella term for all of these positions is *institutor*, a middleman (or -woman) who conducts business in a shop or any other trade (Ulpian *Digest* 14.3.3).⁶⁰ Men and women, slaves, and children were all eligible to be appointed as *institutores* (Ulpian *Digest* 14.3.7.1–2 and 14.3.8). They were not only responsible for managing a business, including buying tools and raw materials, food and clothing of the workers, but also for managing staffing needs, the maintenance of the shop or workshop, and managing the sale of the finished products.⁶¹

Institutores often have specialized, descriptive titles. One who manages an apartment building (*insula*) is an *insularius*, while an *offinator* manages a workshop (*officina*).⁶² While no *insularia* is attested, there is one *officinatrix* in Rome, named Iunia Crocale. Iunia died aged 30, but it is unclear what kind of workshop she managed (*CIL* VI.9715). Ulpian indicates that this tradition of women managing also extends to the maritime world, where the same rules apply for women as men (Ulpian *Digest* 14.1.1.16).⁶³ Such a woman (*magistra navis*?) would be responsible for a ship, including such tasks as shipping cargo or leasing the ship (Ulpian *Digest* 14.1.1.12).

The lead pipe and brick industries both offer opportunities to trace Roman women working as managers. Private access to water in Rome was an imperially granted privilege, and thus when pipe was laid it

usually was stamped with the name of the owner of the property (in the genitive), while the *plumbarius*, -a who owned the workshop that made the pipe was listed in the nominative.⁶⁴ A pipe from Rome reads, *M(arci) Aemili Aemiliani / Marcia Caenis fec(it)* (CIL XV.7378a).⁶⁵ The inscription indicates that, Marcia Caenis “made it” for the property of Marcus Aemilius Aemilianus. Perhaps the most common, modern association between women and economy using the verb *fecit* is *lanam fecit*: “she spun the wool” (CIL VI.15346). The testimony of at least 26 other examples of women known from other pipes is certainly valuable for our knowledge of women in the workplace. This sample of a total of 27 represents 10 percent of all attested *plumbarii* in Rome.⁶⁶ However, Bruun does not believe that Marcia actually made these pipes herself, unlike a woman who is actually creating a textile. Instead, Marcia Caenis is the owner of the workshop that produced the pipes.⁶⁷

Officinatores are also found in the brick industry, a flourishing business using the clay beds around Rome and along the Tiber. These women were managers and private entrepreneurs who most likely owned the tools and associated structures (but not the workshop).⁶⁸ Brickstamps allow us to trace their work. Six percent of the attested *officinatores* (for a total of 20) in Rome were women. For both the pipe and brick trades, women have important roles and significant responsibilities, but they are not doing the physical labor themselves.

Women as owners of businesses and equipment

There is evidence of women owning workshops, shops, and raw materials for industry. Some worked at the shops they owned, while others, of a more elite standing, owned these shops as a part of their income and would have employed a manager to run these on their behalf.

The brick industry offers important evidence not only for the economic role of female *officinatores*, but also for wealthy women in the economy of Rome. Of 150 *domini* who owned clay beds, 50 were women.⁶⁹ Päivi Setälä notes that these *dominae* not only owned the clay beds, but also the bricks. Setälä also observes that the *dominae* were not passive heiresses of land, but “as business-minded as men with regard to brick production.”⁷⁰ Claudia Marcellina inherited the brick industry from her husband, but *dominae* such as Fabia Aeliana, Flavia Pelagia, Neratia Quartilla, and Ulpia Accepta, do not, on the basis of extant brick stamps, seem to have anyone else in their family in the business.⁷¹ Domitia Lucilla Minor, the mother of Marcus

Aurelius, inherited her interests in the brick industry (i.e., multiple *figlinae*) from her grandfather, father, and uncle. Over three decades, Domitia employed 71 different *officinatores*.⁷²

There is varied testimony of women owning shops and, at times, the stock within the shop. A woman in Tusculum willed her shop to her freedmen (Scaevola *Digest* 32.38.5), while Mecia Dynata, whose brother and mother were both in the cloth industry, bequeathed three shops in Rome (*CIL* VI.9493).⁷³ Yet another woman in Ostia, Iunia Libertas, gave the use of shops, buildings, and gardens to her freedmen and freedwomen.⁷⁴

Two different accounts from the Roman jurists involve settling a deceased woman's estate and, in both cases, it is clear that her property includes tools for a shop or saleable wares. In one case, a woman bequeathed the tools of a blacksmith's workshop (*instrumentum tabernae ferrariae*) (Scaev. *Dig.* 31.88.3), and in another a *negotiatrice* (a merchant or wholesaler) in the silver trade owned the silver wares in her shop (*in basilica*) (Paulus *Digest* 34.2.32.4).⁷⁵ In fact, the woman who owned the tools of a blacksmith's workshop bequeathed them not to heirs but to two men, one of whom was a slave. Very likely, these men had run the shop for this woman and were expected to carry on the business after her death. The first woman most likely earned an income from a blacksmith's shop managed by others, whereas the second woman, the *negotiatrice*, clearly sold the silver products that she owned—and perhaps she owned the shop, as well. There is no evidence that either woman was herself manufacturing silver or iron products.

Evidence for such relationships between women and the shops and/or stock that they owned and the productive economy comes from a third-century AD papyrus from Oxyrhynchus, Egypt (*P.Oxy* L 3595).⁷⁶ Two women, Aurelia Leontarous and Aurelia Plousia, own a potter's workshop—attached to their estate—stocked with a kiln, storerooms, a potter's wheel, and even raw materials such as clay. Aurelius Pasis, a potter, will lease the workshop and its tools from them for two years and provide them with a certain number of pots (over 15,000) annually. The papyrus also states that the landladies transacted this arrangement with the help of their guardian, which recalls practices observed among the Sulpicii archives.

Not only did women own shops, they also owned other substantial pieces of property that contributed to the Roman economy. The first evidence for this comes from women who owned ships and used them to bring goods to Rome. Since Rome was a city of one million or so

inhabitants and because the state did not have a naval fleet devoted to provisioning, Roman emperors occasionally had to offer stimuli in order to control the price and supply of that most valuable commodity—grain. In order to encourage the transport of grain to Rome, the emperor Claudius offered different enticements to ship-owners, depending on their status, including a specific benefit for women who owned ships (Suetonius *Claudius* 18–19). As a result of Augustus’ social legislation, freedwomen could avoid having a tutor if they had four children (while free women only needed three).⁷⁷ Claudius’ special provision would give female ship-owners the status of having had four children, thus revealing that this benefit targeted freedwomen.

Women were involved in other aspects of long-distance trade, playing vital roles in both production and distribution in the Baetican olive oil industry. A woman from Rome was an importer and wholesaler of olive oil and wine. Although her name was not preserved, her daughter, Coelia Mascellina, left an inscription honoring her mother, as well as her father (*CIL* VI.9683):

[ne]gotiatri(ci) olear(iae) ex provinc(ia) Baetic(a) item vini / [castit]ate incomparabili Cn(aeo) Coelio Masculo patri piis(imo) / Coelia Mascellina parentibus fecit.

Coelia Mascellina made [this tomb] for her parents, for [her mother], a woman of unequalled purity, a *negotiatrix* of oil and wine from the province of Baetica [and] for her most dutiful father, Gnaeus Coelius Masculus.⁷⁸

A chance find from the Tiber river reveals that Coelia was not only the daughter of an entrepreneur, but an entrepreneur herself. A bilingual, inscribed bronze die (*signaculum*) was found, reading (*CIL* XV.8166):

Coeliae Gn(aei) f[iliae] Mascellinae

Κοιλ[ιης]Μασκειλλει/νης

It seems that Coelia was a *negotiatrix*,⁷⁹ as well, and this die would have been used to stamp the stoppers of amphorae used for oil and wine.⁸⁰ Amphorae were marked to indicate the different individuals involved in the production, transport, or distribution of the goods that they contained. Epigraphers classify seals used by individuals involved in getting an amphora and its contents to market (whether merchants, wholesalers, or even ship-owners) as β seals. Painted β seals on amphorae attest to the names of at least six other individuals of the *gens* Coelia, which indicates that this family was broadly active in the importation of oil and wine to Rome.⁸¹ While Coelia and her mother

seem to have been in a family business, they are not outliers for their gender. The names of twelve other women (of at least eight different families) appear on painted β seals from amphorae found at Monte Testaccio and elsewhere in Rome.⁸²

Women were also involved in oil production in Baetica. One such is Aelia Marciana, who may have been the daughter of Aelius Marcianus, the proconsul of the province of Baetica during the reign of Antoninus Pius.⁸³ Two amphorae marked with her painted seal were found in the Saint-Gervais 3 shipwreck near Massalia (Marseille), dating to the mid-second century AD.⁸⁴ The oil came from Aelia's property in Spain, an estate abbreviated on her amphora stamp as "*Callecri*." In order to mark the individuals who owned or who were tenants of an oil producing property, like Aelia, a seal classified as a δ seal was used to mark the amphorae.⁸⁵ Over 30 women (out of a total of 270) are listed with these seals on Baetican oil amphorae. Most have connections to other family members—male and female—who are also owners or tenants of farms, or in some cases merchants.⁸⁶ In this way, women like Aelia have roles in the Roman economy similar to the wealthy women who owned brickyards. These varied inscriptions, as well as evidence from legal texts and literature, show how owning property, such as farms or shops, was not considered *opera virilis*. Many women in various sectors of the Roman economy demonstrate women's multiple contributions to daily commercial life.

Conclusion

You would never see a woman's name in the Roman forum on a list of past office holders or one of triumphing generals. But you certainly would have seen women working publicly nearly anywhere you walked in Rome or elsewhere in the empire, earning money for themselves and their families (or, if they were slaves, for their master). In spite of legislative provisions that prevented women from assuming public office, or 'manly' jobs, and in spite of their restriction from occupational *collegia*, Roman women were visible at all levels of the Roman economy. Whether doctors, singers, shopkeepers, perfumers, workshop managers, or workshop owners, it is clear that women played vital roles in feeding, clothing, entertaining, supplying, and even building Rome and its empire.

Notes

1 CIL VI.9141.

- 2 Joshel 1992: 69, [table 3.1](#).
- 3 Joshel 1992: table 5.2.
- 4 Joshel 1992: 98.
- 5 Groen-Vallinga 2013: 304, n. 50.
- 6 Treggiari 1976: 86–89.
- 7 It may be that these female doctors were different from their male peers, because they had a specialty in women's diseases and obstetrics (Treggiari 1976: 86–87; Kampen 1981: 116; Parker 1997: 137).
- 8 Aurelia lived in Bordeaux in the late fourth century AD and was Ausonius' aunt. Gardner 1986: 240–41; Parker 1997: 144, n. 35.
- 9 Parker 1997: 141, n. 5 (Parker's translation).
- 10 Paulus *Sententiae* 2.26.11; Ulpian *Digest* 23.2.43; *Codex Justinianus* 9.29; Treggiari 1979: 73–74; Evans 1991: 133–37; Dixon 2001a: 127.
- 11 Holleran 2013: 316.
- 12 Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 134. Kampen 1981: 139, n. 3, fig. 28; Clarke 2003: 123–125, fig. 69.
- 13 Kampen 1981: 63 and 104, fig. 46; Clarke 2003: 105–112, fig. 63; Holleran 2013: 316; *CIL* IV.3130.
- 14 This Aurelia might have been known by Juvenal, for he mentions a *piscatrix* named Aurelia; while Aurelia was a common name, it is not impossible that he was referring to Aurelia Nais (Juvenal, *Satires* 5.98). See also Boscolo 2005.
- 15 For the *seminaria*, see *CIL* XIV.2850), *fabaria*, *CIL* III.6672, barley, (i.e., qu[a]e [h]ordeu[m] [v]end[i]t (*CIL* VI.9684), *conditaria*, *CIL* VI.9277, and for the husband and wife who dealt in honey (*mellari*), see *CIL* I.3021. Treggiari 1979: 72 and 78; Kampen 1981: 113, n. 31; Joshel 1992: 111; Holleran 2012: 57, n. 206.
- 16 Holleran 2012: 201; Holleran 2013: 321–322.
- 17 Kampen 1981: 118 and 157, n. 53, fig. 45; Dixon 2001a: 128–129.
- 18 Note that the Torlonia relief wherein women are cleaning game should be mentioned here. First, the women in this relief are not necessarily butchers, but could be merely sellers, preparing their stock. More importantly, this relief is thought to date to the eighteenth century (Kampen 1981: 154, n. 43, fig. 84).
- 19 For the *auri netrix*, see *CIL* VI.9213, *auri vestrix* (*CIL* VI.9214), *margaritaria* (*CIL* VI. 5972; VI. 7351), and Babbia Asia, a woman included in a group of *gemmari[i]* (*CIL* VI.9435).
- 20 Le Gall 1970: 125; Treggiari 1979: 70; Dixon 2001a: 119–120.
- 21 Laturia Ianuaria, *calcaria* *ILS* 7663; *AE* 1894, 147; Kampen 1981: 126–127. Two other *furnariae* are attested at Rieti (*CIL* IX.4722).
- 22 Mattingly 1990: 74–75, fig. 3. This painting came from House VII.7.5 at Pompeii. It was drawn in the late nineteenth century before it was lost or destroyed. John Clarke discusses the Cupids in the fullery scene from this same room in just such a way (Clarke 2003: 101, fig. 56).
- 23 Mattingly 1990: 72–74 and 77, fig. 1.
- 24 Limestone relief, mid second century AD *Épinal*, Musée Départemental des Vosges, inv. no. 61. Found in Grand, near the amphitheater. Kampen 1981: 97 and 158, n. 55; Boussel *et al.* 1983: 61 and 72; Bardiès-Fronty *et al.* 2009, 124–125. See also H. Schoppa *Die Kunst der Römerzeit in Gallien, Germanien und Britannien*. Munich 1957, 54–55, n. 76 and A. M. Colini. 1964. *Museo della*

Civiltà Romana. Catalogo. Rome: Casa Editrice Carlo Colombo, 590, n. 39.

- 25 Kampen 1981: 64–69 and 139–140, n. 5. Ostia, Museo Ostiense, inv. 418. Second century AD *CIL* XIV.4698.
- 26 Kampen 1981: 69.
- 27 For a thorough survey of different occupational titles and gendered tasks within this industry, see Lena Larsson Lovén 1998.
- 28 Larsson Lovén 1998: 7–8; Flohr 2013: 282–283.
- 29 Larsson Lovén 1998; Dixon 2001a: 117–123, 2001b.
- 30 Larsson Lovén 1998; *CIL* V.5923; *CIL* VI.6362.
- 31 Larsson Lovén 1998; Dixon 2001b. However, Cameria Iarine makes a dedication to fine clothing tailors, and it is possible that she includes herself in this body (especially since one of the men is her patron) (*CIL* VI.37826; Dixon 2001b: 9).
- 32 Joshel 1992: 69, [table 3.1](#).
- 33 La Regina 1976; Poccetti 1988: 139–142. The two sets of footprints seem to be set diagonally to one another, such that one set measures 21 by 5.5. cm and 22 by 6.5 cm, whilst the other set measures 22 by 6.5 cm. It is possible that one teenager made one stamp of her foot (21 by 5.5. cm) while the second girl stamped her feet thrice. Franchi De Bellis suggests this reading of the footprints, thinking that Defri may have intended to make only one imprint (*plautad*) but that Amica might have thought it funny to make her own mark repeatedly (Franchi De Bellis 1992: 22–23, n.1).
- 34 Aubert 1993: 180.
- 35 La Regina writes that *q[u]ando ponebamus tegila(s)* . . . “must refer to the laying of the tiles, even raw, to dry in the sun or under a canopy” (La Regina 1976: 287).
- 36 Grubbs 2002: 74.
- 37 Benke 2001: 50; Dixon 2001a: 83.
- 38 Grubbs 2002: 62.
- 39 Kampen 1981: 114.
- 40 Dixon 2001a: 82, 85–88.
- 41 Gardner 1986: 234–235; Gardner 1999: 21; Benke 2001, 2012: 28.
- 42 Gardner 1986: 236.
- 43 Benke 2012: 226.
- 44 Dixon 2001a: 101–102; Benke 2001: 54.
- 45 Dixon 2001a: 101 and 104.
- 46 Gardner 1999: 11.
- 47 Gardner 1999: 17–18.
- 48 Gardner 1999: 18–19.
- 49 Gardner 1999: 18; Caldelli 2015: 589.
- 50 Gardner 1986: 18.
- 51 Dixon 2001a: 77.
- 52 Gardner 1999: 19.
- 53 Gardner 1986: 236.
- 54 Benke 2012: 233.

- 55 Veyne 1997: 189. But note an inscription where a group of female mimes (*sociae mimae*) claim an affiliation (*CIL* VI.10109). Liu points out that there are no known legal restrictions prohibiting women's memberships in professional *collegia* (Liu 2009: 178–180). See also Treggiari 1979: 85–86 fn. 47; Gardner 1986: 239.
- 56 Veyne 1987: 191.
- 57 Kloppenborg 1996: 19; Hemelrijk 2008.
- 58 Hemelrijk 2008: 118.
- 59 Benke 2012: 223.
- 60 *Institor appellatus est ex eo, quod negotio gerendo instet: nec multum facit, tabernae sit praepositus an cuilibet alii negotiationi.* “An institor is called from this, because he/she is at hand for conducting business, nor does it matter much whether he/she is in charge of a shop or whatever other kind of trade you please.” (See also Ulpian *Digest* 14.3.5.)
- 61 Aubert 1993: 172.
- 62 Aubert 1993: 173.
- 63 This role is explicitly called (14.1.1) *magister navis*, which likely means that a woman in such a position was a *magistra navis*.
- 64 Aubert 1993: 176; Bruun 2013: 308; De Kleijn 2001: 116–120; Frontinus *De aquae ductu urbis Romae* 105–106 and 112.
- 65 De Kleijn 2001: 179, n. 27. This stamp dates to the third century AD and was found along the Via Tiburtina, Camposanto. Another pipe with only a stamp for this *plumbaria* (*Marci]a Caenis fec(it)*) was found near the Baths of Diocletian (*CIL* XV. 07378b; De Kleijn 2001: 179, n. 28).
- 66 Bruun 1991: 343–344.
- 67 Bruun 1991: 343–344, 2012: 21 n. 10.
- 68 Setälä 1989: 64 and 68, 2002: 198; Caldelli 2015: 589. See also T. Helen 1975. *Organization of Roman Brick Production in the First and Second centuries AD. An interpretation of Roman Brick Stamps.* Helsinki: Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae: 112–113.
- 69 Setälä 2002: 184.
- 70 Setälä 2002: 184.
- 71 Setälä 2002: 185–187, 1989: 65.
- 72 Setälä 1989: 64, 2002: 192; see also Setälä 1977.
- 73 Treggiari 1979: 70; Groen-Vallinga 2013: 307.
- 74 Calza 1939; *AE* 1940: 94; Dixon 1992, 2001a: 106; Caldelli 2015: 588. This inscribed will was placed at Iunia's tomb.
- 75 Gardner 1986: 235.
- 76 Humphrey *et al.* 1988: 374–375, n. 9.80; Aubert 1994: 253–254.
- 77 Gardner 1986: 20.
- 78 *AE* 1973, 71. Note that there is one other woman, who is specifically given the title of a *negotiatrix* in Rome, and she is Abudia Megiste, a wholesaler in grain and pulse (*negotiatrix frumentariae et legumenariae*) (*CIL* VI.9683). Holleran 2012: 81–82; see also P. Andreau (2000) “*Negotiator*”. *Der Neue Pauly* 8: 783–785.
- 79 The term *negotiatrix* could simply mean merchant, but more often it specifies a wholesaler, even one who might travel to facilitate the exchange of products. Individuals in such a position would have needed to have access to significant

capital, as well as connections abroad, in order to import material.

- 80 Panciera 1980: 245. For a similar *signaculum* used by a merchant, see P. Berni Millet and D. Gorostidi Pi. 2013. “*C. Iulius Valerianus et C. Iulius Iulianus: mercatores del aceite bético en un signaculum de plomo para ánforas Dressel 20.*” *JRA* 26,167–189; see, in particular, Berni Millet and Gorostidi Pi, fig. 6 which shows how the *signaculum* would be used in Rome for sealing the top of an amphora.
- 81 Morretta 1999: 231.
- 82 Morretta 1999: 231–232, 242.
- 83 Liou and Tchernia 1994: 150–151; Haley 2003: 163.
- 84 *AE* 1981, 627; *AE* 1991, 1187c. Liou and Gassend 1990: 196–197, nn. 14–15, figs. 56, 57, 60 and 61; Liou and Tchernia 1994: 151; Edmondson 2015: 685–687.
- 85 Liou and Tchernia 1994.
- 86 Haley 2003: 163; Morretta 1999: 235.

References

- Aubert, J.-J. (1993) Workshop managers. In W. V. Harris (ed.) *The Inscribed Economy: Production and Distribution in the Roman Empire in the Light of Instrumentum Domesticum. The Proceedings of a Conference Held at the American Academy in Rome on 10–11 January, 1992*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, pp. 171–181.
- Aubert, J.-J. (1994) *Business Managers in Ancient Rome: A Social and Economic Study of Institores, 200 BC–AD 250*. Leiden, The Netherlands: E. J. Brill.
- Benke, N. (2001) Why should the law protect Roman women? Some remarks on the *Senatus Consultum Velleianum* (ca. 50 AD). In K. E. Børresen, S. Cabibbo and E. Specht (eds) *Gender and Religion: European Studies*. Rome: Carocci, pp. 41–56.
- Benke, N. (2012). Gender and the Roman law of obligations. In T. A. J. McGinn (ed.) *Obligations in Roman Law: Past, Present, and Future*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, pp. 215–246.
- Boscolo, F. (2005) Aurelia Nais, piscatrix de horreis Galbae e i piscatores di Roma. *Rivista storica dell’antichità* 35: 181–188.
- Boussel, P., Bonnemain, H. and Bové, F. J. (1983) *History of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Industry*. Paris: Asklepios Press.
- Bruun, C. (1991) *The Water Supply of Ancient Rome: A Study of Roman Imperial Administration*. Helsinki, Finland: Societas Scientiarum Fennica.
- Bruun, C. (2012) New prosopographical data derived from Roman lead pipe inscriptions. *ARCTOS* 46: 19–31.
- Bruun, C. (2013) Water supply, drainage and watermills. In P.

- Erdkamp (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Rome*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 297–316.
- Caldelli, M. L. (2015) Women in the Roman world. In C. Bruun and J. Edmondson (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Epigraphy*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 582–604.
- Calza, G. (1939) Epigrafe sepolcrale contenente disposizioni testamentarie. *Epigraphica* 1: 160–162.
- Clarke, J. R. (2003) *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans: Visual Representation and Non-Elite Viewers in Italy, 100 BC–AD 315*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- De Kleijn, G. (2001) *The Water Supply of Ancient Rome: City Area, Water, and Population*. Amsterdam: Gieben.
- Dixon, S. (1992) A woman of substance: Iunia Libertas of Ostia. *Helios* 19: 162–174.
- Dixon, S. (2001a) *Reading Roman Women*. London: Duckworth.
- Dixon, S. (2001b) How do you count them if they're not there? New perspectives in Roman cloth production. *Opuscula Romana* 25/26: 7–26.
- Edmondson, J. (2015) Economic life in the Roman Empire. In C. Bruun and J. Edmondson (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Epigraphy*. New York and Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 671–695.
- Evans, J. K. (1991) *War, Women, and Children in Ancient Rome*. New York: Routledge.
- Flohr, M. (2013) *The World of the Fullo: Work, Economy, and Society in Roman Italy*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Franchi De Bellis, A. (1992) Latino Plautus e osco plauta. In I. Mazzini (ed.) *Civiltà Materiale e Letteratura nel Mondo Antico*. Atti del seminario di studio (Macerata, 28–29 giugno 1991). Macerata, Italy: Università degli studi di Macerata, Facoltà di lettere e filosofia, pp. 21–43.
- Gardner, J. F. (1986) *Women in Roman Law and Society*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Gardner, J. F. (1999) Women in business life: Some evidence from Puteoli. In P. Setälä and L. Savunen (eds) *Female Networks and the Public Sphere in Roman Society*. Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae, 22 Rome: Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, pp. 11–27.
- Groen-Vallinga, M. J. (2013) Desperate housewives?: The adaptive family economy and female participation in the Roman urban labour market. In E. A. Hemelrijk and G. Woolf (eds) *Women and the Roman City in the Latin West*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 295–312.

- Grubbs, J. E. (2002) *Women and the Law in the Roman Empire. A Sourcebook on Marriage, Divorce and Widowhood*. London: Routledge.
- Haley, E. W. (2003) *Baetica Felix: People and Prosperity in Southern Spain from Caesar to Septimius Severus*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Hemelrijk, E. (2008) Patronesses and ‘mothers’ of Roman *Collegia*. *Classical Antiquity* 27(1): 115–162.
- Holleran, C. (2012) *Shopping in Ancient Rome*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Holleran, C. (2013) Women and retail in Roman Italy. In E. A. Hemelrijk and G. Woolf (eds) *Women and the Roman City in the Latin West*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 313–330.
- Humphrey, J. W., Oleson, J. P. and Sherwood, A. N. (1988) *Greek and Roman Technology: A Sourcebook. Annotated Translations of Greek and Latin Texts and Documents*. Routledge: New York.
- Joshel, S. (1992) *Work, Identity, and Legal Status in Rome. A Study of the Occupational Inscriptions*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Kampen, N. B. (1981) *Image and Status: Roman Working Women in Ostia*. Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag.
- Kloppenborg, J. S. (1996) *Collegia* and *thiasoi*: Issues in function, taxonomy, and membership. In J. S. Kloppenborg and S. G. Wilson (eds) *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World*. London: Routledge, pp. 16–30.
- La Regina, A. (1976) Osco: Pietrabbondante. *StEtr* 44, pp. 283–288, n. 2, table LIX.
- Larsson Lovén, L. (1998) Male and female professions in the textile production of Roman Italy. In L. Bender Jørgensen and C. Rinaldo (eds) *Textiles in European Archaeology*. Göteborg, Sweden: GOTARC series A, volume 1, pp. 73–78.
- Le Gall, J. (1970) Métiers de femmes au Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum. In M. Durry (ed.) *Mélanges M. Durry*. Paris: Les Belles Lettres, pp. 123–130.
- Liou, B. and Gassend, J.-M. (1990) L’épave Saint-Gervais 3 à Fos-sur-mer (milieu du II^e siècle ap. J.-C). Inscriptions peintes sur amphores de Bétique. Vestiges de la coque. *Archaeonautica* 10: 153–257.
- Liou, B. and Tchernia, A. (1994) L’interprétation des inscriptions sur les amphores Dressel 20. In *Epigrafia della produzione e della distribuzione. Actes de la VII^e Rencontre franco-italienne sur l’épigraphie du monde romain (Rome, 5–6 juin 1992)*. Rome: École Française de Rome, pp. 133–156.
- Liu, J. (2009) *Collegia centonariorum: The Guilds of Textile Dealers in the*

- Roman West. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Mattingly, D. J. (1990) Paintings, presses and perfume production at Pompeii. *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 9(1): 71–90.
- Morretta, S. (1999) Donne imprenditrici nella produzione commercio dell'olio betico (I–III sec. d.C.). *Saitabi* 49: 229–245.
- Panciera, S. (1980) Olearii. In J. H. D'Arms and E. C. Kopff (eds) *The Seaborne Commerce of Ancient Rome: Studies in Archaeology and History. Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*. XXXVI. Rome: American Academy in Rome, pp. 235–250.
- Parker, H. T. (1997) Women doctors in Greece, Rome, and the Byzantine Empire. In L. R. Furst (ed.) *Women Physicians and Healers: Climbing a Long Hill*. Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, pp. 131–150.
- Poccetti, P. (1988) Per una definizione delle iscrizioni “bilingui” in area etrusca ed italica. In E. Campanile, G. R. Cardona and R. Lazzeroni (eds) *Bilinguismo e Biculturalismo nel Mondo Antico. Atti del Colloquio Interdisciplinare (Pisa, 28–29 settembre 1987)*. Pisa, Italy: Giardini, pp. 127–144.
- Setälä, P. (1977) *Private Domini in Roman Brick Stamps of the Roman Empire. A Historical and Prosopographical Study of Landowners in the District of Rome*. Helsinki, Finland: Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennica, pp. 108–109.
- Setälä, P. (1989) Brick stamps and women's economic opportunities in Rome. *Current Issues in Women's History*. New York: Routledge, pp. 61–74.
- Setälä, P. (2002) Women and brick production: Some new aspects. *Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae* 25: 181–201.
- Stefani, G. and Varone, A. (2009) *Titulorum Pictorum Pompeianorum qui in CIL Vol. IV collecti sunt Imagines*. Rome: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
- Treggiari, S. (1976) Jobs for women. *American Journal of Ancient History* 1: 76–104.
- Treggiari, S. (1979) Lower-class women in the Roman economy. *Florilegium* 1: 65–86.
- Veyne, P. (1987) The Roman Empire. In P. Veyne (ed.) *A History of Roman Private Life: From Pagan Rome to Byzantium*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Veyne, P. (1997) *The Roman Empire*. Trans. A. Goldhammer. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press.

A DEMANDING SUPPLY

Prostitutes in the Roman world

Linnea Åshede

We know that prostitution was an integral facet of Roman society, yet we know very little about the actual prostitutes. The majority of the primary sources provide scant evidence for life as it looked from within the sex-trade. Literary sources in particular portray Roman society from the minority perspective of a male elite whose interest lay primarily in constructing prostitutes and pimps as the symbolic antithesis of honourable citizens.¹ This evidence is better suited for reflecting the various terminologies connected to sex-workers than their experiences. The legal texts are written from the same perspective, by jurors whose function is to interpret rather than make the law. Importantly, there is no specific Roman law on prostitution, but the sex-trade is discussed in the *Digest* and related texts when it interferes with matters such as inheritance, marriage and the economy.²

Epigraphic evidence, such as graffiti and funerary inscriptions, provide more direct access to the voices of the non-elite and has yielded vital information about practical aspects such as prices and venues. So a scribble on a seat in the theatre at Herculaneum proclaims “If anyone wants a fuck, he should look for Attice – 4 asses”³ (*CIL* IV 1751). However, it remains contestable whether comments such as these should be regarded as genuine advertisements or slander.⁴ Archaeological evidence for prostitution is likewise ambiguous, because bodies temporally engaging in sexual activities involving payment require no purpose-built structures and leave no unique material remains.⁵ Above all, the available archaeological material is largely concentrated on the bay of Naples and may not be representative of the rest of the Roman Empire, just like e.g. legal papyri are primarily preserved from the region of North Africa.⁶ While

the geographic and chronological diversity of the sources makes it difficult to establish regional and temporal differences, the general scarceness of evidence requires an integrated approach where different types of text and archaeological material may balance each other's biases. The study of Roman prostitution can be further aided by later ethnographic parallels, but these must be handled with care as culture-specific institutions such as slavery add further complexities to the issues of profit and agency.⁷

The prostitutes

We hold that a woman openly practices prostitution, not only where she does so in a brothel, but also if she is accustomed to do this in a tavern or inn or anywhere else where she manifests no regard for her modesty.

(Digest 23.3.43, trans. in Lefkowitz and Fant 2005: 118, #143)

Ulpian's exposition in the *Digest* can be taken as representative of Roman legal definitions in that it morally condemns an act left vaguely defined. Later in the same section, Ulpian mentions intercourse with multiple partners in exchange for money, but the paragraph is more concerned with whether the prostitution occurs "openly" than with how to define it.⁸ It also elides the questions of who the woman is and her own choice in selling sex, as well as the existence of sex exchanged for non-monetary resources such as protection, gifts, etc.⁹

The woman forced into slavery and/or prostitution through capture (in war or by bandits) is frequently romanticised in Roman literature (e.g. Sen. *Contr.* 1.2; Dio Chrys. *Or.* 7.113; Apul. *Met.* 7.9–10), but epigraphic evidence gives a different picture. A large number of Pompeian graffiti advertise the availability of girls explicitly identified as *vernae* – slaves born in the owner's house – following the formula of "Felicula, *verna*, for 2 *asses*" (*CIL* IV 4023, also 4025, 5105, 5203, 5204, 5206). The fact that their home-born status is emphasised indicates that this would be seen as an asset, and suggests that slaves being prostituted by their owners was commonplace.¹⁰ Some scholars suggest that the paid and unpaid sex-work done by slaves can be characterised as a form of domestic labour (e.g. Cohen 2014: 190–192), and the location of some of the graffiti near the entrances of town houses indicate that slave-prostitutes may have received customers in the home.¹¹

The figure of the full-time, brothel-based prostitute whose entire existence is defined by her profession mainly appears in literary texts

authored by the male elite, whereas most other sources indicate a society wherein individual women sold sex occasionally, for limited periods of time, or only during specific circumstances.¹² Legal texts in particular grapple with the impact of prostitution on the social and juridical status of freed and freeborn women. Modestinus maintains in the *Digest* 23.2.24 that “cohabitation with a free woman is to be considered marriage rather than concubinage, unless she has been a prostitute”, which illustrates both the loss of marriageability and the legal problem of ex-prostitutes (compare *Dig.* 23.2.41; 25.7.3). Above all, Roman literature abounds with references to unofficial sex-work taking place in connection to baths, inns and taverns, theatres and all kinds of shops (e.g. Cic. *Pis.* 13; Strabo 12.8.17, see further McGinn 2004: 15–30). Other “entertainers” such as actresses and dancers are also routinely conflated with prostitutes (e.g. Stat. *Silv.* 1.6.65–74), but it is often unclear whether they were assumed *de facto* to sell sex or if their status as performers living by their bodies gave them the more figurative reputation of “whores”.¹³

Seneca’s mention of “handing one’s children over to fornication with one’s own hands” as a shameful survival strategy by a desperate father (*Ep.* 101.14–15) reflects the fact that many Roman prostitutes were probably brought into the sex-trade at a very young age.¹⁴ Children abandoned by poor families who end up being taken in and raised as free labour by brothel-owners is another favourite *topos* of Roman literature (e.g. Plaut. *Cist.* 38–40; Mart. *Ep.* 9.5.6–9), but poverty could also drive parents to sell their children directly.¹⁵ Children, like slaves, were practically the parents’ property, and while the prostitution of freeborn children is morally condemned, there appears to have been no laws against it.¹⁶

It is important to remember that a sizeable percentage of Roman prostitutes were male. Contrary to the moralists who frequently claim that pederasty was “imported” along with other Greek vices (e.g. Polyb. 31.25.4), Servius observes in his comments to Vergil’s *Eclogues* that “the Romans of old freely enjoyed the services of prostituted boys” (*ad V. Ecl.* 8.29). The *Fasti Praenestini* (CIL I 236), a calendar inscription found in Latium, dedicates April 24 to a holiday for *meretrices*, “earning women” (a common euphemism for female prostitutes, e.g. Gell. 2.18.3), and the 25th to *pueri leonii*, “the pimp’s boys”, illustrating the general lack of differentiation between female and male sex-workers.¹⁷ Whether they were boys in age or just in status, male prostitutes were expected to serve male customers passively – some fragments of lost plays by Pomponius present the image of Roman citizens seeking out male prostitutes to be dominated by them as grotesque comedy (*fr.* 149, 154–155).

The evidence for whether sex-workers could have female clients is uncertain. When Juvenal ridicules the noblewoman, Ogulnia, for “presenting what is left of the family plate, down to the last ewer, as a gift to some beardless athlete” (*Sat.* 6.355–356) or describes a *gigoloesque* pretty-boy who “will do it to one whom he cares nothing for, stripping her body of all its jewellery” (*Sat.* 10.319–320), he is primarily lampooning female folly. The seemingly more straightforward Pompeiian graffiti proclaiming “Glyco licks cunt for 2 asses”¹⁸ (*CIL* IV 3999, see similarly 8940) has the same problem as all “advertisement-graffiti”: should it be taken at face value, or be considered slander/bragging?¹⁹

Working conditions

Lyde, who services three men at once, one over her belly, the other below, another from above, said: I let in boy-lovers, cunt-lovers, mouth-lovers. If you are in a hurry, get in alongside two others, and don’t hold back!

(Anth. Pal. 5.49)

Although a literary fiction, Gallus’ epigram that has a prostitute advertise her time-saving ability to service three men at once in different orifices illustrates the crass pragmatism and taxing conditions of sex-work. Like *meretrix*, much of the Latin slang for prostitutes refers to hard-working women (and, often interchangeably, boys), sitting (*proседа*) or walking around (*circulatrix*) in search of customers, often at night (*nonaria*) (see Adams 1983 for a comprehensive study of words for prostitute). Plautus’ frequent use of *prostibulum*, literally “one in front of the inn” (e.g. *Aul.* 285; *Cist.* 331) denotes a publicly visible and accessible figure of low status. Numerous literary references to streetwalkers plying their trade in unsavoury locales such as the Subura and under relatively sheltered arches (e.g. *Priap.* 40; Livy 3.13.2; Pers. 5.32; Mart. 2.17.1) are brought to a head by Martial, who when scorning Vetustilla for seeking a husband in her old age writes that the bath-man will let her in “among the tomb-haunting whores (*bustuarias moechas*) only after snuffing his lamp” (3.93.14–15).²⁰ (*Dig.* 47.12.3 likewise mentions slaves living in tombs.) Tacitus similarly refers to male prostitutes as *sellarii*, suggesting they cruise the *sellarium* or public latrine (*Ann.* 6.1).

Even for prostitutes able to rent one of the little one-room “cribs” (*cellae meretriciae*) common in Pompeii, working conditions must have been poor, as these rooms opening directly onto the street seldom measure more than six by six feet, barely enough for a bed.²¹ As for the type of establishments we would define as brothels, they are

frequently referred to in literature (e.g. Hor. *Sat.* 1.2.31–5) and certainly existed, but there are few reliable criteria for identifying them in the archaeological record.²² Brothels constitute “unusual households” but they are “unusual in a variety of ways” (Seifert *et al.* 2000: 140) and may have shown great variance in both architecture and organisation. For instance, Juvenal mentions a brothel where the owner “allowed the girls to go home” after their work was done (6.127, note the satirical context), whereas the slave-collar of a prostitute from Roman Africa (*ILS* 9455) indicates her confinement. There is also no substantial evidence that sex for sale was limited to specific neighbourhoods.²³

Ulpian’s statement that “a woman is not to be excused who leads a shameful life under the pretext of poverty” (*Dig.* 23.2.43) sounds callous considering that sources from Plautine comedy (e.g. *Cist.* 40–45; *Truc.* 220) to court-records (e.g. *BGU* IV 1024, see below) present economic hardship as the main motivation for prostitution.²⁴ (Elite writers’ accusations that women enter the sex-trade driven by lust, e.g. Sen. *Ben.* 6.32.1; Juv. 6.115–132, remain unconvincing.) Prices are known primarily through Pompeian graffiti where two *asses* presents the standard – a fairly low price, equivalent of a loaf of bread (e.g. *CIL* IV 4150, 4592, 5345).²⁵ Among the higher prices are six *asses* (*CIL* IV 8224) and among the very lowest, *CIL* IV 5372 offers “I am yours [for] a copper”. A number of graffiti specifies *fellatio* as the service on sale (e.g. *CIL* IV 1969, 2028, 8160, 8185) but most only mention a price.

Based on the low prices known from Pompeii compared with the ratio of clients served by prostitutes in later cultures, Thomas McGinn estimates that the lower-earning prostitutes would have needed to turn a harrowing 15–20 tricks per night.²⁶ To make matters worse, much of the income of a free prostitute may have been swallowed up by pimps and landlords.²⁷ Numerous legal passages attest that both pimps and sex-workers were classed as *infames* and denied many of the legal protections of honourable citizens, such as the right to prosecute and the right to bodily integrity (e.g. *Dig.* 48.2.2, 48.4.7, 48.5.3).²⁸ The existence of female procuresses is attested both by Ulpian, stating that “we call those women *lenae* who set out [other] women for hire” (*Dig.* 23.2.43 – the more common male pimp is *leno*), and by a funerary inscription from Roman Beneventum (Imperial period) where the freedwoman Vibia Chresta dedicates the monument to one Vibia Calybenis, “freedwoman procuress”, along with her own family (*CIL* IX 2029). This dedication suggests that connections to the sex-trade may not have been as stigmatising among the non-elite as it was in the eyes of the law.

The issues of economic motivation, parents prostituting their children and prostitutes' legal standing intersect in a fourth-century CE Alexandrian court case (*BGU* IV 1024) belonging to a compilation of governor's sentences wherein men charged with murdering their wives/lovers are all severely punished.²⁹ The seventh case details how "a certain leading councillor of Alexandria called Diodemos" is imprisoned on charges of murdering his prostitute lover. The other councillors want him released but the magistrate, Zephyrios, heeds the protests of the local people. At the subsequent trial – where Diodemos confesses – the prostitute's old mother, Theodora, demands economic compensation:

For she said: "It was for this reason that I gave my daughter to the brothel-keeper, so that I should be able to have sustenance. Since I have been deprived of my means of livelihood by the death of my daughter, I therefore ask that I be given the modest needs of a woman for my subsistence".

(Rowlandson 1998: 271)

Theodora's claim that she has only now with her death lost her daughter – and her income – seems to suggest both that mother and daughter stayed in contact and that some of the latter's money went to the mother instead of the brothel-keeper. Perhaps surprisingly, the outcome of the case is that Diodemos is sentenced to execution and Theodora is granted the right to inherit a tenth of his property. Zephyrios' concluding speech wavers between contempt and pity for both the dead sex-worker and her mother-turned-procuress:

The prefect said: "You have slaughtered a woman who makes a shameful reproach of her fortune among men, in that she led an immoral life but in the end plied her trade . . . Indeed, I have taken pity upon the wretch because when she was alive she was available to anyone who wanted her, just like a corpse. For the poverty of the mother's fortune so overwhelmingly oppressed her that she sold her daughter for a shameful price so that she incurred the notoriety of a prostitute".

(Rowlandson 1998: 271–272)

Abuse of prostitutes was likely common – another memorandum from Roman Egypt (*PSI* IV 406) mentions the "misuse" of a girl by men allegedly engaged in trafficking with slave-prostitutes to Palestine.³⁰ Concerning sexual violence, Ulpian decrees that it constitutes a "lesser offence" to have accosted a woman if she was in slave's clothing at the time, and "a much lesser offence, if the women were dressed as prostitutes and not as respectable matrons" (*Dig.* 47.10.15.15). Women thus have themselves to blame if they fail to look modest while prostitutes are fair game – Cicero similarly refers to the rape of a *mimula* that it was done "according to an old right against

entertainers, well known in all towns” (*Plan.* 30). The juridical and moral consensus appears to have been that it cannot be a crime to rape a person already selling her/himself,³¹ as illustrated by Cato’s argument that force should never be visited upon the body of a free person “except for the person who has been making money openly with his body or who has hired himself out to a pimp” (*Gell.* 9.12.7).

Yet it seems that the lack of legal protection was not absolute. Gellius records a court case wherein the Roman *curule aedile*, Hostilius Mancinus, charges the prostitute, Manilia, “because he said that he had been struck with a stone thrown from her apartment by night” (4.14.3). Manilia, however, claims that she was forced to defend herself because he tried to break in after she had refused to admit him, and the tribunes agree “that the *aedile* had rightly been refused admission to a place in which it had not been seemly for him to go with garlanded head” (4.14.6) – apparently, since Hostilius approached Manilia as a customer rather than in his official role, she had the right to turn him away. Where slaves are concerned, the restrictive covenant of *ne serva prostituatur*, “the slave may not be prostituted”, (enacted in the first century CE) could theoretically allow someone selling a slave to stipulate that she must never be used in the sex-trade (*Dig.* 37.14.7).³² Regrettably, McGinn believes that this law had little impact on most slaves’ lives and primarily “made a low-cost statement about society’s readiness to safeguard sexual honour” (McGinn 1998: 347).

Lived experiences

We lack demographic data for the lives of Roman prostitutes, but as comparison, standardised mortality rates for British sex-workers in 2006 were the highest for any category of women, six times those of the general population.³³ Considering Rome as a slave-society where *infames* could expect little healthcare or legal protection, the average life expectancy of its prostitutes was probably low. Whether full-time or part-time, sex-workers were unlikely to belong to the upper social stratum. If evidence such as Martial’s reference to prostitutes plying their trade among the tombs is any indication, many probably lived below what was considered acceptable standards regarding housing, sanitation, nourishment, etc., perhaps in the kind of illegally erected sheds debated by jurists (e.g. *Dig.* 43.8.2.17; *Cod. Theod.* 15.1.39).³⁴ Surprisingly, not even Martial has a word to say about venereal diseases, and it remains inconclusive how much the Romans knew about STDs (see Stumpp 1998: 123–136).

A major factor affecting female health in general and that of sex-workers especially is pregnancy and childbirth. Not only do these put a strain on the body but for someone whose body is her livelihood, it would also disable her for months and result in a debilitating loss of income.³⁵ However, most literary evidence for Roman methods of contraception is problematic as the remedies often appear harmful or ineffective.³⁶ Soranus (*Gyn.* 1.19.61) e.g. advises that:

[a]t the critical moment of coitus when the man is about to discharge the seed, the woman must hold her breath and draw herself away a little, so that the seed may not be hurled too deep into the cavity of the uterus. And getting up immediately and squatting down she should induce sneezing.

(McLaren 1990: 58)

He also describes pessaries anointed with anything from “old olive oil” to honey and white lead (*Gyn.* 1.19.62), that sound as potentially lethal as many of the abortion techniques described, such as Ovid’s reference to vaginal insertion of sharp objects (*Am.* 2.13.1–28). Many of the methods of birth-control discussed by medical writers are herbal remedies. Dioscorides, for example, writes of the plant *Onosma echinoids* that its leaves drunk with wine will drive out fetuses, but adds “they say that a pregnant woman miscarries also if she steps over this plant” (*MM* 3.131, the same claim is made of the root of cyclamen in 2.164).³⁷

Lucretius condemns prostitutes and other women who move in such ways as to “throw off the natural course of the seed” to avoid getting pregnant (*De re.* 4.1274–8), but it seems unlikely that sex-workers would have relied on uncertain methods such as *coitus interruptus*. A Hippocratic passage acknowledges that “public women, who have much experience of such things, when they are with a man, know it every time they are pregnant and then terminate it” (*Carn.* 8.610 (19)). The fanciful character of many of the contraceptive methods described by male elite writers may indicate that the knowledge necessary for sex-workers about how to prevent, diagnose and terminate pregnancies was orally transmitted.³⁸ Largely, the strategies for avoiding work-hazards such as pregnancy, disease and injury seem to have been the prostitutes’ problem alone.

The lived experience of many female prostitutes may be reflected by a find from late Roman Ashkelon, where excavations of the sewer beneath a Roman bathhouse yielded the skeletal remains of some 100 neonates, carelessly discarded in contrast to child burials from the same area. Bone size indicates that none was older than 48 hours while the consistent age, large number and manner of disposal

indicate infanticide. In surprising contrast to the well-attested ancient favouring of boys over girls, gender-analysis of the skeletons (using amplification of the DNA-sequences specific to X/Y-chromosomes) revealed a considerably higher percentage of male victims.³⁹ This has led Marina Faerman and Gila Kahila Bar-Gal tentatively to suggest that the bathhouse may have doubled as a brothel, with the sewer serving as a dumping-ground for the unwanted babies of sex-workers.⁴⁰ In this case, they suggest, infanticide would have been preferred to abortion, because it enabled sex-selection, allowing girls to be raised as future economic assets.⁴¹

Public women, invisible men

When Roman writers morally condemn prostitutes, they invariably return to their indiscriminate availability to anyone able to pay. Zephyrios' declaration that the murdered Alexandrian prostitute was available to anyone "like a corpse" even in life (*BGU* IV 1024) echoes Seneca's description of the prostitute as a *publica via* that everyone treads underfoot (*Controv.* 1.2.33–38). Prejudice against sex-workers is perhaps best summarised by Quintilian (*Maj. Decl.* 14.7), who has a prosecutor describe his prostitute opponent as a person "who may not shut out cripples or disdain the dregs of society, who [is] accessible to the drunk, sold to the wanton" and worst of all: "granted nightly to the public" (Flemming 1999: 47). The sex-worker as *publica* (e.g. Sen. *Epist.* 88.37) is regarded as the archetypal common whore, shamed for shamelessly making her body publicly available. The public woman is thus used by elite writers to differentiate themselves from the members of the common public – who are so crude as to buy a woman *anyone* could have.⁴²

The elite view of prostitutes is summed up by Cicero's condescending comment that the behaviour of the girl Chelidon was "not inhumane, considering she was a whore (*meretrix*)" (*Verr.* 2.1.138). Similarly negative public opinions are revealed by slang such as *scortum*, "leather hide" (e.g. Macrobian *Sat.* 2.2.6), and *lupa*, she-wolf (e.g. Novius 7; Laber. 56), painting the sex-worker as not just lowly but less than human.⁴³ But, however much the sex-workers were despised, prostitution itself is always taken for granted as an inescapable component of Roman society, with the rationale that the availability of prostitutes is necessary to ensure social and familial stability.⁴⁴ Horace even has Cato the Elder, the paragon of Roman morals, laud a "distinguished man" seen exiting a brothel for releasing his lusts in there instead of "grinding away at other men's wives" (*Hor Sat.* 1.2.31–5). And even though Cicero elsewhere condemns political

adversaries for their dealings with prostitutes (e.g. *Verr.* 2.1.137–139), in his defence of Caelius (*Cael.* 48) he states that:

If there is someone who thinks that young men should be forbidden even from engaging in affairs with prostitutes, he is, to be sure, very strict indeed (that I cannot deny), but he is at variance not only with the permissiveness of our own era but also with what our ancestors practiced and allowed. For when was this not commonly done? When was it criticized? When was it not permitted? When, in short, was it the case that what is licit was illicit?

(Williams 2010: 50)

For a man to buy sex is thus not only licit but a time-honoured custom. When moralists and biographers cite association with prostitutes as a negative trait of high officials and unpopular emperors (a favourite *topos* of Suetonius, e.g. *Cal.* 36; *Vesp.* 22; *Dom.* 22) it is specifically *excessive* lust and/or spending that it criticised. If done with moderation, visiting prostitutes attaches no stigma to the customer.⁴⁵

Apart from the tax on prostitution instituted by Caligula in CE 40 – according to Suetonius (*Cal.* 40) for “the amount each [prostitute] earned for one act of intercourse” (see also Cass. Dio 59.28.8) – the Roman sex-trade appears to have been unaffected by the kind of regulations imposed by many later societies, such as licensing and enforced medical examinations to protect customers.⁴⁶ The identity of the latter is vague, as the man who buys sex presents something of an absent presence in the sources.⁴⁷ In many ways he is portrayed as everyman, representing the inevitability of male sexual urges regardless of whether he happens to be Cato’s “distinguished man” or the dregs of society envisioned by Quintilian (*Maj. Decl.* 14.7, compare Hor. *Sat.* 2.7.47; Colum. *Rust.* 1.8.2). The low prices for sex recorded in Pompeian graffiti would have been affordable even for many slaves, and several of the graffiti from the *lupanar* (“wolf-house”, i.e. brothel, VII.12.18) identify customers with names that suggest servile status (e.g. *CIL* IV 2173–2296, see Varone 2002: 146).⁴⁸

In summary, the variety of textual and archaeological sources together present a picture of prostitution as “the interplay of sex and money, of labour and livelihood, in their wider surroundings” (Flemming 1999: 61). What remain conspicuously absent are the voices of the prostitutes themselves, and we can therefore only speculate on the strategies by which they managed stigma, violence and negative emotions in relation to their situation.⁴⁹

Notes

- 1 Edwards 1998; McGinn 1998: 340, 348, 2004: 8; Flemming 1999: 40; Glazebrook 2011: 145, 161–162, 166.
- 2 McGinn 1998: 18–20; Glazebrook 2011: 157.
- 3 An *as* is the smallest unit of Roman currency, the equivalent of the modern penny.
- 4 Varone 2002: 148; Beard 2008: 232.
- 5 Schmidt and Voss 2000: 1–7.
- 6 Rowlandson 1998: 18–23.
- 7 Flemming 1999: 39.
- 8 McClure 2006: 6.
- 9 Flemming 1999: 41; McGinn 2004: 55; Glazebrook 2011: 147; Lindgren 2013: 140; Richlin 2014: 206.
- 10 Flemming 1999: 50.
- 11 Varone 2002: 144–145.
- 12 Flemming 1999: 42; Beard 2008: 237; Lindgren 2013: 140.
- 13 Edwards 1998: 69, 81, 93, n. 58; Duncan 2006: 252–256, 270.
- 14 Foxhall 2013: 102; Lindgren 2013: 143.
- 15 McGinn 2004: 56–58; Laes 2011: 204–205.
- 16 Flemming 1999: 42; McGinn 2004: 56–57; Laes 2011: 200–203, 246–254, 257, 260.
- 17 Williams 2010: 40–50.
- 18 Note that the gender of the name Glyco is ambiguous: it could be read as a Greek feminine name but more likely constitutes the Latinised form of the Greek masculine name Glykon.
- 19 Flemming 1999: 49.
- 20 Seifert *et al.* 2000: 126, n. 6.
- 21 Scobie 1986: 403–404; McGinn 2004: 215–217.
- 22 Seifert *et al.* 2000: 119; McGinn 2004: 182–219, 267–290; Beard 2008: 237.
- 23 McGinn 2006.
- 24 Stumpp 1998: 37; Flemming 1999: 40; McGinn 2004: 61 n. 337; Glazebrook 2011: 161; Richlin 2014: 184.
- 25 Stumpp 1998: 216; Varone 2002: 145–146; McGinn 2004: 41–42; Johnson and Ryan 2005: 102–103.
- 26 McGinn 2004: 47–50.
- 27 McGinn 2004: 52.
- 28 Edwards 1998; McGinn 1998, 59–64; Grubbs 2002: 10, 84, 148, 285, n. 139; Glazebrook 2011: 154; Bond 2014: 6, 16.
- 29 Bagnall 1993: 196–198.
- 30 Rowlandson 1998: 270–271.
- 31 Lindgren 2013: 143.
- 32 McGinn 1998: 288–319 (see criticism by Bradley 2000: 471); Glazebrook 2011: 157–158.
- 33 Goodyear and Cusick 2007: 52; Walter 2010: 58.

- 34 Scobie 1986; Flemming 1999: 59; Johnson and Ryan 2005: 88; Laes 2011: 200.
- 35 Kapparis 2002: 108.
- 36 Frier 1994: 328.
- 37 McLaren 1990: 42–72; Stumpp 1998: 110–119; Flemming 2000: 166–167.
- 38 McLaren 1990: 57; Kapparis 2002: 113.
- 39 Faerman and Bar-Gal 1998: 863.
- 40 Faerman and Bar-Gal 1998: 861–864.
- 41 Faerman and Bar-Gal 1998: 864–865.
- 42 Adams 1983: 343–344.
- 43 Adams 1983: 333–335; McGinn 1998: 61, 2004: 8.
- 44 McGinn 1998: 65–68, 343, 2006: 169; Flemming 1999: 45; Johnson and Ryan 2005: 88–89.
- 45 McGinn 1998: 339; Lindgren 2013: 143–144.
- 46 McGinn 1998: 10, 248–274, 343.
- 47 Stumpp 1998: 174–176.
- 48 Flemming 1999: 45, 51; Joshel 2010: 126–129, 149; Glazebrook 2011: 145; Cohen 2014: 193.
- 49 Hulusjö 2013: 256–258.

References

- Adams, J. N. (1983) Words for “prostitute” in Latin. *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 126: 321–358.
- Bagnall, R. S. (1993) *Egypt in Late Antiquity*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Beard, M. (2008) *Pompeii: The Life of a Roman Town*. London: Profile.
- Bond, S. (2014) Status, violence, and civic exclusion in Late Antiquity. *Classical Antiquity* 33(1): 1–30.
- Bradley, K. R. (2000) Prostitution, the law of Rome, and social policy. *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 13: 468–476.
- Cohen, E. (2014) Sexual abuse and sexual rights: Slaves’ erotic experience at Athens and Rome. In T. K. Hubbard (ed.) *A Companion to Greek and Roman Sexualities*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 184–198.
- Duncan, A. (2006) Infamous performers: Comic actors and female prostitutes in Rome. In C. M. Faraone and L. K. McClure (eds) *Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 252–273.
- Edwards, C. (1998) Unspeakable professions: Public performance and prostitution in Ancient Rome. In J. P. Hallett and M. B. Skinner (eds) *Roman Sexualities*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 66–95.

- Faerman, M. and Bar-Gal, G. K. (1998) Determining the sex of infanticide victims from the Late Roman era through ancient DNA analysis. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 25: 861–865.
- Flemming, R. (1999) *Quae Corpore Quaestum Facit*: The sexual economy of female prostitution in the Roman Empire. *Journal of Roman Studies* 89: 38–61.
- Flemming, R. (2000) *Medicine and the Making of Roman Women: Gender, Nature, and Authority from celsus to Galen*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Foxhall, L. (2013) *Studying Gender in Classical Antiquity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Frier, B. (1994) Natural fertility and family limitation in Roman marriage. *Classical Philology* 89(4): 318–333.
- Glazebrook, A. (2011) Prostitution. In M. Golden and P. Toohey (eds) *A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Classical World*. Oxford, UK: Berg, pp. 144–168.
- Goodyear, M. D. E. and Cusick, L. (2007) Protection of sex workers. *British Medical Journal* 334(7584): 52–53.
- Grubbs, J. E. (2002) *Women and the Law in the Roman Empire: A Sourcebook on Marriage, Divorce and Widowhood*. London: Routledge.
- Hulusjö, A. (2013) *The Multiplicities of Prostitution Experience: Narratives About Power and Resistance*. Malmö, Sweden: Faculty of Health and Society, Malmö University.
- Johnson, M. and Ryan, T. (2005) *Sexuality in Greek and Roman Society: A Sourcebook*. London: Routledge.
- Joshel, S. R. (2010) *Slavery in the Roman World*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kapparis, K. (2002) *Abortion in the Ancient World*. London: Duckworth Academic.
- Laes, C. (2011) *Children in the Roman Empire: Outsiders Within*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Lefkowitz, M. R. and Fant, M. B. (2005) *Women's Life in Greece and Rome: A Sourcebook in Translation*. Third Edition. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Lindgren, M. (2013) Education and Work. In J. H. Tulloch (ed.) *A Cultural History of Women in Antiquity*. London: Bloomsbury, pp. 125–145.
- McClure, L. K. (2006) Introduction. In C. M. Faraone and L. K. McClure (eds) *Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 3–18.
- McGinn, T. A. J. (1998) *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- McGinn, T. A. J. (2004) *The Economy of Prostitution in the Roman World: A Study of Social History and the Brothel*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- McGinn, T. A. J. (2006) Zoning shame in the Roman city. In C. M. Faraone and L. K. McClure (eds) *Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 161–176.
- McLaren, A. (1990) *A History of Contraception: From Antiquity to the Present Day*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.
- Richlin, A. (2014) Talking to slaves in the Plautine audience. *Classical Antiquity* 33(1): 174–226.
- Rowlandson, J. (1998) *Women and Society in Greek and Roman Egypt: A Sourcebook*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Schmidt, R. A. and Voss, B. L. (2000) Archaeologies of sexuality: An introduction. In R. A. Schmidt and B. L. Voss (eds) *Archaeologies of Sexuality*. New York: Routledge, pp. 1–32.
- Scobie, A. (1986) Slums, sanitation and mortality in the Roman world. *Klio* 68(2): 399–433.
- Seifert, D. J., O'Brien, E. B. and Balicki, J. (2000) Mary Ann Hall's first-class house: The archaeology of a capital brothel. In R. A. Schmidt and B. L. Voss (eds) *Archaeologies of Sexuality*. New York: Routledge, pp. 117–128.
- Stumpp, B. E. (1998) *Prostitution in der Römischen Antike*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- Varone, A. (2002) *Erotica Pompeiana: Love Inscriptions on the Walls of Pompeii*. Trans. R. P. Berg. Roma: L'Erma di Bretschneider.
- Walter, N. (2010) *Living Dolls: The Return of Sexism*. London: Virago.
- Williams, C. A. (2010) *Roman Homosexuality*. Second edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

IDENTITIES AND SOCIAL ROLES OF WOMEN IN MILITARY SETTLEMENTS IN THE ROMAN WEST

Elizabeth M. Greene

Introduction

Since the 1990s it has become increasingly clear that women were a significant part of military communities around the Roman Empire well before the military was settled and monitoring somewhat peaceful frontiers. Evidence from Roman military forts reveals the presence of women and children during the first and second centuries AD, precisely the years during which there was a ban on legal marriage for serving soldiers.¹ The presence of women in these very masculine spaces has been contested in the past because of the prohibition on marriage. This picture is patently false and scholars now seek to correct ideas about life in the imperial Roman army.

This contribution addresses our current understanding of the lives of women living within the settlements of the Roman army stationed on the frontiers of the western Roman Empire. It focuses on the evidence for the role of women of both upper- and lower-class status in the social structure of the Roman army, not just the evidence for the presence of women in military communities. The investigation looks closely at the women and families living in these settlements specifically in the first two centuries of the principate, because there was at this time a ban on legal marriage for soldiers, which engendered in scholarship an image of a quasi-monastic military existence.² Evidence specifically from the military fort at Vindolanda on Hadrian's Wall is used here to show the important role and sometimes public position of these military women and families. This discussion focuses on the Vindolanda evidence, bringing together archaeological and epigraphic material to illuminate the lives of

women in the Roman military world.

The Roman army and its settlements

The focus group in this chapter is the auxiliary cohorts, the smaller groups of “helping troops” of non-citizen soldiers that were recruited from the provinces and supported the large legionary units. Many of the frontiers in the western provinces and especially the northern frontiers in Britain were heavily or exclusively manned by auxiliary units with a legionary unit stationed somewhat nearby.³ The auxiliary cohorts were much smaller than the legions and were comprised typically of nearly 500 to over 1,000 men depending on the type of unit. The top of the social structure in any auxiliary Roman fort was occupied by the officers; the highest was the prefect or commanding officer who was usually a Roman citizen with equestrian status, followed by the middle-ranking officers such as decurions and centurions. There were a range of low-ranking officers, followed by the cavalrymen in the auxiliary *alae*, and foot soldiers in auxiliary cohorts. Since the auxiliary units were recruited from the conquered provinces of the empire, the population of almost any auxiliary fort was a multicultural group with varied ethnic and cultural characteristics.

Military settlements in the Roman world typically consisted of a fort proper with a settlement that arose outside of the fort walls, which housed any number of non-combatant individuals. The entirety of this space, both fort and extramural settlement, should be considered a military community. The fort was a walled area in which the major military structures were located: the headquarters building (*principia*), the home of the prefect (*praetorium*), granaries, barrack buildings, and a number of other possible structures such as hospitals and offices. Outside the fort walls a community grew up almost immediately, often called a *vicus* or extramural settlement. These areas were sometimes walled to create an annex to the fort, but were usually open areas with somewhat organic growth around one or more sides of the fort. The extramural settlements were occupied by any number of individuals including merchants, tradespeople, craftspeople, and the families of soldiers.⁴ Some individuals living in this space will have originated from the local area, while many traveled with the unit regularly, such as the soldiers’ families, and were as much a part of the military world as the soldiers.

It has always been understood that women and children were a part of these extramural settlements,⁵ but the common image of life at a

military garrison based on the unbending division of military and civilian space has some problems. The fort and its extramural settlement have been investigated in the past as two distinct and contrasting spaces. That is to say, the fort was considered the “military” space and the extramural settlement was its binary opposite, the “civilian” part of the community. This neat separation of the two is untenable and the fluid nature of these sites is now recognized.⁶ There could never be an impermeable line drawn between these two areas. Many spaces outside the fort walls were necessary in the daily activity of Roman soldiers, such as bathhouses and religious structures, which brought the sphere of the extramural domain very much into the realm of the military world. At the same time, the evidence is mounting for the presence of women living and working inside the fort itself.⁷ Some lived in permanent quarters in the fort buildings, such as the families of the commanding officers, and others perhaps conducted temporary activities inside the fort while living permanently outside.⁸ With this reality in mind, we should envision the fort and the extramural settlement together as a “military settlement” rather than looking for the military aspect inside the walls and treating the extramural spaces as areas in which non-military populations inhabited for reasons unassociated with the occupying garrison. The two cannot be separated from one another and the entirety should be investigated together as the military community.

The Roman army and laws on soldiers’ marriages

Officers of the highest rank were legally allowed to marry during their period of service. It is debated how low in the officer ranks legal marriage was allowed, but most scholars believe that at least centurions and decurions held this privilege. The rank and file of auxiliary and legionary units were banned from legal marriage while they were active soldiers during at least the first and second centuries AD and were given this privilege usually only after discharge.⁹ It is clear, however, that soldiers took de facto wives and formed families while they served in the Roman military.¹⁰ These “wives” were not legally recognized by the Roman State;¹¹ therefore, there was no official provision for them by the army, for instance in food rations or any other subsistence, as far as our evidence suggests. Social custom, however, rarely follows legal mandate and the archaeological and epigraphic evidence discussed below all show that soldiers started families while serving in the military.¹²

Officers in the auxiliary cohorts, particularly the prefect, were

Roman citizens with equestrian status and, therefore, their wives usually held the same status. Since the lower-ranking auxiliary soldiers under discussion here typically originated from the conquered provinces, not Rome or Italy, the de facto wives too were usually of provincial origin. Some soldiers maintained relationships with local women who were from the region close to the location in which the unit was stationed, but more seem to have chosen partners with similar cultural origins to themselves. In other words, quite often soldiers appear to have maintained a cultural connection with their homeland by starting a family with a woman of similar background. The primary evidence for these cultural connections is in the discharge certificates of the auxiliary soldiers (military diplomas) which will be discussed at length shortly. With this reality in mind, it seems that soldiers did not heed the legal ban on marriage, at least with social practice. There was no official ceremony and, as it appears in a few cases preserved in papyrological evidence, if a claim was made concerning a soldier's "wife" the state denied the existence of the marriage. Therefore, these relationships existed entirely outside the legal system, but were no less socially important to the auxiliary soldiers and their families. Van Driel-Murray contends that the extramural settlement was a community in which soldiers could find wives, often probably the sisters and daughters of their comrades, the prerequisite for which is the regular habitation of soldiers' families in the military settlements.¹³

The de facto wives of the common soldiers were not the only women living in military settlements and associated with the occupying garrison. Officers of the highest ranks and probably the middle ranks appear to have brought their wives into service fairly regularly;¹⁴ however, because officers were legally allowed to marry, investigation of the daily lives of these women has not occurred to any great depth. Their presence has been accepted in the military sphere because of the legality of the union and therefore the investigation has stopped. Understanding the presence and social role of these families, however, is of great importance to appreciate fully the nature of life inside a Roman military camp, especially if several officers living within the fort walls had families along with them. The regular and normal appearance of women within the fort must have been accepted and a part of everyday reality for everyone living in a military community. Evidence such as the high-status shoes of women and children, and writing tablets relating various aspects of life in the fort are discussed later in the chapter, leading to the conclusion that at least the family of the commanding officer had a somewhat public role.¹⁵ Given their location living in the central range of structures

inside the fort, it would be almost impossible to ignore their role in the daily activities of the military space. These women and children were certainly not sequestered in the home, therefore a place must be found for their social position.

Women and families present in military settlements: the evidence and arguments

The negative view of a female presence in military life may seem more prominent if one takes into account only the literary evidence. The most commonly cited passage is Tacitus' report of Severus Caecina's chastisement of men whose wives accompany them to official posts.¹⁶ He calls for legislation banning women from joining their husbands during provincial duties.¹⁷ The motion, however, is rejected by the senate and the case against the proposal makes clear that men enjoyed the company of their wives while serving outside Italy.¹⁸ Archaeological evidence seems to support that at least some officers and soldiers had their wives and children with them during service and that they were an important part of life in the settlement. The literary viewpoint in this case should not be prioritized and should be examined in light of archaeological evidence.

The lived reality of the various women who resided in a military settlement will have differed greatly depending on their status, or lack thereof, in different spheres of society. Even with the appropriate legality of the union of the officers in the *auxilia*, an investigation of the presence and social roles of the officers' families better illuminates the lives of military women on the frontiers. The auxiliary fort at Vindolanda provides a great deal of unique data relevant to the lives of officers' wives and families. Both writing tablets and footwear reveal something about the lives of women and families living within military communities. Without another assemblage of material as extensive as that found at Vindolanda, comparisons are difficult to make, but further evidence from elsewhere in the empire, such as that investigated by Allison in the German forts, suggests that the presence of women and children in and around military forts was commonplace.¹⁹

Upper-class women in a military garrison

At Vindolanda, the prefect's family quite clearly lived with him in the *praetorium*. Though it has been known for some time that officers were allowed to marry, the presence of this family within the central range

of buildings of the fort is important for considering military life inside the fort walls. Writing tablets show clearly that some women—at least the officers' wives—had a certain amount of freedom within the military environment. A few tablets preserve the correspondence between Sulpicia Lepidina, the wife of the prefect at Vindolanda, and Claudia Severa, the wife of the commander at Briga, an unknown fort somewhere on or near the northern frontier. The letters show that the women traveled to see each other, perhaps quite regularly since tablet 291 is an invitation to a birthday party, presumably a somewhat regular event:²⁰

Claudia Severa to her Lepidina greetings. On 11 September, sister, for the day of the celebration of my birthday, I give you a warm invitation to make sure that you come to us, to make the day more enjoyable for me by your arrival, if you are present (?). Give my greetings to your cerialis. My Aelius and my little son send him (?) their greetings. (2nd hand) I shall expect you, sister. Farewell, sister, my dearest soul, as I hope to prosper, and hail. (Back, 1st hand) To Sulpicia Lepidina, wife of cerialis, from Severa.²¹

The invitation indicates that family events were important, even here in the military environment and all the way out on the northern frontier. Not only do we see that life on the periphery carried on in a way expected of the civilian world elsewhere in the empire with birthday parties and family visits, but also that these women were in no way sequestered in their homes. Tablet 292 attests to this mobility further. The letter records a straightforward declaration that Claudia Severa is allowed to travel to see her friend anytime it is necessary:

[g]reetings. Just as I had spoken with you, sister, and promised that I would ask Brocchus and would come to you, I asked him and he gave me the following reply, that it was always readily (?) permitted to me, together with . . . to come to you in whatever way I can. For there are certain essential things which . . . you will receive my letters by which you will know what I am going to do . . . I was . . . and will remain at Briga. Greet your cerialis from me. (Back, 2nd hand) Farewell my sister, my dearest and most longed-for soul. (1st hand) To Sulpicia Lepidina, wife of cerialis, from Severa, wife of Brocchus (?).²²

These women were visible members of the community and they were moving in both directions; each of the letters above suggests that both Claudia Severa and Sulpicia Lepidina travel to see the other. Moreover, the letters date to the period around AD 100, when the northern frontier in Britain consisted of only timber forts and a road connecting them.²³ This was a region recently consolidated by Roman power, with initial conquest occurring only in the AD 70s and 80s. It is telling that women were free to move about this region, though presumably this occurred with a retinue or escort of some sort, which may be indicated in the lost words of the incomplete line in tablet 292

above, after the words “together with.” This sort of mobility and prominence in the everyday activities of the military world now take a place in our reckoning of life at Roman military forts.

The writing tablets also suggest that there was a distinct feminine culture in the routine of the army at Vindolanda. Tablet 581 is an otherwise innocuous list of supplies entering the fort, but contains a line listing provisions that were to be used for the *matronalia*.²⁴ The *matronalia* is a very distinct female ritual that requires the presence of women, and more specifically fecund wives, and is not merely a celebration to honor women generally.²⁵ If this festival had become part of the yearly religious calendar at Vindolanda, it indicates the regular and standard habitation of women, and more likely, the wives of the officer classes. This tablet, together with others, also suggest that these women were not in any way considered interlopers or simply tolerated; they were part of the fabric of life in the fort and in this military settlement.²⁶ That the supplies are included on an official list of goods in the fort also suggests that the festival was sanctioned by military officials in some way, which is not surprising since the ritual required the presence of wives *and* their husbands. The celebration of the *matronalia*, whether this was a regular occurrence in military settlements elsewhere or an anomaly here at Vindolanda, suggests that wives were appreciated and celebrated, rather than considered a negative force to distract a soldier from discipline.

Similar to the way the tablets revealed something of the lives of elite women on site, the shoes found within the *praetorium* at Vindolanda also suggest some public function for the family of the prefect.²⁷ Over 4,000 leather shoes from the Roman period have been excavated from Vindolanda, allowing one to gain sharp focus on the population of the fort over a period of 300 years. Several shoes in the *praetorium* belonged to the family of the commanding officer, one of particular note is a fine slipper with a high-end maker’s mark and delicate decoration that may have belonged to Sulpicia Lepidina (Figure 68.1).

Another shoe type, one with “fishnet” decoration (Figure 68.2), is found almost exclusively within the elite setting of the *praetorium*. This depositional pattern may suggest that this fine shoe was worn exclusively by the elite population on site, perhaps only by the family of the prefect and other high-ranking officers. Included within the assemblage from the *praetorium* are small shoes of this type having belonged to children; one example was worn by an individual about 10 to 12 years old (see Figure 68.2) and another by someone as young as 8 months to a year old (Figure 68.3).²⁸



Figure 68.1 The so-called “Lepidina slipper” found in the residence of the commanding officer at Vindolanda from the early second century AD. This high-end shoe has detailed decoration and a stamp of the shoe maker on the insole. (Photo copyright: the Vindolanda Trust.)



Figure 68.2 Shoe having belonged to a child with the “fishnet” decorative style characteristic of shoes found in elite residences at Vindolanda. Early second century AD. (Photo copyright: Elizabeth M. Greene and the Vindolanda Trust.)



Figure 68.3 Shoe having belonged to an infant with the “fishnet” decorative style. The shoe has a full set of iron hobnails and detailed decoration throughout. Early second century AD. (Photo copyright: Elizabeth M. Greene and the Vindolanda Trust.)

Since this shoe type is confined to the residence of the prefect, it indicates that it was part of the material package of the elites on site and that children were also held to this sartorial standard of dress. In order for such a visual marker of status to have any effect, the family of the prefect must have had some public function within the fort itself. One might imagine that the “first family” within the settlement, with the wife at the head, became part of the public military rituals such as parades. It is difficult to know with certainty the daily activities of these women and children, but it is clear that they were not hidden away from life in and around the garrison.

Non-elite women in the military world

The intersection of elite and non-elite women in the military world can be explored also through the writing tablets. A letter from a woman named Paterna, who writes to and is most likely of lower status than Lepidina, promises to bring her remedies.

Paterna (?) to her Lepidina, greetings. So help me god, my lady [and sister?], I shall bring (?) you two remedies (?), the one for . . . , the other for fever (?) and therefore . . . myself to you . . . but insofar as . . . [.29](#)

This letter is interesting for a few reasons. Though Paterna has been

identified as a slave,³⁰ she uses language that is endearing still. The word *domina* is used and may represent only the relationship between slave and owner, but the tenor of the letter leaves one feeling as though a closer relationship was had by these women. I have suggested elsewhere that a few of the letters, though frustratingly incomplete, may suggest that there was something of a female network present in this otherwise very masculine world of the Roman army.³¹ Another tablet suggests that this network may include patronage by the ranking senior woman on site, the wife of the prefect.

Valatta to her cerialis, greetings. I ask my lord, by your posterity, and through Lepidina that you grant me what I ask (?)³²

Valatta, a woman of lower status, writes to cerialis, the prefect of the cohort in the late first and early second centuries and husband of Sulpicia Lepidina. She appeals to cerialis for something unknown, but does this by invoking the patronage of Lepidina.³³ The letter is fragmentary, but the glimpse of an appeal perhaps through the benefaction of the prefect's wife, suggests there was a network of trust and that the hierarchy of the military worked within a gendered context. Little evidence exists, but it is probable that the wives of foot soldiers would have taken part in this hierarchy and experienced life not only as women in a Roman military community, but also as lower-status individuals needing to appeal to elite women on site for patronage. In an auxiliary military unit, this would have been the wife of the prefect at the top, followed by the wives of other high-ranking officers.

The best place to gain a greater understanding of the identity of lower-status women, particularly the wives of auxiliary foot soldiers, is in the military diplomas. Each diploma was essentially a discharge certificate awarded to a soldier at the end of his service.³⁴ Our earliest dated diplomas are from AD 52 (fleet) and AD 54 (auxiliary) and they were issued to auxiliary soldiers until the early third century, when the practice ceased. They record the name of the soldier with his military details such as unit and rank, and personal information such as his father's name and his place of origin.³⁵ If requested, a soldier could also name his wife, who would have legally been only a de facto partner up to that point, and the children that he had at the point of leaving military service, who receive Roman citizenship. Of the whole corpus, about 43 percent of those diplomas that preserve this section of the document name a family member, either a wife alone, a wife with children, or only children.³⁶ This personal information provides an extraordinary wealth of data for understanding with whom soldiers

chose to create relationships while they served in the Roman military.

The auxiliary cohorts were by definition the “helping” units of the Roman army and were of a different character than the legions. They were typically recruited from provincial lands, a situation which created units with a diverse multiethnic character, especially after the first century AD when the majority of new recruits came from local areas in which the unit served and moved.³⁷ It is interesting to see, therefore, exactly whom these soldiers “married” and what social ties they kept while serving in the Roman army. The military diplomas help enormously in this regard; when the wife is listed together with the soldier-husband, she is also identified with her father’s name and her place of origin. We can determine, therefore, whether the soldier married a woman with the same cultural background, or met a woman from another province, often from the location in which the unit was stationed. The diploma evidence suggests that far more often soldiers chose to have relationships with women who shared their own cultural background. The result is rather surprising when we consider that it is commonly stated in general books on the Roman army that soldiers met local women and formed relationships with native women from around the garrison.³⁸

From a corpus of forty-two diplomas that clearly record the *origo* of both the husband and wife, twenty-one show that the soldier and wife come from the same tribe.³⁹ A further six strongly imply that the soldier married a female relation of his comrade, indicating that the relationship spawned from within the military community itself. Moreover, it is quite probable that many of the wives that appear to come from the same cultural background as the soldier, were actually present and living within the military settlement already. This information has a few important implications. The simple fact that military communities were vibrant settlements with women and families of all classes present should be incorporated much more organically into our image of life in the Roman army. Though scholars have long understood that the settlements outside the fort walls were inhabited by a variety of people, including women and children, not enough attention has been paid to who exactly these individuals were and what their precise relationship was with the nearby garrison. If far more of the wives came from the same tribe as the soldier, it would suggest that whole families or households entered into the military community together with the soldier. These families were the backbone of the military community and in many cases provided the women with whom soldiers began “marital” relationships. It must have been important to a greater number of soldiers and their wives to maintain a cultural connection by marriage. This goal could have

been accomplished either by a woman having entered into the military world with the soldier at recruitment or by the soldier seeking a wife with the same origins from the garrison community or from the original geographical homeland. Families certainly existed in the military communities in all periods in order for soldiers to marry the sisters and daughters of comrades. Therefore, we must imagine the regular and sustained presence of families in a thriving community like any other, rather than a haphazard settlement of individuals simply “hanging on” to the unit as has often been surmised. The military community comprised the soldiers, the women and children, merchants, traders, and craftsmen that we have come to recognize as part of any settlement in the Roman world.

Wives of the lower-status soldiers would surely have lived a different reality than the wives of officers, simply because of the class differentiation. We can understand something of their cultural identification since very often the wives share a similar ethnic background with their husband, but we have little evidence for understanding their role within the daily social order of the settlement. If we use other women in the empire with similar social status as an indicator, it could suggest that these women helped to sustain the families of soldiers.⁴⁰ Auxiliary soldiers did not receive as much pay as legionary soldiers, and their wages were delivered partially in goods rather than cash.⁴¹ Unfortunately, there is little direct evidence for the working lives of women living in military garrisons. Allison has suggested that the patterns of artifact deposition in some German forts indicate that women’s activities were probably in part in the commercial sector. Artifacts in the streets, gateways, and other public areas of forts on the German frontier, such as Oberstimm and Ellingen, led her to posit an economic role for some women in these military communities.⁴² Written evidence from the legionary fort at Vindonissa, also in Germany, suggests that women lived inside the fort itself serving as inn keepers.⁴³ Direct evidence is not terribly robust, but it would not be a stretch to posit that wives of foot soldiers took part in the economy of the settlement in many ways, from selling goods to mending and craftsmanship.⁴⁴

Conclusion

For the women present in this military-focused world, life would have revolved around the beat of the military drum. We need not presume that life was so terribly different for women living in the military community than those living elsewhere in the Roman provinces, but there must have been a prioritization on the military nature of the site

and the requisite activities. The life led here by various women within the community would have been quite different based on their social standing and other affiliations that made the settlements of the auxiliary army varied and multicultural environments. We have a greater impression of the officers' wives simply because our evidence is more robust. The available material suggests that wives and families in the higher classes may have played a public role in the social order of the fort and were certainly not a hidden component of the population. Wives of foot soldiers and other lower-status freeborn females I believe would also have played a vibrant role in the life of the settlement, taking part in the economy in various ways. Again, they were part of the fabric of the community, as many of the Vindolanda writing tablets suggest with greetings to family and friends found throughout the corpus. Life at an auxiliary military fort was surely something unique, but despite the legal ban on military marriages, we can explore the lives of women, children, and family life in these settlements that were once thought to be predominantly masculine spaces.

Notes

- 1 The most comprehensive work on the marriage ban and its parameters is Phang 2001. For a recent review, see Eck 2014.
- 2 Wells 1997: 571–574.
- 3 E.g., in Britain the nearest permanent legionary fortress was at York, well south of the frontier lines.
- 4 For a longer treatment of civilians in these spaces, see Hanson 2005: *passim*.
- 5 For treatments of the civilians associated with the Roman army, see most recently Speidel 1997; Birley 2000; Maxfield 2002; Stoll 2006, 2008; Brandl 2008.
- 6 For a full treatment of this subject and investigation of artifact deposition and social space at Vindolanda, see Birley 2013: *passim*.
- 7 For the evidence of women's occupation found in German forts, see Allison 2013. For the presence of women in the barracks of the foot soldiers at Vindolanda, see Van Driel-Murray 1998; cf. Greene 2013a.
- 8 Van Driel-Murray 1995, 1997, 1998; Allason-Jones 1997, 1999; Allison 2006, 2007, 2013.
- 9 In the first century AD, auxiliary soldiers were given privileges after 25 years of service, but not necessarily with official discharge.
- 10 The primary body of evidence for pre-discharge families of soldiers is the military diplomas, see below. For full discussion, see Greene 2015a.
- 11 For the full discussion of the marriage ban, see Phang 2001, *passim*.
- 12 Phang 2002, 2004; Allison 2011.
- 13 Van Driel-Murray 1998; cf. Wells 1997.
- 14 Allason-Jones 1999; Maxfield 2002; Greene 2013a, 2013b.

- 15 Greene 2013b, 2014.
- 16 Tac. *Ann.* 3.33.1–4.
- 17 For further discussion of this passage, see Marshall 1975.
- 18 Tac. *Ann.* 3.34.1–6.
- 19 Allison 2006, 2007, 2013. The military diplomas, discussed below, also show the high number of wives and children associated with soldiers before retirement.
- 20 All transcription and translation of the Vindolanda tablets are from Bowman and Thomas 1994 and 2003.
- 21 *Tab. Vindol.* II 291. Bowman and Thomas 1994: 256–259; cf. Greene 2013b.
- 22 *Tab. Vindol.* II 292. Bowman and Thomas 1994: 259–262.
- 23 It is debated how early this region can be called a “frontier” and when the road was implemented here. See Hodgson 2000 for arguments; cf. Poulter 1998 for discussion of road construction.
- 24 *Tab. Vindol.* III 581. Bowman and Thomas 2003: 23–34. See Greene 2013b: 378–379 for the full discussion of this tablet and the *matronalia* festival in this context.
- 25 For fuller treatments of the *matronalia* festival, see Gagé 1963; Prescendi 2000.
- 26 For a comparison between the Vindolanda letters and the very public role of military wives on the nineteenth-century American frontier, see Greene 2012: *passim*.
- 27 For full discussion of the children’s shoes at Vindolanda, see Greene 2014.
- 28 Van Driel-Murray 1993: 44–47; cf. Greene 2013a.
- 29 *Tab. Vindol.* II 294. Bowman and Thomas 1994: 263–265.
- 30 Bowman and Thomas 1994: 263–265; for further discussion of this tablet, see Birley 2002: 145.
- 31 Greene 2013b: *passim*.
- 32 *Tab. Vindol.* II 257. Bowman and Thomas 1994: 230–231; for further discussion of this tablet, see Birley 2002: 145.
- 33 Greene 2013b: 379–380.
- 34 Legionary soldiers did not receive the document except in exceptional circumstances. The largest number of diplomas preserved today belong to auxiliary and fleet soldiers.
- 35 For publication of most diplomas up to 2006, refer to the series of volumes *Roman Military Diplomas* by Margaret Roxan (Vols. 1–3) and Roxan and Holder (Vols. 4–5). Since 2006 and for the *editio princeps* of many diplomas, refer to volumes of *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* and other publications by Werner Eck, Andreas Pangerl and Peter Weiß.
- 36 Greene 2015a: 135–136.
- 37 For the most recent comprehensive treatment of the Roman *auxilia*, see Haynes 2013.
- 38 E.g., Keppie 1998: 148; Le Bohec 2000: 225; Southern 2006: 144–145.
- 39 Greene 2015a: 137–143.
- 40 For discussion of working women in the empire, see Becker, this volume.
- 41 For debates about Roman soldiers’ pay, see most recently Speidel 2014.
- 42 Allison 2006: 14; 17–19 for discussion.

- 43 Speidel 1996: 186–187, n. 44.
- 44 For further consideration of wives of soldiers working in military settlements, see Greene 2015b.

References

- Allason-Jones, L. (1997) The women of Roman Maryport. In R. J. A. Wilson (ed.) *Roman Maryport and Its Setting*. Maryport, UK: Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, pp. 105–111.
- Allason-Jones, L. (1999) Women and the Roman army in Britain. In A. Goldsworthy and I. Haynes (eds) *The Roman Army as a Community*. Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, pp. 41–51.
- Allison, P. M. (2006) Mapping for gender: Interpreting artefact distribution inside 1st- and 2nd-century A.D. forts in Roman Germany. *Archaeological Dialogues* 13(1): 1–20.
- Allison, P. M. (2011) Soldiers' families in the early Roman Empire. In B. Rawson (ed.) *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*. Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 161–182.
- Allison, P. M. (2013) *People and Spaces in Military Bases*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Birley, A. (2013) The fort wall: A great divide? In R. Collins and M. Symonds (eds) *Breaking Down Boundaries: Hadrian's Wall in the 21st century*. Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, pp. 85–104.
- Birley, A. R. (2002) *Garrison Life at Vindolanda: A Band of Brothers*. Gloucestershire, UK: Tempus.
- Birley, R. (2000) *Civilians on Rome's Northern Frontier: Families, Friends and Foes*. Greenhead, UK: Roman Army Museum Publications.
- Bowman, A. K. and Thomas, J. D. (1994) *The Vindolanda Writing-Tablets: Tabulae Vindolandenses Volume II*. London: British Museum Press.
- Bowman, A. K. and Thomas, J. D. (2003) *The Vindolanda Writing-Tablets: Tabulae Vindolandenses Volume III*. London: British Museum Press.
- Brandl, U. (ed.) (2008) *“Frauen und Römisches Militär”: Beiträge eines Runden Tisches in Xanten vom 7. Bis 9. Juli 2005*. Oxford, UK: British Archaeological Reports.
- Eck, W. (2014) *Milites et Pagani*. La posizione dei soldati nella società Romana. *Rationes Rerum—Rivista di Filologia e Storia* 3: 11–54.
- Gagé, J. (1963) *Matronalia. Essai sur les Devotions et les Organisations Cultuelles des Femmes dans L'ancienne Rome*. Brussels, Belgium:

- Greene, E. M. (2012) Sulpicia Lepidina and Elizabeth Custer: A cross-cultural analogy for the social role of women on a military frontier. In M. Duggan, F. McIntosh and D. Rohl (eds) *Proceedings of the Twenty First Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 105–114.
- Greene, E. M. (2013a) Before Hadrian's Wall: Early military communities on the Roman frontier in Britain. In R. Collins and M. F. A. Symonds (eds) *Breaking Down Boundaries: Hadrian's Wall in the 21st century*. Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, pp. 17–32.
- Greene, E. M. (2013b) Female networks in the military communities of the Roman west. In E. Hemelrijk and G. Woolf (eds) *Gender and the City: Women and Civic Life in Italy and the Western Provinces*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, pp. 369–390.
- Greene, E. M. (2014) If the shoe fits: Style and status in the assemblage of children's shoes from Vindolanda. In R. Collins and F. McIntosh (eds) *Life in the Limes: Studies of the People and Objects of the Roman Frontiers*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 29–36.
- Greene, E. M. (2015a) *Conubium cum uxoribus*: Wives and children in the Roman military diplomas. *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 28: 125–59.
- Greene, E. M. (2015b) Roman military pay and soldiers' family: The household contribution to subsistence. In L. Vagalinski and N. Sharankov (eds) *Limes XXII. Proceedings of the 22nd International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies, Ruse, Bulgaria*. Sofia, Bulgaria: Bulletin of the National Archaeological Institute XLII, pp. 495–499.
- Hanson, W. S. (2005) Civilians on frontiers. In Z. Visy (ed.) *Limes XIX, Proceedings of the XIXth International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies, Pécs, Hungary, September 2003*. Pécs, Hungary: University of Pécs, pp. 303–307.
- Haynes, I. (2013) *Blood of the Provinces: The Roman Auxilia and the Making of Provincial Society from Augustus to the Severans*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Hodgson, N. 2000. The Stanegate: A frontier rehabilitated. *Britannia* 31: 11–22.
- Keppie, L. (1998) *The Making of the Roman Army*. London: Routledge.
- Le Bohec, Y. (2000) *The Roman Imperial Army*. London: Routledge.
- Marshall, A. (1975) Tacitus and the Governor's lady: A note on Annals III. 33–4. *Greece & Rome* 22(1): 11–18.
- Maxfield, V. A. (2002) Soldier and civilian: Life beyond the ramparts. In R. J. Brewer (ed.) *The Second Augustan Legion and the Roman*

- Military Machine*. Cardiff, UK: National Museum Wales, pp. 145–163.
- Phang, S. E. (2001) *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers (13 BC–AD 235): Law and Family in the Imperial Army*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Phang, S. E. (2002) The families of Roman soldiers (first and second centuries A.D.): Culture, law and practice. *Journal of Family History* 27: 352–373.
- Phang, S. E. (2004) Intimate conquests: Roman soldiers' slave women and freedwomen. *The Ancient World* 15: 207–237.
- Poulter, J. (1998) The date of the Stanegate, and a hypothesis about the manner and timing of the construction of Roman roads in Britain. *Archaeologia Aeliana, Ser. 5* 26: 49–56.
- Prescendi, F. (2000) *Matralia und Matronalia: Feste von Frauen in der römischen Religion*. In T. Späth and B. Wagner-Hasel (eds) *Frauenwelten in der Antike*. Stuttgart, Germany: Verlag J. B. Metzler.
- Southern, P. (2006) *The Roman Army: A Social and Institutional History*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Speidel, M. A. (1996) *Die Römischen Schreibtafeln von Vindonissa: Lateinische Texte des Militärischen Alltags und Ihre Geschichtliche Bedeutung*. Brugg, Switzerland: Gesellschaft pro Vindonissa.
- Speidel, M. A. (1997) Frauen und Kinder beim römischen Heer. *Jahresbericht – Gesellschaft Pro Vindonissa 1997*, pp. 53–54.
- Speidel, M. A. (2014) Roman army pay scales revisited: Responses and answers. In M. Reddé (ed.) *De l'or pour les braves! Soldes, armées et circulation monétaire dans le monde romain*. Bordeaux, France: Ausonius, pp. 53–62.
- Stoll, O. (2006) Legionäre, Frauen, Militärfamilien. Untersuchungen zur Bevölkerungsstruktur und Bevölkerungsentwicklung in den Grenzprovinzen des Imperium Romanum. *Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums Mainz* 53(1): 217–344.
- Stoll, O. (2008) “*Incedere inter milites, habere ad manum centurions . . . iam et exercitus regerent!*” Frauen und römisches Militär—Eine schwierige Beziehung? In U. Brandl (ed.) “*Frauen und Römisches Militär*”: *Beiträge eines Runden Tisches in Xanten vom 7. Bis 9. Juli 2005*. Oxford, UK: British Archaeological Reports, pp. 20–51.
- Van Driel-Murray, C. (1993) *Vindolanda Research Reports. Volume III, The Early Wooden Forts: Preliminary Reports on the Leather, Textiles, Environmental Evidence and Dendrochronology*. Hexham, UK: The Vindolanda Trust, pp. 1–75.
- Van Driel-Murray, C. (1995) Gender in question. In P. Rush (ed.) *Theoretical Roman Archaeology: Second Conference Proceedings*. Aldershot, UK and Brookfield, WI: Avebury, pp. 3–21.

- Van Driel-Murray, C. (1997) Women in forts? *Jahresbericht – Gesellschaft Pro Vindonissa 1997*, pp. 55–61.
- Van Driel-Murray, C. (1998) A question of gender in a military context. *Helinium* 34 (1994): 342–362.
- Wells, C. M. (1997) “The daughters of the regiment”: Sisters and wives in the Roman army. In W. Groenman-van Waateringe, *et al.* (eds) *Roman Frontier Studies 1995*. Oxford, UK: Oxbow, pp. 571–574.

FEMALE GLADIATORS IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Anna McCullough

The hold of female gladiators on the modern popular imagination has yet to see any diminishment. The recent publication of a figurine alleged to be a female gladiator nearly went viral, making it to LiveScience, National Geographic, MSNBC, and Yahoo, among other online sites and forums. And as a scholar who works on this topic, I may say from personal experience that out of the litany of research interests dutifully recited in response to the question, “what do you work on,” the mention of female gladiators is consistently the theme upon which listeners seize and interrogate me further. I will here briefly review the limited evidence available, identify the broad conclusions possible from this evidence, and conclude with analysis of two issues which have generated a number of misconceptions and controversies, namely the Latin terminology and archaeological evidence.

Literary evidence

First, differentiation must be made between mentions in texts of “true” gladiators, i.e., those individuals who trained and fought under contract as gladiators, and untrained women who appeared in the arena as prisoners of war, criminals condemned to execution, or Christian martyrs. This section will focus on “true” gladiators, as well as female *venatores* (beast-hunters). Also, as will be discussed later in the chapter, there was no specific Latin term for a female gladiator; authors must describe them more generally as women in the arena, or women fighting in combat.

Mentions of female gladiators in the literature are included most often as curiosities, as anecdotes of interest for the reader, which

illustrate the generosity or innovations of emperors in providing public games. The tone of such mentions is generally neutral or positive. However, when the participants are women from the equestrian or senatorial orders, the tone turns unequivocally negative as authors condemn the violations of both social class and gender norms, and condemn the emperor under whom elite women appeared.¹ References are concentrated under just a few emperors, and often seem to refer to the same occasions. The emperors under whom female gladiators are said to appear are Nero, Titus, Domitian, and Septimius Severus.

Nero, who encouraged or forced elite men and women to fight beasts or as gladiators, is roundly condemned by Tacitus (*Annales* 15.32) and Cassius Dio (62[61].17.3) for doing so. However, while Suetonius mentions elite men and women being involved in theatrical productions under Nero, he does not specify the gender of elite participants in the gladiatorial shows (*Nero* 11–12). Petronius, the only source contemporary to Nero which mentions female gladiators, references a female *essedaria*, i.e., one who fights from a chariot (*Satyricon* 45). This, however, is a fictional source and is the only mention of this type of female gladiator. Finally, Cassius Dio also describes a games sponsored by Nero for Tiridates, at which only Ethiopians fought—men, women, and children (62[63].3.1). It is not clear whether the participants were trained fighters, or prisoners; but the exhibition is described as a *monomachias*, a term typically used for gladiatorial spectacles, and the excellence of the show was noted. Those conditions point toward trained fighters, rather than prisoners or slaves thrown to slaughter.

The Flavians continued the trend of sponsoring women in the arena. Martial (*De Spectaculis* 7[6], 8[6b]) and Cassius Dio (66.25.1) both describe female beast-hunters at the same event, Titus' games inaugurating the Colosseum in AD 80. In addition, Cassius Dio, Statius, and Suetonius seem to be describing a similar set of events under Domitian. Cassius Dio (67.8.4) describes games at night, between dwarfs, and between women; Suetonius (*Domitian* 4.1) describes combats by torchlight at night, and combats between women; and Statius (*Silvae* 1.6.51–6) describes combats between dwarfs and between women at a Saturnalian games sponsored by Domitian. Cassius Dio is likely collating the events which Suetonius and Statius describe. Statius is clear that the combats between women were held during the afternoon, before nightfall; so this is not the same event to which Suetonius and Cassius Dio refer. It is unclear, however, how often Domitian may have held night contests, or combats between women, or whether one or two such events held notoriety and novelty

enough to merit mention.

After the Flavian era, literary references dry up. Juvenal's Satire 6, written no earlier than AD 115, includes a passage mocking elite women who practice as gladiators in a *ludus*. As with the rest of Satire 6, it is unclear how literally the reader ought to take this passage, given the Satire's hysterical hyperbole regarding the state of Rome's womanhood. Elsewhere, Juvenal describes a woman named Mevia who killed a boar in the amphitheater while dressed as an Amazon: *Mevia Tuscum/figat aprum et nuda teneat venabula mamma* ("Mevia pierces a Tuscan boar and holds the spears with one breast bare" Satire 1.22–3). Lastly, Cassius Dio (76[75].16.1) records the presumed end of female gladiators under Septimius Severus. In AD 200, there was a particular gymnastic contest (*gymnikos agon*) which included single combat (*monomachia*) between women; when the events inspired jokes about women in the audience, Severus banned women from appearing in such spectacles, presumably to protect the reputations of the women watching.

One other possible reference to female gladiators occurs in Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae* (third century AD, 4.154a), which preserves a fragment of Nicolaus of Damascus (late first century BC). Describing the origins and conditions of gladiatorial combat in Rome, Nicolaus mentions a man who ordered in his will that his female slaves fight in *monomachia*; another ordered his boy favorites to do the same. However, the text goes on to say that the people refused to carry out these provisions in outrage at their indecency, and it is not known when this incident may have occurred.

The brief, anecdotal nature of the literary evidence nevertheless yields some general conclusions. If they were not of high social rank, women who fought and trained as gladiators and beast-hunters were lauded for their bravery and skill, and were valued for their novelty and the intensity with which they fought. A good show, after all, was what the audience expected! The novelty of women gladiators likely was preserved or ensured by their relative rarity. The lack of a specific Latin term for female gladiators, the overall paucity of all types of evidence, and the seeming repetition of the same events in the sources indicate that they were likely not a very common sight. There is no hint that women's equipment and training differed from men's, as will be seen too in the artistic evidence. However, women are not recorded to have ever fought men, only other women and beasts. Finally, the sources seem to point to female gladiators as a phenomenon especially known under Nero and the Flavians in the city of Rome itself. All references, except for the Severan games and the possibly fictional

ones by Petronius and Juvenal, identify the emperors themselves as sponsoring the appearances of female gladiators. However, as will be seen, the non-literary evidence will demonstrate that female gladiators appeared in more varied geographical and historical contexts than the literary sources would imply.

Art and inscriptions

To uncover female gladiators prior to Nero and outside the city of Rome, we must turn to epigraphic and artistic evidence. Here too, female gladiators are confirmed as a trend emerging under the empire as part of the increasing popularity of the games.

The earliest secure mention of women fighting in the arena appears in a senatorial edict (*senatus consultum*, or S. C.) of AD 19 from Larinum, which banned the descendants of senators and equestrians (as well as the wives of the latter) from fighting in the arena as gladiators. The S. C. also mentions an earlier edict of AD 11 which banned freeborn women under the age of 20 from the arena. Suetonius and Tacitus seem to refer to the S. C. of AD 19, but neither names female gladiators among its targets. Suetonius *Tiberius* 35.2 only identifies a ban on males, and mentions elite women registering themselves as prostitutes. Tacitus *Annales* 2.85 likewise mentions the prostitution issue.² Barbara Levick argues for Augustus enacting a similar ban in 22 BC, which applied to equestrians and the grandsons of senators; while Cassius Dio does not explicitly say that women were included in this ban, he does mention women of both ranks appearing as actresses, and it is likely they too were included in the legislation (1983: 106–107).

From Ostia is an inscription erected by municipal official, Hostilianus, who was involved with the local *collegium iuvenum* and responsible for putting on its Iuvenalia games.³ The inscription was initially dated AD 150–200, but Coleman (2000: 498) argues that it may belong to the third century AD, postdating the Severan ban. Hostilianus boasts that it is he *qui primus om[n]ium ab urbe condita ludus cum [. . .]or et mulieres [a]d ferrum dedit* (“whose school was the first of all since the founding of the city . . . and assigned women to a gladiatorial fight” *CIL* 14.5381).⁴ This appears to commemorate the first appearance of female gladiators in Ostia, surprisingly. Given its proximity to Rome, the location in which female gladiators are best attested, would not women have appeared in the Ostian amphitheater sooner? As a novelty the audience evidently enjoyed (e.g., Stat. *Silv.* 1.6.51–6), one might have expected an entrepreneurial spirit like

Hostilianus to have sponsored women earlier than AD 150–200, either to satisfy audience demand or in imitation of the emperors. This may indicate that female gladiators were rather rare and expensive enough that local games in municipalities would not necessarily have access to them.

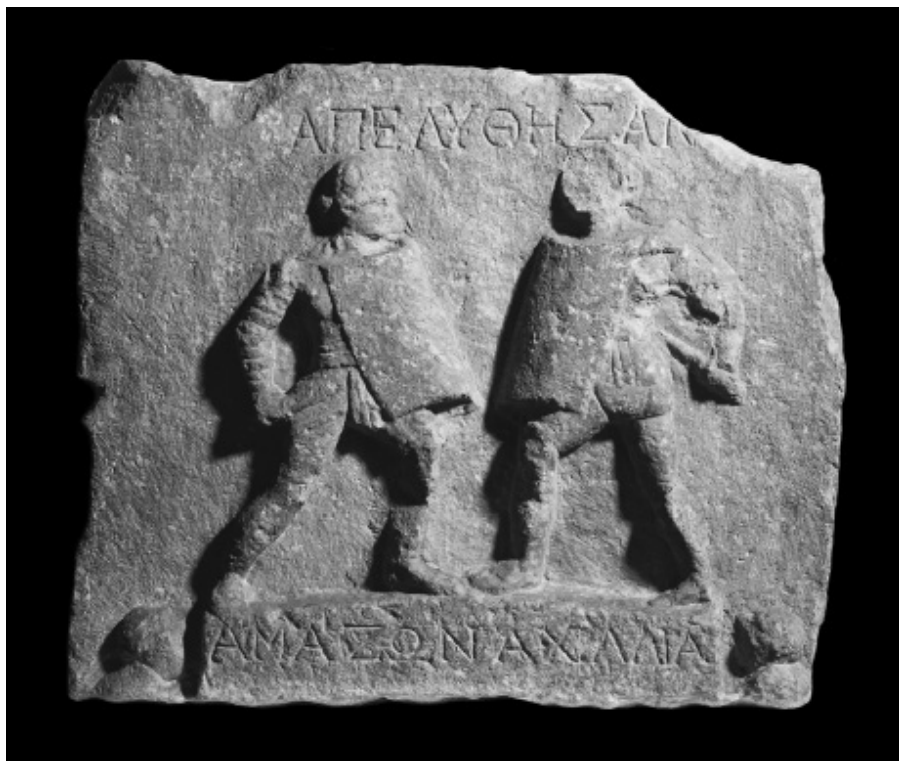


Figure 69.1 Female gladiators on relief from Halicarnassus. Dated to the second century AD.

The best-known inscription regarding female gladiators is also the only secure artistic representation of them: the relief from Halicarnassus. Dated to the second century AD, the marble relief displays a Greek inscription in two registers, above and below a relief of two women armed and in single combat. The inscription gives the women's names, Amazon and Achillia, and states that they were granted *missio*, i.e., that they fought to a draw and were granted a reprieve to fight another day (Figure 69.1). Their names evoke associations with the mythical duel between Achilles and Penthesilea during the Trojan War, but it is unknown whether this is a deliberate reenactment of the duel or simple coincidence. Amazon seems a

natural name for a female gladiator, and Achillia echoes other male gladiators named Achilles.⁵ The literary sources underscore the natural associations with Amazons as well. Juvenal's Mevia fights boars with a breast bared, Amazon-style; and while watching women fight, Statius exclaims, *credas . . . Thermodontiacas . . . turmas* ("you would believe them bands of Amazons" *Silvae* 1.6.55–6).⁶

The women in the relief wear greaves, full arm protection, and carry swords and curved rectangular shields; they thus appear to be trained as a type of heavily-armed gladiator, with standard equipment. Their helmets appear to each side of the lower register of the inscription, perhaps representing their *missio*.⁷ They are also bare-chested, but then most types of gladiators lacked any kind of chest protection,⁸ and depictions of male gladiators picture them bare-chested as well. Amazon and Achillia did not go topless as a deliberately erotic overture, in other words, or with the express intent of evoking sexual desire in their male audience; neither is baring their chests something unique to female gladiators. However, this does not mean that some male spectators did not feel sexual desire for these fighters, just as women felt attracted to male gladiators.⁹

Similar conclusions may be drawn about a figurine recently published as a possible female gladiator. Dating to the first century AD, the figure is a standing female with clearly articulated breasts and long hair bound up, with left arm raised holding a curved object and looking down and toward the right. Her right arm statically hangs by her side, with the hand missing. She wears a *subligaculum*, or loincloth, and has her left knee wrapped with straps above and below the kneecap. The right leg is missing below the upper thigh. However, she wears no armor or protection of any kind; the straps around her left knee appear to be *fasciae*, for support or decoration, and do not cover the area.¹⁰ Her only weapon is the curved object, previously interpreted as a strigil but, as Manas argues, more greatly resembles the curved dagger used by a Thracian gladiator (2011: 2740–2741). Her pose also seems to rule out a strigil; the arm is raised quite high and away from her body, not a natural position from which to start scraping the skin. But such a pose does find parallels in artistic depictions of victorious gladiators, who have their arms raised in similar fashion.¹¹ As with the Halicarnassus relief, the woman's nudity, if she is indeed a gladiator, is not a deliberately erotic gesture, but simply a symbol of her low status and her profession, which did not usually involve chest protection. Topless female gladiators did not participate in a sexual spectacle, in other words, but in a sporting contest.¹²

False leads

Terminology

Despite its usage by modern scholars and in popular culture, the word *gladiatrix* is unknown in classical Latin. To my knowledge, it only appears once in late Latin, in a gloss from a fourth-century AD commentary on Juvenal (*Scholia in Iuvenalem Vetustiora*). In Satire 6, Juvenal mocks a woman who trains as a gladiator in a *ludus*, asking if she prepares merely for the Floralia¹³ or *si quid in illo/pectore plus agitat veraeque paratur harenae?* (“if she plans something more in that mind, and is preparing for the real arena?” 6.250–251). The commentary provides a gloss on line 251, offering the following explanation: *nam vere vult esse gladiatrix quae meretrix* (“for truly she wants to be a gladiatrix who is a prostitute”).

If *gladiatrix* was not used in classical Rome as a term for female gladiators, was there any other that applied? Some have become attached to *ludia* as an alternative word meaning “female gladiator” in classical Latin. This identification stems from its usage in Juvenal and Martial. For example, Juvenal uses *ludia* at 6.104 to describe Eppia, the wife of a senator who has run off with her lover, Sergius, a gladiator. In their popular sourcebook on ancient women, Lefkowitz and Fant translate it as “Gladiatrix” (2005: 32), and their footnote for the translated term only tells readers to refer to sources 295–302 for information on female gladiators (2005: 337, n. 30). Together, the initial translation and its footnote do not differentiate between Eppia as “gladiatrix,” because she acts as wife to a gladiator, and Eppia as “gladiatrix,” because she fights as a gladiator herself. Indeed, the reference to sources on actual female gladiators implies that the authors believe *ludia* to mean the latter, i.e., a woman who fights. Amy Zoll uses Lefkowitz and Fant’s translation of the line and *ludia*, and claims that the term, while most commonly referring to an actress, is “somewhat ambiguous” and “also came to refer to a woman in any way affiliated with a gladiatorial school . . . whether as groupie, paramour, or wife of a gladiator or as a combatant in her own right” (Zoll 2002: 28–30). Unfortunately, dictionaries do not provide clarity. The *OLD* states that *ludia* is “a female slave attached to a gladiatorial school,” not specifying if such a slave would have herself fought, and the *New College Latin and English Dictionary* translates the term as “actress” or “woman gladiator.”

However, there is absolutely no basis in the literary evidence for interpreting it as meaning a female gladiator or actress. Looking at the texts themselves, the contexts in which *ludia* appears are very specific

and narrow in scope. There is no reason to interpret this word as meaning anything but the wife, lover, or “groupie” of gladiators.

Ludia itself is not a very common word. A Packard Humanities Institute Latin texts search (<http://latin.packhum.org/>) turns up *ludia* only three times in literature in the context of gladiators,¹⁴ all three occurring in Juvenal and Martial. Juvenal uses the term twice, both times in the passages discussed above regarding Eppia and the elite women training as female gladiators. In his conclusion to the latter passage, he laments: *dicite vos, neptes Lepidi caecive Metelli/Gurgitis aut Fabii, quae ludia sumpserit umquam/hos habitus, quando ad palum gemat uxor Asyli?* (“Tell us, granddaughters of Lepidus or of blind Metellus, or of Fabius Gurges, what *ludia* ever took up these appearances, when did the wife of Asylus groan at the practice post?” Satire 6.265–267). Here Juvenal is clearly differentiating between women who train, and women who do not train. Elite women are the former, and *ludiae* and the wife of Asylus—presumably a gladiator, or former gladiator, given the slave name—are the latter. Unlike the female descendants of Republican heroes, even low-ranking women know it is inappropriate for them to act like gladiators (or men). Eppia’s story likewise is clear. She is condemned for trading the title *nupta senatori*, “wife of a senator” (6.82), for *ludia*: *quid vidit propter quod ludia dici sustinuit?* (“What did she see [in him] on account of which she tolerated to be called *ludia*?” 6.104–105). Why would Eppia trade her respectability and high status for disgrace and low status? Juvenal’s answer: *Ferrum est quod amant* (“What such women love is the sword” 6.112). If it was not Sergius, then another gladiator would have received her attentions and loyalty; it is the nature of their profession to which women like Eppia are attracted. But there is no hint here that Eppia wants to be a gladiator herself; the arena is simply a source of sexual attraction and personal satisfaction.

This sentiment of Juvenal’s regarding female fans of the games was perhaps inspired by Martial’s only use of *ludia*; certainly the two were friends, as Martial addresses three epigrams to Juvenal. *Ludia* appears in another epigram regarding a gladiator notorious for breaking women’s hearts: *Hermes cura laborque ludiarum* (“Hermes, the heartache and distress of *ludiae*,” Ep. 5.24). The women are called *ludiae* based on their emotional connection with Hermes. This concise expression is similar to graffiti in Pompeii noting the popularity of certain gladiators with women.¹⁵ It is not necessary to assume that each *ludia* has a sexual relationship with Hermes; it may simply indicate that these women are his fans, and that they desire and admire him from afar. As Juvenal stated above, *ferrum est quod amant*; gladiators like Hermes and Sergius were popular with female fans, and

were objects of desire and affection, regardless of whether or not a personal relationship existed.

It must also be noted that the women in Juvenal and Martial to whom the term is applied are clearly not actresses. Eppia was the respectable wife of a senator prior to eloping with Sergius, and Martial's reference seems to be about women in the audience, i.e., Hermes' particular fan base. So, while the term itself is theoretically a feminine form of *ludio/ludius* (stage performer or dancer), neither author uses it as such to specify a female actress or dancer.

Outside of literary sources, to my knowledge, *CIL* 7.1335 is the only example of *ludia* in inscriptions: *VERECVND A LV D I A / LVCIVS GLADIATOR*. Scratched along the rim of a patera of red glazed Samian ware, it was found in 1854 in Leicester, England. No date is given in the *CIL*, but given the popularity of such ware in Britain during the first to third centuries AD, it likely dates from that period. An off-center hole was bored in the space between *Gla* and *Dia*, possibly for suspension, e.g., on a cord around the neck.

At least initially, *ludia* was interpreted to be Lydia, with Verecunda an adjective modifying the name Lydia: "Blushing Lydia."¹⁶ Since *ludia* is indeed an alternate spelling of *lydia*, this may be possible. Zoll chose rather to interpret *ludia* as the woman's occupation, offering merely rhetorical questions as to the nature of that occupation: "Was Verecunda an actress herself . . . Was she simply a besotted fan . . . Or was she something more to this man? Could she have been a gladiatrix herself?" (Zoll 2002: 31). But if we do not take *ludia* as Lydia, with the inscription's lack of context possible interpretations should be derived from the literary usages: so, not an actress, nor female gladiator, but the fan or lover of a gladiator.

However, as a non-literary use of *ludia* in a region far from cosmopolitan Rome, did *ludia* mean the same thing in Britain as it did to Martial and Juvenal? The graffito at least indicates that the term was known and used outside Rome. The very limited literary evidence does also suggest that the term's meaning was stable across time, if not space. The above-mentioned *Scholia* glosses *ludia* at Juvenal 6.266 as *uxor gladiatoris*, "the wife of a gladiator," hence preserving the classical sense of romantic attachment as justifying the use of *ludia*. The fourth-century date of the *Scholia* thus points toward consistency in the term's meaning between the first and fourth centuries. The pottery sherd is from the same period. If everyday usage across the empire reflected the literary understanding of the term, then *ludia* here means wife or lover as well, and was perhaps a "love token"

presented to Verecunda (or Lydia?) by her gladiator (Page and Keate 1907: 201).

Ludia, in short, is not a very common term, and is used in very specific, consistent contexts. It is applied to a woman who is emotionally attached to a gladiator in some way, either as a fan in the case of Hermes' followers, or romantically in the case of Eppia. The possible exception is Verecunda *Ludia*, but with its lack of context, there is no strong reason as yet to accept that its use of *ludia* diverges from Juvenal's or Martial's. The fact that all uses of the term date from the second half of the first century AD or later, precisely when the gladiatorial games were most popular, is convenient circumstantial evidence; is it a surprise that a term for a female gladiator groupie would emerge when gladiators themselves were very popular? Finally, *none* of the secure epigraphic or literary references to women fighting in the arena use this word. We should thus reject any association of the term with the acting profession or its translation as a woman who trains and fights as a gladiator, and instead adhere closely to its meaning in Juvenal and Martial, namely the female fan or lover of a gladiator. The dictionaries should be updated to reflect this and to allay confusion over the term.

Archaeology

A woman found in the Roman cemetery at Great Dover Street in London is the most famous of potential finds. Dated AD 50–130 (early second century AD is most likely), the unusual nature of the burial as well as the types of grave goods have led some to accept the occupant as a female gladiator.

The grave occupant was cremated using a *bustum*, a pit cut beneath the pyre for increased air flow and for the burial of the cremated remains. Inside the grave were a number of tazze (for burning incense) and eight lamps; all were likely placed in the grave after cremation.¹⁷ Four of the lamps display gladiatorial imagery or associations. One depicts a fallen gladiator, most likely a Samnite type; identical lamps also in central Gaulish white ware have been found elsewhere in Britain and were common in Europe.¹⁸ The other three lamps show Anubis, the Egyptian jackal-headed god who accompanied souls to the underworld. Also found in the grave were the organic remains of stone pine cones and nuts, dates, figs, almond, chicken, and grains: “the ‘raw’ materials of a fine meal” burnt.¹⁹ Gold too was present in traces, perhaps as part of a textile.²⁰ The variety of these grave goods, as well as the fact that the stone pine, dates, figs,

and almonds would likely have been expensive imports, together imply that the dead woman was wealthy.²¹

Arguments for this being the grave of a female gladiator focus on the lamps' imagery, the unusual use of a *bustum*, and the position of the grave on the outside margins of the overall cemetery area. It is the combination of elements which proves compelling for some: that a wealthy woman is given an unusual type of burial associated with the military and gladiatorial funeral games, and is buried with gladiatorial symbols on the outside edges of a cemetery, just as gladiators lived on the margins of society.²² Is it theoretically possible that this is the grave of a female gladiator? Yes. Is it statistically likely, given that female gladiators were not as common as male gladiators, and that confirmed burials of gladiators are themselves not very common? In other words, have we found the proverbial needle in an empire-sized haystack? In my opinion, no.

Regarding the image of the fallen Samnite gladiator on one lamp, there are no compelling reasons to accept this as proof that the deceased was a female gladiator. In fact, there are multiple explanations for the presence of such a depiction. As discussed above, it was near commonplace in Roman culture that some women were great fans of the gladiators, sexually desiring them or even perhaps wanting to *be* them. It would not be surprising that such a fan would choose to be buried with the image of a gladiator, and lamps of this type were common. Moreover, the fallen gladiator could also have represented bravery in the face of death and evoked associations with magical properties said to reside within a gladiator's blood.²³ On a more basic level, given gladiators' origins in funeral games, the image of one in a burial is not surprising.²⁴

The remaining lamps, all three depicting Anubis, have been interpreted as evidence of a gladiatorial association by virtue of the god's association with Mercury. Anubis' duty of escorting souls to the underworld associated him with Psychopompus, the epithet of Mercury/Hermes in his aspect as the god who brings souls to the underworld; indeed, the lamps portray the jackal-headed god as carrying a caduceus, the winged staff entwined with snakes which is a symbol of Mercury. Individuals dressed as Hermes Psychopompus and Dis Pater, the Roman divinity who ruled the underworld, would confirm death and remove bodies from the arena, not only for gladiators but also for executed criminals and prisoners, who needed to be ritually eliminated from the city and whose deaths needed to be confirmed legally.²⁵ However, the figure of Anubis had associations with the cult of Isis that were just as strong as those with the

gladiatorial world. Anubis was Isis' nephew and assisted in her search for the dead Osiris, and played a role in Isaic cult processions and funeral rites.²⁶ That three of the lamps portray Anubis rather than gladiators may point to a stronger Isaic connection than one with the arena. After all, there was a temple to Isis in London, and it was a popular cult across the empire; other Isaic artifacts have been found in Britain as well.²⁷

The use of a *bustum* for cremation and burial was an unusual choice, and one quite rare in Britain, where this method is found at military sites.²⁸ It had connections with both the army and arena; *bustuarius* was another name for gladiators, as they fought near the *bustum* of the deceased during funeral games.²⁹ However, would this mean that gladiators could and did receive burial by *busta* themselves? In the only securely identified gladiatorial cemetery, in Ephesus, *busta* are not found; inhumation was the standard. Soldiers, generals, and war heroes may have been given *busta*, but that does not mean gladiators were as well.

Finally, regarding the location of the grave on the “margins” of the cemetery, it is unclear whether this was considered by the local inhabitants at the time as the appropriate area for individuals such as gladiators who were legally classed as *infames* (“disgraced”) or in some way lived on the margins of society. The area was just being developed as a roadside cemetery in the late first century AD and was unenclosed. Four other burials contemporary to the woman's were nearer to her than to the only structure, a temple-mausoleum. Were they all marginal individuals? Behind the temple-mausoleum were two, possibly three burials, but these did not differ significantly from the others, e.g., in the lack of coffins.³⁰ By the mid-second century AD, the area between the woman and the temple-mausoleum was rapidly being filled with burial structures. Between 140 and 250 AD, two walled cemeteries and a second mausoleum were constructed. The presence of sculptural details—a carved cornice molding, a pine cone finial of French limestone³¹—indicate occupants of means. Burials within the walled structures were also widely spaced, perhaps an indication of private plots for the wealthy.³² The overall context of the area speaks more to higher-status individuals or at least those of some means. The pine cone finial, for example, was likely decoration for the funeral monument of a military officer.³³ In short, it is not clear that the area around the *bustum* was considered in ancient times as appropriate for someone of low or marginal status, especially considering that part of the *bustum* extends beyond the edge of the excavated area. If the woman was on the periphery, it was not by much, or for long.

The different elements of this burial, then, each have larger contexts which evoke cultural institutions or phenomena far more common than female gladiators in ancient times. A devotee of Isis; a female fan of gladiators; a method of burial as yet unknown for gladiators, but with strong military associations; a periphery which may not have been all that peripheral. The conclusion that this was definitively the grave of a female gladiator ignores these contexts, and is perhaps driven by the understandable desire to add to the scanty body of tangible evidence for ancient women's lives outside of those prescribed by men. In other words, seeing the Dover Street woman as a female gladiator helps to "reclaim" ancient women from hegemonic literary sources written by men; and it assists optimist historians and classicists in saying that women have been, and can be, powerful.

Notes

- 1 Cf. McCullough 2008.
- 2 Cf. McGinn 1992.
- 3 Vesley 1998: 91.
- 4 The text presented here is that of *CIL* 14.5381 as emended and expanded by cebeillac-Gervasoni and Zevi 1976: 612–620.
- 5 Coleman 2000: 477–478, n. 4.
- 6 The river Thermodon was the mythical home of the Amazons.
- 7 Coleman 2000: 492–493.
- 8 Dodge 2011: 31.
- 9 Coleman 2000: 499.
- 10 Manas 2011: 2742.
- 11 Manas 2011: 2742.
- 12 Manas 2011: 2736.
- 13 The Floralia was a festival held in late April in honor of Flora, goddess of flowers, fertility, and vegetation. The games included theatrical performances and other spectacles; and, Juvenal implies here, women fighting in mock combats.
- 14 Macrobius' use of the word in *Saturnalia* 3.20.1 is not relevant, as it is presented as the name of a type of fig; so too in Columella 5.10.11 and Varro *R.* 1.41.6, where it is spelled *lydia*. *Ludiariam* superficially appears to be related but is a late Latin adjective, *ludarius*, meaning "as a game" (see Trebellius Pollio's *Gallieni Duo* 3.7, in the *SHA*; cf. *A Glossary of Later Latin to 600 A.D.*)
- 15 Piernavieja 1972: 1040.
- 16 Page and Keate 1907: 201 and plate VI.
- 17 Mackinder 2000: 13 and 37.
- 18 Mackinder 2000: 33.
- 19 Mackinder 2000: 12.
- 20 Mackinder 2000: 37.

21 Giorgi 2000: 66. The stone pine in particular is unusual:

Stone pine remains from London have so far been found only in small quantities and mainly in waterlogged deposits from riverside sites in the City and Southwark . . . This was presumably a high-status food, occurring only on sites with relatively affluent residents.

(Giorgi 2000: 65)

22 Bateman 2008: 163.

23 Bateman 2008: 165.

24 Wardle 2000: 28.

25 Kyle 2001: 155–158; Bateman 2008: 163.

26 Wardle 2000: 28.

27 Bateman 2008: 163; Schuster 2011: 312.

28 Bateman 2008: 162.

29 Bateman 2008: 163.

30 Mackinder 2000: 13–14.

31 Blagg 2000: 62; Mackinder 2000: 14.

32 Mackinder 2000: 22.

33 Mackinder 2000: 23.

References

- Bateman, N. (2008) Death, women, and the afterlife: Some thoughts on a burial in Southwark. In J. Clark, J. Cotton, J. Hall, R. Sherris and H. Swain (eds) *Londinium and Beyond: Essays on Roman London and Its hinterland for Harvey Sheldon*. York, UK: Council for British Archaeology, pp. 162–166.
- Blagg, T. F. C. (2000) Sculptures and architectural fragments. In A. Mackinder (ed.) *A Romano-British cemetery on Watling Street: Excavations at 165 Great Dover Street, Southwark, London*. London: Museum of London Archaeology Service, pp. 61–63.
- cebeillac-Gervasoni, M. and Zevi, F. (1976) Revisions et nouveautes pour trois inscriptions d'Ostie. *MEFRA* 88: 612–620.
- Coleman, K. (2000) Missio at Halicarnassus. *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 100: 487–500.
- Dodge, H. (2011) *Spectacle in the Roman World*. London: Bristol Classical Press.
- Giorgi, J. (2000) The plant remains – A summary. In A. Mackinder (ed.) *A Romano-British cemetery on Watling Street: Excavations at 165 Great Dover Street, Southwark, London*. London: Museum of London Archaeology Service, pp. 65–66.
- Kyle, D. G. (2001) *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome*. London:

Routledge.

- Mackinder, A. (2000) *A Romano-British cemetery on Watling Street: Excavations at 165 Great Dover Street, Southwark, London*. London: Museum of London Archaeology Service.
- Manas, A. (2011) New evidence of female gladiators: The bronze statuette at the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe of Hamburg. *International Journal of the History of Sport* 28(18): 2726–2752.
- McCullough, A. (2008) Female gladiators: Literary context and historical fact. *Classical World* 101(2): 197–209.
- McGinn, T. A. J. (1992) The SC from Larinum and the repression of adultery at Rome. *ZPE* 93: 273–295.
- Page, W. and Miss Keate (1907) Romano-British Leicestershire. In W. Page (ed.) *The Victoria History of the County of Leicester*. London: Archibald Constable and Co., pp. 179–219.
- Piernavieja, P. (1972) Ludia: Un terme sportif latin chez Juvenal et Martial. *Latomus* 31(4): 1037–1040.
- Schuster, J. (2011) A lead bust of the goddess Isis from Groundwell Ridge, Swindon, Wiltshire. *Britannia* 42: 309–314.
- Vesley, M. (1998) Gladiatorial training for girls in the *Collegia Iuvenum* of the Roman Empire. *Echos du Monde Classique/Classical Views* 42(1): 85–93.
- Wardle, A. (2000) Funerary rite, burial practices, and belief. In A. Mackinder (ed.) *A Romano-British cemetery on Watling Street: Excavations at 165 Great Dover Street, Southwark, London*. London: Museum of London Archaeology Service, pp. 27–30.
- Zoll, A. (2002) *Gladiatrix: The True Story of History's Unknown Woman Warrior*. New York: Berkley Boulevard Books.

WARRIOR WOMEN

The archaeology of Amazons

Adrienne Mayor

In Greek mythology, Amazons were fierce warrior women—“the equals of men”—dwelling in barbarian lands north and east of the Mediterranean world. The mythic heroes Heracles, Theseus, and Achilles defeated Amazon queens of the Black Sea region and the classical Athenians celebrated their legendary victory over an invading Amazon army; Greeks venerated numerous tombs and landmarks associated with the women warriors.¹

Scholars have long assumed that Amazons were purely fictional figures of myth. But modern archaeological discoveries of females buried with their weapons and horses across Eurasia now confirm that Amazons were not merely figments of the Greek imagination. The myths, legends, and historical accounts of warlike foreign females were partially influenced by steppe nomad horsewomen whose rugged outdoor lives differed markedly from the constrained lives of most Greek women. (An outlier is Askold Ivantchik (2013), who denies that male and female archers in Scythian-style attire in Greek vase paintings represent steppe nomads and argues that Scythian women did not ride horses and that the weapons buried with females in kurgans were only used to defend against “wild animals and robbers.”) As the Greeks began to trade and establish colonies around the Black Sea, historians, geographers, and other writers began to identify the Amazons as “Scythians,” the collective name for the diverse but culturally related nomadic steppe tribes from the Black Sea to Inner Asia. Among these peoples, horse riding and archery served as “equalizers,” leveling out physical differences. Girls and women rode horses, wielded bows, battle-axes, and spears, hunted, and went to war like the boys and men. As the Greeks learned more about the steppe nomad cultures, their depictions of Scythians and

Amazons in art and literature took on more realistic details of weaponry, horses, attire, and equipment, often matching the artifacts found in *kurgans* (grave mounds) of Scythians and their neighbors.²

Although much of what we know about the women called Amazons and their Scythian lifestyle comes from Greek literature and art, the Greeks were not the only ones to tell stories about steppe warrior women. Oral traditions about Amazon-like women existed in other ancient societies, including Egypt, Persia, Caucasia, central Asia, and China.³

“Amazon” graves and relics in classical antiquity

More than 2,500 years before modern archaeology began to confirm the existence of Amazon-like women, ancient Greeks identified certain mounds and antiquities as Amazonian. Numerous cities in Anatolia and landmarks were named for Amazons. Examples include Smyrna, Sinope, Priene, and Mytilene; the Amazon River (Tanais, now the Don); Amazon Island (Aretias, now Giresun Island); the Amazoneum in Athens and another Amazoneum on Patmos; the Amazonian Mountains of Pontus; and the Marpesian Rock on the Caspian Sea.⁴ The earliest written mention of a mound at Troy associated with the Amazon queen, Myrina, appeared in Homer’s *Iliad* (2.811–814). The great temple of Artemis at Ephesus was built (c.550 BC) upon an ancient sanctuary believed to have been established by Amazons (Callimachus, *Hymn to Artemis*). Apollonius of Rhodes’ epic poem *Argonautica* (2.360–406, 2.911–929, 2.965–1001, 2.1168–1178) described the ancient temple, altar, and large black boulder on Giresun Island as sacred to the Amazons of Pontus, now identified by archaeologists as a Cybele cult site.⁵

Several ancient authors described well-known “Amazon” graves, monuments, and antiquities in Attica, Megara, Boiotia, Euboia, Thessaly, and the Peloponnesus. These were usually associated with the great Amazonomachy of Athenian myth. An exception was Queen Hippolyta’s golden war belt and gold-spangled cape displayed in the Temple of Hera near Tiryns (Euripides, *Heracles Furens* 408; *Ion* 1144–1145). The temple was constructed in c.700 BC; it is possible that these “Amazon” relics were either facsimiles or genuine Scythian artifacts embellished with gold, like the war belts and clothing encrusted with golden plaques found in Scythian kurgans.⁶

Athenians were proud of numerous memorials marking their defeat of the Amazons. Plutarch’s catalog (*Theseus* 27) of Amazon sites

describes graves in Chalkis, Chaeronea, Skotoussa, Kynoskephalai, and around the Hill of Ares in Athens. On the day before the Theseia festival (established in 475 BC), the Athenians made sacrifices at the Amazoneum shrine at the Hill of Ares. In *Demosthenes* 19, Plutarch tells of the discovery of an ancient stone carving of a wounded Amazon inscribed “Thermodon” excavated in 338 BC at Chaeronea by Greek soldiers digging a trench around their camp. That area has archaic tombs that were linked to the legendary war with the Amazons and the figurine may have been a dedication from centuries past.⁷

Amazon graves and memorials were also described by Pausanias (1.41.7; 2.32.8–9; 3.25.3). He visited an Amazon cemetery on the road to Rhous, north of Megara. One marker shaped like an Amazon’s half-moon shield was said to be Hippolyta’s tomb. Pausanias saw more Amazon burials at Kelenderis near Troezen, and he viewed two very old *xoana* (wooden idols) in Phyrriochos believed to have been dedicated by the invading Amazons. According to Pausanias (1.2.1), Plutarch (*Theseus* 27.5), and pseudo-Plato’s *Axiochos* (364a–365b), a lone stele or column near the Sanctuary of Gaia in Athens (another area with prehistoric graves) was pointed out as the tomb of the Amazon, Antiope, wife of the city’s legendary king, Theseus. The Amazon Molpadia was also buried there; both were said to have died in the Amazon attack on Athens.⁸

It seems likely that some of the graves assigned to Amazons were prehistoric tombs of great antiquity containing skeletons, weaponry, and ornaments (and sometimes remains of horses). Mycenaean and Geometric tumuli and artifacts were perceived as extremely ancient and revered by later Greeks. The possibility that some were taken as evidence of the great Amazonomachy was investigated in 2014 by Susan Rotroff and Robert Lamberton. “cemeteries of those eras lay under much of Classical Athens and there is no question that ancient Athenians stumbled upon them when they dug into the earth.” Matching the geography of so-called “Amazon” tombs with the locations of archaic and other early burials, the authors note that unlike classical individual burials, chamber tombs of the Late Bronze Age often contained remains of several men and women together with golden jewelry and weapons, including arrowheads—weapons linked with Amazons and Scythians. When “Athenians of the Classical and Hellenistic periods encountered ancient graves, including multiple burials that contained grave gifts with incompatible gender associations,” the discovery of old-style weapons and gold jewelry together “may well have given rise to the phenomenon of the Amazon tomb, which in turn gave substance to the myth . . . of the Amazon

invasion of Attica” (Rotroff and Lamberton 2014: 129).

Amazons were also believed to have died on Samos in a mythic conflict. According to Plutarch (*Greek Questions* 56), one could visit a battlefield at Phloion where the god Dionysus and his Indian war elephants destroyed an Amazon army from Ephesus. The naturally red soil was said to have been stained by Amazons’ blood. Large fossil bones of prehistoric mastodons and mammoths weathering out of the blood-soaked “battleground” were displayed in situ and in the Temple of Hera as further proof of Amazons’ presence on Samos.⁹

Greeks did not intentionally excavate actual graves of warrior women in antiquity, but the geographical range and number of archaeological sites and artifacts that they connected with Amazons are impressive. Greek authors did not doubt the historical reality of Amazons and reported that some barbarian women were still living the lives of Amazons in contemporary times.

Modern excavations of the historical female counterparts of the Amazons only began in the late twentieth century. It is striking that when classical Greeks came across graves of great antiquity containing both weapons and jewelry, they had little difficulty attributing them to female warriors. In contrast, modern archaeologists initially observing weapons in a tomb could only imagine that they belonged to a man. Until recently, it was routine to assign any skeleton accompanied by weaponry to a male warrior. Jewelry, spindle-whorls, needles, and mirrors were assumed to be feminine.¹⁰ Scientific determination of the sex of skeletons in Scythian lands now reveals that a substantial number of women were buried with tools, weapons, and armor as well as jewelry, needles, and mirrors, the same grave goods that accompany Scythian males. Moreover, the bones of females with weapons sometimes bear battle scars identical to those of male warriors. Armed women were laid to rest with the same honors as armed males, with similarly constructed graves, sacrificed horses, funeral feasts, food offerings, weaponry, and valuable local and imported grave goods.

Modern excavations of burials of armed women

More than 1,000 tombs of Saka-Scythians, Sarmatians, and related tribes have been excavated across the Eurasian steppes. As of 1991, only 112 burials of armed women were known. Today that number has more than doubled, with about 300 identified so far. The findings are leading archaeologists to reassess a number of skeletons that were

assumed to be male before sexing methods became standard. DNA analyses of adult skulls, pelvises, and teeth can establish sex with 97–98 percent accuracy.¹¹ In some cemetery populations, armed females make up 20 to 37 percent of the burials. Between the Danube and Don rivers, archaeologists have discovered more than 100 graves of women warriors who died in the fifth and fourth centuries BC, most of them between 16 and 30 years old. Farther east, between the Don and the Caspian Sea, where Herodotus located the Sarmatians, archaeologist Renate Rolle reported another 40 women warrior burials. In the northern Black Sea-Don-Volga region, about 20 percent of the fifth- and fourth-century BC graves containing weapons turned out to belong to women. According to Elena Fialko, about 130 graves of that era in southern Ukraine held women with arrows and lances. At the Mamaj Gora cemetery (Ukraine), Fialko (2010) found about a dozen warrior women who “formed light-armed cavalry.” In southwestern Siberia, Natalia Berseneva excavated Sargat Culture kurgans (580 BC to AD 350) and found that 20 percent of female graves held arrowheads.¹²

The modern findings confirm those ancient Greek accounts that described Amazons as members of tribes of males, females, and children, instead of women-only groups.¹³ The non-Greek name *Amazones* appears to have been originally understood as an “ethnic designation” for “a people consisting of men and women” (Blok 1995: 159). Bioarchaeologist Eileen Murphy, examined Scythian and other remains from Tuva, noting that, “existence of female warriors in the steppes during the Iron Age is heavily supported by evidence from the archaeological record” (Murphy 2003: 11). The influence of steppe horsewomen-archers in images and tales of Amazons is now “verified by . . . rich female graves containing full sets of weapons and horse trappings,” remarks archaeologist V. Guliaev. “These women were, according to all indications, the true Amazons of the classical written tradition” (Guliaev 2003: 114, 120–121). The armed women were warriors for at least part of their lives, agrees Jeannine Davis-Kimball, excavator of female graves in Kazakhstan (2002: 61).

Archaeological discoveries of armed women and comparative ethnology are leading scholars to reconsider accounts of nomadic, warlike women by Herodotus and other Greco-Roman historians. The historian, Diodorus (2.44–45), for example, described the magnificent tomb of Zarina, a Saka warrior-queen who fought the Medes. Herodotus did not specifically mention graves of warrior women but he detailed Saka-Scythian-Sarmatian nomads’ lives and burial practices with striking accuracy.¹⁴ Moving from pasture to pasture and living in camps, the nomads “carry all their possessions and wealth with them.” Among these peoples “archery, horseback riding, and

hunting are a girl's pursuits," wrote Pomponius Mela (3.34–35).

Nomad children rode and trained with bows at an early age; male and female youths of the tribe were capable of defending herds, property, and territory. The ratio of female to male graves with weaponry suggests that the most proficient and courageous women chose to remain hunter-warriors as adults. Guliaev and Fialko suggest that groups of Scythian women and girls serving as mounted skirmishers could ride out to war whenever needed alongside the men or could repel attackers when men were away. This parallels statements in Herodotus (4.117) and the Hippocratic treatise (*Airs, Waters, Places* 17) that it was customary for the young women to prove themselves in battle and that older women fought by choice or when necessary.¹⁵ The relevant passages appear below (translations by S. L. Budin).

In Europe there is a Skythian nation which dwells around the Maiotis Mere (Sea of Azov), and which is different from the other nations. They are called Sauromatai. Their women ride horseback and shoot bows and hurl javelin from horseback and fight enemies, so long as they are maidens. They do not lose their virginity until they have killed three enemies, and they do not cohabit until they sacrifice the lawful rites. She who takes a man to herself stops riding horseback, until necessity compels a full-scale expedition. They do not have a right breast, for to those yet small children the mothers take a burning bronze implement and place it on the right breast and burn it off, so that they might halt its growth and send all the growth and strength to the right shoulder and arm.

(*Hippocrates On Airs, Waters, and Places* (17))

This is what is said about the Sauromatians. When the Greeks were fighting the Amazons [the Skythians call the Amazons Oiorpata; the name can be taken in Greek to mean "man-killer," for they call "man" "oior," while "pata" is "to kill"], then the story goes that the Greeks, having won in the Battle of Thermodon, sailed off with three ships, taking along as many Amazons as they could capture alive. But when they embarked the Amazons attacked them and cut down the men. But they didn't know how to sail, or use oars, or sails, or rowing. So, when they cut down the men, they were carried along by wind and wave, and so they came to the Maiotis Mere by Kremnos. The Kremnians live in the land of free Skythians. There the Amazons disembarked from the ships and proceeded to the inhabited region. Having first come across a herd of horses, they seized them, mounted, and raided the Skythian properties. The Skythians were unable to understand what was going on, for they knew neither the language nor the clothing nor the nation, but they were utterly at a loss regarding whence the Amazons had come. They figured that they were young men, and they fought against them. The Skythians got hold of the corpses after the battle, and thus they discovered that they were women. Deliberating on this, it seemed better to them no longer to kill them in any way, but rather that they should send their own youngest men to them, as many of them as there were women, and they were to camp near them and do whatever the women did. If they chased them, not to fight, but to flee; when

they ceased, to go back to camping near them. The Skythians devised these things because they wanted to have children with the Amazons. So the young men went back and followed their orders. When the Amazons learned that they approached with no evil intentions, they were pleased, and every day the two camps drew closer to each other. Just like the Amazons, the young men had nothing except for weapons and horses, and so they lived the same way as the women—hunting and pillaging. Come noontime the Amazons did as follows: They broke up into groups of ones and twos, dispersing apart from each other when “nature called.” Learning this, the Skythians did the same thing. And when one of the men was alone with one of the women, he drew near her, and the Amazon did not draw away, but allowed it. And it was not possible for them to converse (for they couldn’t understand each other), so with her hand she said to come the next day to the same place, and to bring another, signaling the “two,” and she would bring another woman. The young man then went back and told these things to the rest. On the next day he went to the same spot, and he brought a comrade. And he found the Amazon and a second waiting. The rest of the young men learned of these things, and they hooked up with the rest of the Amazons. After this, they united the two camps and lived together, each man having the woman with whom he first had sex. The men never could learn the language of the women, so the women adopted the men’s. When they could understand each other, the men said to the Amazons, “We have parents and property. Let us therefore now no longer live this way, but return home to live. And we shall have you as wives and no others.” And the women said to them: “We are not able to live alongside your women, for we don’t have the same customs as they do. We shoot archery and hurl javelins and ride horseback—we don’t learn the womanly arts. Your women don’t do any of these things we’ve described, but they only do the womanly arts while remaining in the wagons, not going out to hunt or anything else. We shall not be able to get along with them. But if you wish to have us as wives—and this seems to be most just—go to your parents and take your share of the possessions, and then come and we shall dwell amongst ourselves. And the young men were persuaded and did just this. When they took the portion of the possessions allotted to them, they returned back to the Amazons, and the women spoke to them thus: “Fear and dread have hold of us, while we are dwelling in this land, where we have stolen you from your fathers and where we have wrought so much havoc. But since it seems good to you to have us as wives, do this with us: Come let us emigrate from this land and go dwell across the Tanais River.” And the young men were persuaded. Crossing the ford at the Tanais and heading east, they proceeded for three days along the Tanais, then another three from the Maiotis heading north. Arriving in this land they settled there and live there even now. And the women still follow the old ways of the Sauromatians, and they routinely go hunting on horseback, either with or without the men. And they routinely go to war and wear the same clothes as the men. The Sauromatians use the Skythian language, although degraded from the pure form, for the women never did learn it correctly. Concerning marriage they do this: No maiden marries before she has killed a man of the enemy. Some of them even die old spinsters, not being able to fulfill the law.

(Herodotos (4.110–117))

Evidence from grave goods and bones

Arrows, for hunting and battle, are the most common weapons buried with women, but swords, daggers, spears, armor, shields, and sling stones are also found. Some female warriors in Ukraine owned heavily armored war belts with bronze or iron plates. In central Asia and southern Siberia, females wore gold, bronze, and iron belt plaques and fancy buckles embossed with animals. Men and women alike wore neckpieces and earrings and owned fancy combs. Tools—knives, awls, whetstones, “spindle-whorls”—were placed in graves of women, men, and youngsters. Once assumed to be feminine, “spindle-whorls” (discs of stone or other materials with central holes) could be used with a flywheel to make fire and may also have symbolic meanings. In the Nart sagas of the Caucasus, whetstones were both magical and practical. Mirrors, once believed to belong to priestesses, are ubiquitous for Scythian men, women, and children. Mirrors might have been symbolic in death and practical in life: for example, a mirror could send flashing signals on the steppes.¹⁶

Besides sex and age at death, osteological studies reveal wear and tear on bones, chronic diseases, healed fractures, and fatal injuries. A lifetime on horseback is evident in skeletons across Scythia, and their bones indicate strenuous lifestyles. Many display combat injuries. Some have suggested that the weapons in women’s graves were only placed there for ritual reasons, perhaps for symbolic protection. But archaeologists point to signs of wear on weapons and war wounds, compelling evidence that women buried with weapons were involved in battle. Arrowheads are still embedded in bones and a number of female and male warrior’s bones and skulls show injuries inflicted by pointed battle-axes (*sagareis*), slashes from swords, stab wounds from daggers and spears, and punctures from projectiles. In many cases, the direction of the attack is obvious, and bioarchaeologists can determine whether wounds were sustained in face-to-face combat, while in motion, on horseback, fleeing, or after death. The descriptions of the injuries conjure up scenes of violent combat. In a study of Scythian male and female skeletons with head wounds from battle-axes, most blows were dealt by right-handed opponents during active fighting. Other evidence comes from cutting wounds or “nightstick” fractures of left forearm bones. Forensic analysis suggests that these individuals warded off blows with their left arms while attacking with their right.¹⁷ [Figure 70.1](#) shows the major archaeological sites with armed women burials.

Northern Europe

In 2004, archaeologist Hilary Cool discovered two “Amazon”

companions who fought far from their Sarmatian homeland. The women's remains were among about 120 partially cremated bodies in the ancient Roman cemetery at Brocavum (AD 200–300), a Roman fort in Cumbria, near Hadrian's Wall (northeastern England). The cemetery had been excavated in 1966, but the sex of the bodies was not revealed until 2004. The female cavalry officers were burned on individual, high-status funeral pyres along with their horses, swords, objects of silver, glass, and ivory, and dish of meat. Many of the artifacts in the cemetery came from the Sarmatian Danube region (ancient Thrace/Illyria). Cremation of horses was very unusual for Roman funerals, but Scythian male and female warrior funerals typically called for sacrificed horses—and a last meal of meat. The Sarmatian Iazyges tribe provided 5,500 cavalry from the Danube area to join the Roman legion guarding Hadrian's Wall. The Imperial Roman army was thought to be exclusively masculine, but Cool's discovery shows that at least two Sarmatian women served.¹⁸



Figure 70.1 Major archaeological sites with armed women burials. Map by Michele Angel.

Northern Greece (Ancient Macedon)

Mystery still shrouds the identities of the partially cremated male and female remains in golden caskets discovered in 1977 in Tomb II of the fourth-century BC royal Macedonian tombs at Vergina (northern Greece). Luxurious grave goods include jewelry, armor, weapons, and a gold and ivory shield depicting Achilles and the Amazon queen, Penthesilea. In 2014 a bioarchaeological study showed that the male

had injuries consistent with those of Philip II of Macedon, Alexander's father. The archaeologists also confirmed that the weapons in the grave, a Scythian-style *gorytus* quiver containing seventy-four arrows, part of a bow, and two iron spears, along with an Illyrian pin, linen corselet, and a pair of gilded greaves belonged to the woman. The left greave is shorter than the right. The new study shows that the female in her early thirties had suffered a fracture that left her with a shortened leg. The mismatched greaves were custom-made for her. Moreover, the bow, quiver, and arrows were Scythian weapons, not Greek. Who was this real Amazon in the royal Macedonian household? Candidates include one of Philip II's Scythian wives, Meda (a Getae princess of Thrace) or Cynna, Alexander's half-sister, trained as a warrior by her Illyrian mother, Audata. Cynna commanded a Macedonian army and died in 323 BC. Another candidate is Cynna's daughter, Adea (Eurydice), also raised as a traditional Illyrian warrior woman. Whoever she was, the young woman was clearly buried as an "Amazonian" heroine both "literally and figuratively" (Carney 2014).¹⁹

Bulgaria, Romania, Moldava, Ukraine, Southern Russia (Ancient Thrace and Scythia)

Two grave mounds (fourth century BC) with treasure, weapons, trilobate (war) arrowheads, armor, gilded Thracian helmets and greaves, silver objects, Greek pottery, and richly equipped horses were discovered at Agighiol (eastern Romania, in 1931) and at Vratsa (Vraca, Bulgaria, in 1965). Each mound held two individuals. The dead were originally identified as warrior-chieftains and their wives. But analysis of the skeletons in 2010 revealed that all four bodies were female warriors interred with their arsenals and horses. In each mound was a silver cup inscribed "Kotys" in Greek.²⁰ An ally of Athens, Kotys I (382–359 BC) ruled a confederation of Thracian tribes. The silver cups may have been presented to the warrior women to seal an alliance or thank them for military service.

A fourth-century BC kurgan (Kurgan 16, Akkermen 1) on the Dniester River (Ukraine) was excavated near ancient Tyras, a Greek colony (c.600 BC) in the territory of the Tyragetae ("Getae or Thracians of the Tyras," Strabo 7; Ptolemy 3.5.25; Pliny 12.26). The grave belonged to a female warrior who died in combat—a battle-axe had punctured her skull and a bronze arrowhead was still embedded in her leg. A pair of iron lances were planted in the ground at the grave's entrance (typical of Scythian warrior tombs) and two spear

heads lay near her, by a massive armored belt with iron plaques, a quiver, 20 bronze arrows with painted wooden shafts, glass beads, pearls, silver and bronze bracelets, bronze mirror, lead spindle-whorl, needle, iron knife, and a wooden tray of food for the afterlife.²¹

Not far from Tyras, a fifth-century BC kurgan near the mouth of the Dnieper River contained another female warrior buried with iron dagger, bronze arrowheads, bronze mirror, and gold earrings decorated with Cybele on a lion throne. Identical earrings were recovered from two other female warriors' graves nearby. Evidence of Cybele worship has been found at other sites identified with Amazons in classical antiquity (see above). These women died around the time that Herodotus (4.19) was visiting Greek trading colonies in this region, interviewing Scythians and describing real-life Amazons.²²

A sixth-century BC burial farther north on the Dnieper belonged to a warrior woman with gold earrings, bronze mirror, quiver with 92 arrows, and iron spearhead. Next to her was a child. A similar burial near Bobrytsia held a warrior woman, child, and horse, a necklace of agate, pearls, topaz, amber, and glass beads, and 21 arrows in a quiver. Another female warrior's skeleton (fourth century BC, Kurgan 20, Cholodny Yar) on the Tyasmin River, had silver earrings, bone and glass necklace, 2 large iron lance points, a painted leather and wooden quiver with 47 trilobate bronze arrows, iron knives, whetstone, sling pebbles, spindle-whorl, and bronze mirror. At her feet lay the skeleton of a younger man (perhaps her groom or servant; his only grave goods were 2 bells and a bracelet).²³

Among the fifty fourth-century BC warrior burials at Chertomlyk, four female graves were found. An arrowhead was embedded in the spine of the woman in Kurgan 9; she owned an iron lance head, 18 arrowheads, knives, jewelry, and mirror. The woman in Kurgan 30 had a large shield, sling pebbles, mirror, pearls, and pigments. In Kurgan 11, jewelry and a number of arrowheads accompanied a young woman whose right finger bones indicated heavy use of a bow. Kurgan 16 contained another woman, about 20 years old, with arrowheads and an infant. Another large group of mounds near Ordzhonikidze yielded a fourth-century BC kurgan with the remains of a man, woman, and child, with horses, weapons, and opulent artifacts. All three were clad in tunics and boots covered with scaled armor of overlapping gold plates engraved with fantastic animals. Another grave contained a woman's skeleton with an arrowhead at her left knee. A bronze mirror, awl, jewelry, bronze arrowheads, and spearhead were found with her, along with two children. Guliaev (2003: 115) points out that "the presence of children suggests that the

Amazons were not just young virgins but that their group included childbearing women.” Another burial, a girl of about 10, stands out because of her military grave goods—iron armor and spears—evidence for the early training of Scythian children in the use of weapons.²⁴

Elena Fialko described numerous “Amazon” burials in the Dnieper-Don region, Ukraine. One exceptional burial, Zelenoje Kurgan 5, contained three young girls aged between 10 and 15, with scaled armor, helmet, javelin, spear, and shield (heavy cavalry items), plus arrows, pebbles for slings, necklaces, and mirrors. In Bobrica Kurgan 35, a woman warrior was buried with her horse in the seventh/sixth century BC. Of the Mamaj Gora cemetery’s 317 graves, Fialko found twelve that belonged to women warriors. The oldest was about 60 and the youngest about 16. Six of the armed women were between 25 and 35 and infants were found with four of them.²⁵

In the heart of Amazon/Sarmatian territory described by Herodotus, north of the Sea of Azov along the Don River, archaeologists have excavated numerous Scythian kurgans, many containing women with weapons. At Elizavetovskiy cemetery, for example, a group of seven female warriors died there in the fifth century BC and twenty-four female warriors were interred in the fourth century. One of the women in the first group (Kurgan 30), about 40 years old, was surrounded by a rich assemblage: iron sword and spearhead, bronze and iron arrowheads, bronze mirror, gold and glass necklace, bronze bracelets, clay spindle-whorl, Greek amphora, and a chunk of meat with an iron knife. Another large Greek amphora belonged to the warrior woman in Kurgan 4. Wearing earrings and a gold necklace, she was accompanied by a long iron sword, spear point, and iron knife, arrowheads of iron and bronze, bronze mirror, and a last meal of meat with iron knife.²⁶

During 1993 to 2001, five more female warrior burials of the same era were discovered in this same region. These Amazon graves near Ternovoye were very large and rich, despite being looted. All five women were in their twenties. In Kurgan 6 was a young woman wearing gold earrings and gold pendants. Next to her were iron darts, more than 30 bronze trilobate arrowheads, and a mirror. The second female warrior (Kurgan 5) had arrowheads and gold belt plaques, the plate of meat with iron knife, and pottery. The youngest woman was in Kurgan 8 with gold griffin ornaments, iron arrowhead, and a comb decorated with a leopard. She too owned a painted Greek vase. The fourth woman had an iron knife and iron arrowhead, golden griffin belt plaques, a spindle-whorl, and pottery. With the oldest woman

(Kurgan 12) were an iron arrowhead, gold belt plaques, and a Greek wine bowl. The painted Greek vases indicate active trade relations with Greece.²⁷

Near Rostov-on-Don, Russia, Kobiakov Kurgan 10 yielded the remains of a Sarmatian woman warrior of about 20; she had been killed by an arrow. Buried with an iron battle-axe, horse harnesses, and a Chinese mirror, she wore a diadem of golden stags and birds and a magnificent pectoral collar of gold and turquoise, decorated with dragons fighting monkeys around a seated man. The artifacts, found in 1987 and stored in the Rostov Museum, are dated to the second century AD and combine Scythian and Chinese motifs.²⁸

Although her grave has not yet been located, in 2007 Russian archaeologists at Phanagoria (Taman Peninsula) discovered a marble statue base with an inscription about a historical warrior woman named in several ancient sources. The base is believed to mark the tomb of Hypsicratea, an archer-horsewoman of an unknown nomadic tribe in the Black Sea-Caspian region, who joined the army of Mithradates VI Eupator of Pontus in about 69 BC. She accompanied him over the Caucasus to his Bosporan Kingdom and became his last queen until his death in 63 BC.²⁹

Caucasus, Trans-Caucasus, and Iran

In the northern Caucasus, where the Terek River flows through Dagestan into the Caspian Sea, archaeologists excavated a woman's skeleton with armor, arrowheads, an iron knife, and "a slate discus." The item could represent a fighting discus, a traditional weapon described in Ubykh Nart sagas of the Caucasus.³⁰

In the southern Caucasus in 1927, excavators discovered what are believed to be the oldest known "Amazon" graves—three armed women buried at Semo Awtschala near Tbilisi, Georgia (in ancient Colchis, strongly associated with Amazons in antiquity). One woman, 30–40 years old when she died c.1000–900 BC, was in a sitting position, a bronze sword on her knees and iron dagger and lance at her feet. Under the lance point lay the jawbone of her horse. Her grave goods included rings, clay pots, and an agate necklace. The left side of her skull had a partially healed pointed-axe injury. The second young woman had an arrowhead embedded in her skull, and the third woman had several leopard claws, hunting trophies or perhaps from a leopard skin like those worn by many Amazons in vase paintings (Figure 70.2).³¹

In Ordubad (ancient Media, now Nakhchivan Autonomous Region of Azerbaijan, an “island” territory within Armenia), Soviet archaeologists excavated ancient settlements dating from the Bronze Age to the fourth century BC, including a necropolis with many warriors’ graves. In 1926, the skeletons were all assumed to be male. But in 2004, studies of the bones conducted by the Archaeological and Ethnological Institute of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences revealed that at least one of the skeletons buried in Kurgan 6 of the Plovdag II cemetery belonged to a woman warrior. She was accompanied by her quiver, arrows, and helmet.³²

In northwestern Iran near Tabriz (part of ancient Media), archaeologist Alireza Hejabri-Nobari reported the discovery of 109 burials of skeletons with weapons. In 2004, a DNA test revealed that one “broad-framed skeleton” with a sword was a female warrior who lived about 2,000 years ago. According to Iranian *Hambastegi News* (2004), “Other ancient tombs believed to belong to women warriors have been unearthed close to the Caspian Sea.” Further DNA results of the other skeletons have not been released.

Kazakhstan, Afghanistan

On the steppes near Pokrova on the Kazakhstan-Russian border, a Russian-American expedition led by Jeannine Davis-Kimball in 1992–1995 excavated the graves of 150 ancient Saka-Scythian-Sarmatians of the sixth to second centuries BC. These people were tall and robust, the women averaging 5 ft. 6 in. and the men averaging 5 ft. 10 in. Of the 40 burials containing weaponry, 7 belonged to females buried with quivers, bronze arrowheads, daggers, swords, jewelry, knives, whetstones, and spindle-whorls. One woman with weapons apparently died of a battle wound: a bent bronze arrowhead lay under her ribs. Most of the males had weapons, except for four men buried with small children and no weapons. Women’s spears were the same size as the men’s, and one was unusually long, over 3 ft., for fighting on horseback. However, the handles of the women’s swords and daggers were smaller than the men’s. Chemical analysis revealed that the bronze came from four different regions, the Caucasus, the Volga basin, the Urals, and central Asia, signifying far-reaching trade (and plunder). Other signs of long-distance exchange are amber from the Baltic; bronze and gold from northwest China; fossil *Gryphaea* oyster shells; and camel bones from the Tarim Basin and Turkestan. One of the most impressive discoveries was the grave of a young girl, aged 13–14, buried (c.300 BC) with 40 bronze arrowheads in a quiver, a boar’s tusk, and a single bronze arrowhead in a leather bag around her

neck. Another warrior woman was found with a large iron dagger and arrowheads ([Figure 70.3](#)).³³

(სურ. 3 J). პრინციპის თვამობრტყელი. მოკლე ზომის 20 ცალი
 ღერსმანი (სურ. 4 a) და შრეული პატარა ზომის თხელი ღერფიტა
 სურ. 3 K და სურ. 4 b). რომლებიც ზემოხსენებული ხანგრძლივ



სურ. 3. ზემოაღნიშნული სამარხი პრინციპის თვამობრტყელი.

პის ბოლოს სწავებული
 იხილეთ პატარა (სურ.



Figure 70.2 Three early “Amazon” graves, 1000–900 BC, discovered at Sema Awtschala, Tblisi, Georgia. Original 1927 excavation report by G. Niordze, one woman’s skull with partially

healed axe wound, her bronze sword, and agate necklace. (Photos courtesy of Nino Kalandadze, Georgian National Museum. Collage by Michele Angel. [Fig 4.1](#), Adrienne Mayor, *The Amazons* (Princeton University Press, 2014), used with permission.)

In northern Afghanistan in 1978, along the Amu Darya River, Afghan-Russian archaeologists excavated six fantastically opulent graves at Tillya Tepe (ancient Bactria). Alexander the Great had passed through here on his way to India in about 328 BC. Two hundred years later, under pressure from the Xiongnu steppe nomad empire, the Yuezhi (Chinese name for the nomads of the Tien Shan area) arrived and dispersed the Saka tribes. The ethnicity of the five women and one man buried at Tillya Tepe are unknown, but the skulls and grave goods indicate multicultural nomads along the Silk Route in the first century AD. Their bodies were covered in gold, accompanied by more than 20,000 pieces of gold and turquoise ornaments, displaying a kaleidoscope of influences and long-distance trade: Roman glass and coins, Indian ivory, Buddhist images, depictions of Greek gods with Greek inscriptions, Xiongnu-style golden crowns, Pazyryk-style boots, Han Chinese mirrors, Siberian daggers, Saka-Scythian-Sarmatian artifacts, and coins from Persia, Parthia, and India. The woman (aged 30–40) in Grave 2 was buried with a pointed battle-axe and two “Siberian”-style daggers. The woman in Grave 3 (aged 15–25) had a gold and iron dagger and a double golden belt clasp showing two facing warriors, and ivory, and mirrors from China and India. The man in Grave 4 (aged 20–30) had a full weapon set: four daggers, sword, two bows and two quivers with arrows; a war belt with golden medallions depicting a woman riding a lion. The woman in Grave 6 (aged 20–30) had a set of iron knives. The relationship of the individuals and manner and order of death are unknown, but the weapons of the oldest woman in Grave 2 appear to mark her as a warrior, perhaps from the northeastern steppes.³⁵

In 2014/15, archaeologists excavating an ancient settlement at Kultobe, southern Kazakhstan, discovered a number of rich burials, including a skeleton identified as a female warrior. She had been laid to rest with two types of arrowheads, bow, dagger, knife, and sword. She is thought to “belong to the mysterious and poorly studied Kangkū or Kangju,” the ancient Chinese name for the powerful confederation of nomadic mounted archers that flourished from the second century BC in ancient Sogdiana until the fourth century AD.³⁴



Figure 70.3 Warrior woman skeleton, accompanied by iron dagger/sword and two iron arrowheads, fourth–third century BC, Kurgan 1, burial 6, necropolis 8, Pokrova, Kazakhstan. (Photo courtesy of James Vedder, center for the Study of Eurasian Nomads. Color plate 3, Adrienne Mayor, *The Amazons* (Princeton University Press, 2014), used with permission.)

Altai, Ukok Plateau, Southern Siberia, Tuva

The bodies of two warriors, a male of about 45 and a youth about 16 or 17 years of age, in the Pazyryk culture burial in Kurgan 1, Burial Mound 1, Ak-Alakha (Ukok Plateau, Altai region) were accompanied by nine horses. The pair were equipped and dressed alike: their felt caps with earflaps, leather boots, and red woolen trousers had survived in the permafrost for more than two millennia. Each had a complete set of battle weapons—pointed battle-axe, bow, quiver, arrows, shield—and neckpieces and hats decorated with golden leopards, stags, horses, and wolves. The burial was excavated by Natalya Polosmak in 1990, and the youth was identified and widely reported as female. But in December 2015, genetic analysis reported by *The Siberian Times* suggested that the youth could be male.³⁶

In 2009, forensic examination was carried out by Jordana *et al.* on the skeletons of seven males (aged 16–65) and one female (aged 25–30) in Pazyryk Altai culture graves of the fifth century BC,

accompanied by horses and weapons. Each person had died violently in combat from injuries inflicted by weapons like their own arrows, daggers, and battle-axes. The young woman's ribcage showed deep V-shaped cuts from a double-edged Scythian dagger slicing upwards from the left to right.

East of the Ukok Plateau, in 1968–1984, archaeologists excavated the Aymyrlyg cemetery complex in the Autonomous Republic of Tuva (south Siberia), the easternmost reaches of the “Scythian World.” The team unearthed more than 800 skeletal remains of men, women, and children of nomadic-pastoral groups of the eighth to second centuries BC. Most of the burials are from the third and second centuries BC, and the grave goods show evidence of combined cultures of the shifting “Scythian,” “Sarmatian,” and Inner Asian nomad populations including those identified in ancient Chinese texts as the Xiongnu.³⁷ Numerous graves held quivers of leather and birch bark, bows, and several different kinds of arrows for hunting and warfare. Although many of the tombs had been ransacked by looters who took weapons, archaeologists recovered pointed battle-axes, daggers, and swords in leather scabbards painted with geometric, curvilinear, and zigzag designs, like those that Scythians and Amazons carry in Greek vase paintings. Conical golden headdresses, gold and bronze earrings, pins, and other jewelry, and leather, wool, silk, and fur clothing were also found. A great number of gold, bronze, and iron belt buckles were decorated with animals in a variety of shapes. Examples of armed women from Tuva include two females aged 35–45. One was buried with arrowheads, bronze mirror, and ivory spike; the other woman had a bronze earring, three boar's tusk pendants, a cowrie seashell from India or China, an iron awl, and a bronze arrowhead.³⁸

One grave in this complex (Arzhan 2, burial 5, seventh century BC; excavated in 2000–2004) is a spectacular double burial of the complete skeletons of a man (about 50) and a woman (about 30) with their weapons and more than 5,000 golden artifacts, the richest Scythian grave found in Siberia. The couple, buried in 650–600 BC, wore sumptuous clothing studded with hundreds of gold animal plaques and thousands of gold beads; there were also arrowheads, pointed battle-axe, and gold quiver cover. Fourteen horses were fitted with fabulous golden equipment. The woman wore a tall pointed cap adorned with golden animals and a belt with a gold-encrusted iron dagger. The weapons and horses of this couple, buried as equals, suggest that they were companions in hunting and battle.³⁹

The Tuva skeletons were scientifically analyzed in 1994–1998 by Eileen Murphy to determine sex, age, and evidence of violent injuries

from accidents or warfare. Several women had healed fractures consistent with falls from horses. Battle wounds were mostly to the upper body, indicating combat on equal footing or on horseback. At least four females had suffered left forearm fractures, most likely from combat, as noted above. One woman, aged about 45, had a fractured rib and “boxer’s fractures” of the right hand, probably from dealing blows during a fight. A broken nose and other facial fractures of a 25- to 35-year-old woman were also attributed to “interpersonal or intergroup violence.” About 24 percent of the head fractures with blunt weapons had been sustained by women. Typically, the damage was on the left side of the skull, indicating “hand-to-hand combat when facing a right-handed opponent.” Of a dozen skeletons displaying evidence of lethal trauma inflicted by a pointed battle-axe, one was female. Another dozen skeletons showed evidence of multiple slashing-sword wounds while in motion and facing an opponent; two were female. One warrior woman sustained several nicks and cuts “indicative of free-moving combat,” that is, sword-fighting with a foe. The location and direction of the slashes suggest that she “was actively engaged in the combat . . . wielding a weapon making it difficult for her opponent to make a clean fatal stroke.” The other woman had a single sword slash to the thigh and had been beheaded. As Murphy remarks, the battle scars and weapon trauma displayed by female skeletons show that “warfare was not an exclusive male activity,” although we cannot know in every case whether the individual was a fighter or a victim.⁴⁰

Conclusion

More than two millennia ago, the ancient Greeks based their Amazons on real-life horsewomen-archers of the Black Sea-Don-Azov region, the Caucasus, Caspian Sea, and beyond. The military prowess of male and female Scythian warriors and their egalitarian lifestyle fascinated the Greeks. The early Scythian conquests in Thrace and Anatolia, coupled with the threat from the Persian Empire, influenced the Athenians in imagining that a powerful army of Amazons allied with Scythians had once attacked Greece. The Athenians reveled in their glorious, hard-won victory in that legendary war. For centuries, tombs of great antiquity in Attica and other places in Greece were revered as the burials of the brave, defeated Amazon heroines.

Modern archaeology has finally allowed us to catch up with what the Greeks already knew: that warrior women fitting the descriptions and images of Amazons in Greek literature and art really did exist. No great army of Scythians ever invaded Greece and the graves identified

in antiquity as those of Amazons did not belong to Scythian women. But the bones and even the mummified bodies of flesh-and-blood females who once gloried in riding, hunting, and fighting with bows and spears really do exist in the very territories where the ancient Greeks located Amazons and warrior women. The details of the condition of the women's skeletons and their weapons, meticulously recorded by modern archaeologists, throw open an extraordinary window on warlike women of Eurasia. At last, physical evidence is revealing how true Amazons lived, died, and were laid to rest by kin and companions.

Notes

- 1 Portions of this chapter appeared in Mayor 2014: 63–83, used with permission of Princeton University Press.
- 2 Rolle 1989, 2010, 2011; *Amazonen* 2010; Fialko in *Amazonen* 2010.
- 3 Mayor 2014: 357–429.
- 4 Mayor 2014: 161–168.
- 5 Doksanalti and Mimiroglu 2010; Mayor 2014: 165–168.
- 6 Mayor 2014: 257.
- 7 Mayor 2014: 284–285.
- 8 Mayor 2014: 285, 276.
- 9 Plutarch, *Greek Questions* 56; Solounias and Mayor 2005; Mayor 2014: 309–310.
- 10 Gender expectations: Rolle 1989: 88; Arnold and Wicker 2001; Murphy 2003: 11.
- 11 Guliaev 2003: 114; Murphy 2003: 11, 37–40; Hanks 2008: 22–29.
- 12 Rolle 1989; Davis-Kimball 2002: 54–55; Berseneva 2008: 139, 141; Lebedynsky 2009: 37–80, 2010: 185; *Amazonen* 2010: 90, 100; Fialko in *Amazonen* 2010: 119–127.
- 13 Blok 1995: 155–160; Mayor 2014: 21–24.
- 14 Stark *et al.* 2012: 77–80.
- 15 Guliaev 2003: 120–122.
- 16 Rolle 1989: 79–82; Guliaev 2003: 114–115; Murphy 2003: 5–8, 11, 19, 98; Davis-Kimball 2002, cf. Hanks 2008: 24–25; Berseneva 2008: 137, 141–145.
- 17 Davis-Kimball 2002: 59–60; Murphy 2003: 43, 50, 87, 96–97, [chapters 5](#) and [6](#) and plates; Hanks 2008; Jordana *et al.* 2009; Rolle in *Amazonen* 2010: 116; Lebedynsky 2010: 140; Stark *et al.* 2012: 55.
- 18 Cool 2004; Mayor 2014: 81–82.
- 19 Carney 2014; Mayor 2014: 67–68.
- 20 Farkas 1982: 37–46; *Amazonen* 2010: 79–85, with photos.
- 21 Rolle 1989: 88; Murphy 2003: 11.
- 22 Guliaev 2003: 122–123. Cybele worship: Mayor 2014: 165–167.
- 23 Repiakhovata Mohyla and Bobrytsia kurgans: Rolle 1989: 88; Murphy 2003:

- 11; Lebedynsky 2009: 40–42. Scythian burials in the northern Black Sea region, Tsetskhladze 2011, maps 121–126.
- 24 Murphy 2003: 11; Hanks 2008: 22–23; Rolle in *Amazonen* 2010: 113–117, 153–159.
- 25 Fialko in *Amazonen* 2010: 119–127; Rolle in *Amazonen* 2010: 156.
- 26 Guliaev 2003: 116–117.
- 27 Guliaev 2003: 117–124, figs 1–7.
- 28 Baumer 2012: 256, 258.
- 29 Mayor 2014: 351–353.
- 30 Murphy 2003: 11; Mayor 2014: 71–72.
- 31 Rolle in *Amazonen* 2010: 153–159, 174.
- 32 Ateshi 2011.
- 33 Davis-Kimball 2002: 57–61; Hanks 2008: 20–22; Stark *et al.* 2012.
- 34 Urazova 2014; *Tengrinews* 2015; *The Daily Telegraph* 2015 (mistakenly gives date as eleventh century BC instead of second century BC).
- 35 Davis-Kimball 2002: 181–184; Lebedynsky 2009: 69–71; Stark *et al.* 2012: 107–138; Baumer 2012: 291–295.
- 36 Polosmak 2001 and Polosmak in *Amazonen* 2010: 129–137 with color photographs; Lebedynsky 2009: 67; Baumer 2012: 193–195; Stark *et al.* 2012: 82; Liesowska 2015 in *The Siberian Times*.
- 37 Aymyrlyg cemetery complex, south Siberia, Ulug-Khemski region, Autonomous Republic of Tuva, 809 individual skeletons, Murphy 2003: 1, 3–24; Hsiung-nu (Xiongnu), 15–17.
- 38 Murphy 2003: 6–8, 17, 20, 155, 171–172.
- 39 Arzhan 1: Rolle 1989: 38–44. Arzhan 1 and 2, burial 5: Bokovenko and Samashev 2012: 20–29, 89 n. 9, with color photographs of the opulent couple grave, c.650 BC; Lebedynsky 2009: 65–67; Baumer 2012: 181–185. See also Chugunov *et al.* 2001 and Deutsches Archäologisches Institut.
- 40 Murphy 2003: 43–45, 57, 65–68, 78–79, 87, 95, 96–98, 213.

References

- Amazonen: Geheimnisvolle Kriegerinnen* (2010) Exhibition Catalog, Historischen Museums der Pfalz Speyer. Munich, Germany: Edition Minerva.
- Arnold, B. and Wicker, N. (eds) (2001) *Gender and the Archaeology of Death*. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.
- Ateshi, N. (2011) *Amazons of the Caucasus*. Berlin: Ganjevi Institute.
- Baumer, C. (2012) *The History of central Asia: The Age of the Steppe Warriors*. London: Tauris.
- Blok, J. (1995) *The Early Amazons: Modern and Ancient Perspectives on a Persistent Myth*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Bokovenko, N. and Samashev, Z. (2012) The roots of Iron Age pastoral nomadic culture. In S. Stark, K. Robinson, Z. Samashev and J. Chi

- (eds) *Nomads and Networks: The Ancient Art and Culture of Kazakhstan*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 20–29.
- Carney, E. (2014) Commemoration of a royal woman as a warrior: The burial in the antechamber of Tomb II at Vergina. Paper delivered at the AIA, Chicago, IL, January 2.
- Chugunov, K., Nagler, A. and Parzinger, H. (2001) The golden grave from Arzhan. *Minerva* 13(1): 39–42.
- Cool, H. (2004) The Roman cemetery at Brougham, Cumbria: Excavations 1966 and 1967. *Britannia Monograph* 21. London: Roman Society.
- Davis-Kimball, J. (2002) *Warrior Women: An Archaeologist's Search for History's Hidden Heroines*. New York: Warner Books.
- Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (n.d.) <http://www.dainst.org/en/project/russian-federation-tuva-arzhan?ft=all>.
- Doksanalti, E. and Mimirolu, I. (2010) Giresun/Aretias—Khalkeritis Island. Proceedings of International Conference, Cultural Borders and Border Cultures . . . Bronze Age to Late Antiquity, Trnava, Slovakia, October 22–24. *Anodos: Studies of the Ancient World* 10: 85–101.
- Farkas, A. (1982) Style and subject matter in native Thracian art. *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 16: 33–48.
- Fialko, E. (2010) Skythische “Amazonen” in den Nordschwarzmeersteppen und De bemalte Sarkophag aus dem skythischen Kurgan. In *Amazonen: Geheimnisvolle Kriegerinnen* Exhibition Catalog, Historischen Museums der Pfalz Speyer. Munich, Germany: Edition Minerva, pp. 118–123.
- Guliaev, V. (2003) Amazons in Scythia: New finds at the middle don, Southern Russia. *World Archaeology* 35(1): 112–125.
- Hambastegi News* (Tehran) (2004) Bones suggest women went to war in ancient Iran. Reuters, December 4. http://www.nbcnews.com/id/6661426/ns/technology_and_science-science/t/woman-warrior-found-iranian-tomb/#.VtYajulYc9U.
- Hanks, B. (2008) Reconsidering warfare, status, and gender in the Eurasian steppe Iron Age. In K. Linduff and K. Robinson (eds) *Are All Warriors Male? Gender Roles on the Eurasian Steppe*. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press, pp. 15–34.
- Ivantchik, A. (2013) Amazonen, Skythen und Sauromaten: Alte und moderne Mythen. In C. Schubert and A. Weiss (eds) *Amazonen zwischen Griechen und Skythen: Gegenbilder in Mythos und Geschichte*. Berlin: de Gruyter, pp. 73–87.
- Jordana, X., Galtés, I., Turbat, T., Batsukh, D., Garcia, C., Isidro, A., Giscard, P.-H. and Malgosa, A. (2009) Warriors of the steppes:

- Osteological evidence of warfare and violence from Pazyryk tumuli in the Mongolian Altai. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 36: 1319–1327.
- Lebedynsky, I. (2009) *Les Amazones: Mythe et realite des femmes guerrieres chez anciens nomades de la steppe*. Paris: Editions Errance.
- Lebedynsky, I. (2010) *Les Scythes*. Second Edition. Paris: Editions Errance.
- Liesowska, A. (2015) Is this the face of an ancient female warrior? *Siberian Times*, February 6. <http://siberiantimes.com/science/casestudy/features/f0055-is-this-the-face-of-an-ancient-amazon-female-warrior/>.
- Mayor, A. (2014) *The Amazons: Lives and Legends of Warrior Women across the Ancient World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Murphy, E. (2003) *Iron Age Archaeology and Trauma from Aymyrlyg, South Siberia*. BAR International Series 1152, December 31.
- Polosmak, N. (2001) *Ukok Riders* (in Russian). Novosibirsk, Russia: Infolio Press.
- Rolle, R. (1989) *The World of the Scythians*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Rolle, R. (2010) Bewaffnung und moegliche Kampfweise skythischer Kriegerinnen and Frauen und Pferde. In *Amazonen: Geheimnisvolle Kriegerinnen* Exhibition Catalog, Historischen Museums der Pfalz Speyer. Munich, Germany: Edition Minerva, pp. 152–163.
- Rolle, R. (2011) The Scythians. In L. Bonfante (ed.) *The Barbarians of Ancient Europe*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 107–131.
- Rotroff, S. and Lamberton, R. (2014) The tombs of Amazons. In A. Avramidou and D. Demetriou (eds) *Approaching the Ancient Artifact: Representation, Narrative, and Function*. Berlin: de Gruyter, pp. 127–138.
- Solounias, N. and Mayor, A. (2005) Ancient references to fossils from the land of Pythagoras. *Earth Sciences History* 23(2): 283–296.
- Stark, S., Robinson, K., Samashev, Z. and Chi, J. (eds) (2012) *Nomads and Networks: The Ancient Art and Culture of Kazakhstan*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Tengrinews (2015) Archaeologists discover first female soldier in South Kazakhstan (translated title). Kazakhstan, August 10. <http://tengrinews.kz/science/arheologi-vpervyie-nashli-jenschinu-voina-v-yuko-279021/>.
- The Daily Telegraph* (2015) Ancient warrior princess' skeleton found in Kazakhstan. August 11. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/kazakhstan/11797523/Ancient-warrior-princess->

[skeleton-found-in-Kazakhstan.html](#).

Tsetskhladze, G. (2011) The Scythians: Three essays. In G. Tsetskhladze (ed.) *The Black Sea*. Leuven, Belgium: Peeters.

Urazova, D. (2014) Historical burial site containing child and noble woman remains discovered in south Kazakhstan. *Tengrinews*, Kazakhstan, July 29. <http://en.tengrinews.kz/science/Historical-burial-site-containing-child-and-noble-woman-255070/>.

PART IX

At the edges

The edges of Mediterranean and Near Eastern cultures



Introduction

“Amazons”

The lives of women in Greece or Mesopotamia have been documented by literature and abundant archaeological evidence, but the cultures on the fringes of these societies, in northern and western Europe and beyond, offer, through archaeological and ethnographic analyses, a wealth of intriguing insights. Although marginalized by Greek authors, the warrior women known as “Amazons” were an integral and important part of the societies of the Black Sea Region and steppes, who at times impinged on the cultures of the Aegean shores, where they were considered northern barbarians. In fact, among the cultures of the Saka-Scythians, Sarmatians, and related tribes, a number of burials attest to warrior women, who furnished the paradigms for mythical personages. These Iron Age cultures flourished between the Danube and the Don Rivers and the Caspian Sea during the sixth to fourth centuries BCE, although their origins lie much earlier, and the repercussions from their contact with Mediterranean and other groups continue even now. A frequent feature distinguishing them is *kurgan* burial, interment of the body with rich offerings, and often horses, within a wooden chamber beneath a tumulus mound. These cultures or their descendants continued into the Late Antique or even early medieval period.

Iberian cultures

There has been human settlement in the Iberian peninsula since the Upper Paleolithic (with many spectacular discoveries made in recent years). Historical Iberian culture has deep roots in the Atlantic region as well as the Mediterranean, beginning, for the purposes of this study, during the Late Bronze Age. Around 1300 BCE, environmental changes led to deep social changes, and technological developments utilizing Iberia's wealth of mineral resources, especially metals, resulted in a patchwork of cultures with strong regional flavors. In the northeast (Catalonia), the proto-celtic Urnfield Culture gained ground, while on the western shores the Atlantic Bronze Age culture, with distinctive metal products, grew and engaged in long-distance trade. On the Lower Guadalquivir, metals and agricultural/agrarian resources supported large, rich settlements that participated in exchange with the rest of the Mediterranean world. By the Iron Age (ninth to eighth century BCE), Huelva, a large settlement on a river estuary on the Atlantic coast, encompassed foreign trade and resident

aliens from as far as Sardinia (Nuragic culture) and Italy (Villanovan or early Etruscan culture) as identified by archaeological evidence; the so-called Huelva-type fibula is known from all over the Mediterranean world and Levant, the first harbinger of Phoenician commerce in the West. The riches of this society, known for its ornate gold jewelry and burnished pottery, led to ancient Greek myths of the kingdom of *Tartessos*. Phoenician colonization founded such cities as Cadiz (*Gadir* “fortress”) and later Cartagena, and incorporated Iberia into the commercial circuits of the Mediterranean. Greek colonists founded Ampurias (*Emporion*, “marketplace”) on the far eastern shore of Iberia in the sixth century BCE; Carthage took over the old Phoenician routes and by the sixth century was ensconced in the southern cities. In the third century, after the Carthaginian loss of the First Punic War, Hamilcar Barca configured Spain as an economic prop for Carthage, producing and coining gold. After Hannibal’s defeat by Scipio (202 BCE), Iberia came under Roman domination, troubled with frequent native revolts; it was transformed during the Empire into a rich province famed for its olive oil—and its long history.

The celts

celtic Europe covered an exceptionally wide swathe of the northern borders of the Mediterranean world, even when it did not deliberately invade the south, as happened on various occasions, for instance the Gaulish invasions of Italy (ca. 400 BCE, following centuries of peaceful settlement there) and Greece (279 BCE, when the sac of the Apollo sanctuary at Delphi was stopped by an earthquake; the Hellenistic kingdom of Pergamon fought off an invasion (241 BCE) commemorated with famous sculptures of *Dying Gauls*). Recognizable traits of celtic culture may be discerned as early as the Late Bronze Age in the distinctive burial customs, pottery, and metalwork of the Urnfield Cultures. The Indo-European celtic languages are not recorded until the first alphabetic inscriptions of the sixth century BCE, but are assumed to have been spoken among the settlements of the Hallstatt Culture (ca. 800–450 BCE) recognized from France and Switzerland through Germany, Austria, and Hungary (with strong contacts across the Alps in Italy). The subsequent La Tène culture, often associated with the historical people, the Gauls, extended even farther, into Iberia and the British Isles (ca. 500/450–ca. 50 BCE), ending with the Roman conquest of Gaul and Britain, begun by Julius Caesar in the first century BCE. Ancient authors, such as Caesar, recounted tales of warrior peoples who fought naked or from chariots, and were led by fierce chieftains; such historical figures as

Vercingetorix and Boudicca have engaged the imagination of scholars from Late Antiquity to today. Germanic tribes and other groups during the Migration Period (300–700 CE) supplanted celtic groups in various regions.

Roman-era Scandinavia

The first millennium BCE saw increased exchange of goods and ideas between the Mediterranean and Scandinavia, bringing Baltic amber into peninsular Italy and Etruscan metal goods (especially arms and armor), along with the alphabet, into Scandinavia. The Scandinavian “Roman Iron Age” (the first 400 years CE, leading into Late Antiquity) was characterized by elite burials of both men and women, distinguished by offerings of prized Roman imported goods, reflecting in some cases a person’s association with the Roman military. In later centuries, burial in boats marked the status of high-ranking women as well as men, setting the stage for the material culture and customs of the Viking Age.

Further reading

- Harrison, R. J. (1988) *Spain at the Dawn of History. Iberians, Phoenicians and Greeks*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Kruta, V., Frey, O. H., Raftery, B. and Szabó, M. (eds) (1999) *The celts*. New York: Rizzoli.
- Mayor, A. (2014) *The Amazons: Lives and Legends of Warrior Women across the Ancient World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Myhre, B. (2003) The Iron Age. In K. Helle (ed.) *The Cambridge of History of Scandinavia. Vol. 1: Prehistory to 1520*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 60–93.
- Simón, F. M. (2013) The religions of the Iberian Peninsula. In L. Bredholt Christensen, O. Hammer and D. A. Warburton (eds) *The Handbook of Religions in Ancient Europe*. Durham, UK: Acumen, pp. 156–172.

WOMEN IN IBERIAN CULTURE

Sixth–first centuries BCE

Lourdes Prados Torreira

Introduction

The culture of ancient Iberia is the result of the evolution of the indigenous communities of the Late Bronze Age interacting with alternate Mediterranean cultures, first the Phoenicians and then the Greeks and Carthaginians. This took place between the sixth and first centuries BCE, slowly disappearing with the Romanization of the Iberian peninsula. This culture was characterized by an important social and territorial hierarchy that developed primarily in the eastern and central regions of the peninsula, extending past the Pyrenees to what is now southern France (see [Figure 71.1](#)).

It was a Mediterranean culture which, for most of its history, was contemporary with the Etruscans, Greeks, Carthaginians, and Romans, peoples with whom it maintained relations of varying intensities, depending on region and chronology. Its commercial growth and strategic position in the Mediterranean were founded on the wealth of its primary resources and its agricultural bounty.¹ We know that the Iberians used writing, especially in their commercial relations, even if we are not yet able to read it beyond identifying some toponyms and personal names.² We are dependent on the Greek written sources and most especially on the Roman, which made reference to these peoples although at a considerably later date. Moreover, these “outsider” *testimonia* consider them as specifically peripheral regions, and thus we must seek recourse primarily in the archaeological data in order to approximate the lives, roles, and status of the women in Iberia. In fact, ever since the first archaeological excavations the image of the female has served as the icon of this society. The decade 1860–1870 marked the first discoveries of the spectacular Iberian cultures of cerro de los

Santos in the province of Albacete, where the image of the *Offering Lady* proved exceptional (see [Figure 71.2](#)).

A few years later, in 1897, excavations at La Alcudia de Elche (Alicante) led to the chance discovery of the bust known as the *Lady of Elche* (see [Figure 71.3](#)). Only a few days after her discovery, this magnificent find was sold to French archaeologist, Pierre Paris, and thus was displayed in the galleries of oriental art at the Louvre along with some of the sculptures from cerro de los Santos, bought previously. Her return to Spain, through an accord with the Vichy government in 1941, permitted the dictator F. Franco to use her as “a symbol of the Spanish woman” (“*símbolo de la mujer Española*”), and her image appeared on the one *peseta* bill.³ Interest in the study of women of the Iberian culture grew significantly starting in 2000, hand in hand with growing interest in the archaeology of gender in the Iberian peninsula.⁴ We shall here consider three categories of archaeological evidence which shed light on the women of this culture: households, funerary ritual, and religion.



Figure 71.1 Map of the main ethnic groups of the Iberian Culture.
(After Victorino Mayoral.)

Household and home

Although the Iberian peoples shared certain common characteristics, they were not an ethnically homogeneous group, neither were their villages. In the region corresponding to modern Andalucía, the general model was fortified settlements located in high places—*oppida*—which allowed them to dominate the territory and areas of cultivation, where other, smaller settlements of an agricultural character were located. We can highlight amongst these Puente Tablas and Porcuna (Jaén), and Torreparedones (Córdoba).⁵ This style of village also appears in the interior, dominating agricultural areas and steppe regions. In regions closer to the sea, there was considerable colonial commercial trade on the Mediterranean, as in La Alcudia de Elche (ancient Ilici), Peña negra de Crevillente, Los Saladares, and El Oral (Alicante). Farther north, in the modern province of Valencia, Tossal de Sant Miquell de Lliria (ancient Edeta), La Bastida de Moixent, and Puntal dels Llops (Olocau) stand out for their large dimensions and territorial control; the latter also for its exploitation of its silver deposits. Another type of settlement is what has been interpreted as walled farms, as appear at Castellet de Bernabé. In the interior of Cataluña, the villages were closed circuits, with the houses butted up against the city walls. Also significant are those villages associated with silos for gathering cereal grains—primarily destined for cities like Emporion—amongst which Puig de Sant Andreu de Ullastret, La Moleta del Remei, and Castellar de Pontós (Girona) stand out.⁶



Figure 71.2 The “Offering Lady” from cerro de Los Santos (Albacete).
(Photo Museo Arqueológico Nacional.)



Figure 71.3 The “Lady of Elche” (Alicante). (Photo Museo Arqueológico Nacional.)

The same diversity is apparent in the houses as with the villages, although we can at least say that the majority of the population resided in very simple homesteads, raised on a stone socle, with walls of compressed earth or adobe, the roof thatched or covered with ceramic tiles, and divided into two rooms, one used for storage and keeping animals, and the other for the daily life of the family. We have found the remains of stairways in various excavations, indicating the existence of two-story homes or access to a terrace, as well as pantries and basement storage units. On the other hand, aristocratic households, located in the best parts of the villages, such as primary streets, plazas, etc., show variations in rooms, courtyards—sometimes of colossal size, as at Puente Tablas (Jaén)—porches, storage units, and workshops. The household hearth, for its part, provided heat and cooking for the residence, and was where the family spent their time together. Likewise, several activities associated with the house took place outdoors for much of the year, in both well-lit and well-ventilated areas.

The preparation and transformation of comestibles

The life of the Iberian woman depended, as one might expect, on her social status. It is clear that the greater part of the evidence that has come down to us is what members of the aristocracy wanted to transmit about their social standing, including that of women, especially as relate to both religious and funerary matters. The women who belonged to these social elites were able to enjoy the best and longest lives, as has become apparent through finds from the previously mentioned excavations, such as Puente Tablas and Sant Miquell de Liria.⁷ Nevertheless, the majority of the Iberian population was composed of peasants, many of whom did not even have the right to enter the necropoleis.

In order to understand the role played by women in Iberian culture, it is necessary to investigate and highlight the importance of household tasks and domestic production (“cottage industries”) which produced necessities for the community and in which women, as was the case in the neighboring Mediterranean regions, were the primary players. We refer here to those activities pertaining to daily life: the gathering, processing, and preparation of foodstuffs and their distribution, consumption, and storage; the transportation of water; family reproduction; and caring for the health and hygiene of the members of the community, notably children, the elderly, and the ill. Another important aspect is women’s role in teaching proper socialization and craft development, as with basket-weaving, pottery, and textiles. All these labors, dubbed “maintenance activities,” were associated with the subsistence and well-being of the members of the social group.⁸ Such activities would not only have taken place within the private sphere—the household interior—but also could occur in public areas such as streets, markets, plazas, fountains, by rivers, etc. Women needed to participate in many of the daily chores that helped to sustain the community, such as their contribution to agricultural work, especially as regards the cultivation of vegetables (“horticulture”), the gathering of wild comestibles, and the care of livestock, as well as their processing of such goods—their storage, distribution, preparation, and cooking.⁹ The basic “menu” for the majority of the population consisted of grains, such as barley, which was used in the preparation of beer and likewise soups, and wheat, which was processed into flour for consumption, yielding breads and pastries, as we know from some Iberian *ex voto* dedications from the sanctuary of Collado de los Jardines (Jaén) (see [Figure 71.4](#)).



Figure 71.4 Female *ex voto* offering breads. Collado de Los Jardines (Jaén). (Photo Archive Nicolini.)

Legumes were cultivated along with grains—garbanzo beans, lentils, and peas, while olives were cultivated to produce olive oil, known in Iberia thanks to Phoenician influence since the eighth century BCE. One of the most important dairy products was cheese, as evidenced by the presence of cheese sieves in certain excavations. The daily consumption of meat was very limited, predominantly ovicaprids, as has been confirmed both by excavation and the iconography, for example, the so-called “Vaso de las cabras” (“Goat Vase”) from Verdolay (Museo de Murcia). Seafood appears often in the coastal

regions, and could be preserved and exported to the interior thanks to their well-known salting technique which appeared in the south of the peninsula from the earliest Phoenician settlements. Living quarters have brought to light iron hooks which may have been used in the hanging, drying, and smoking of foodstuffs. Fruits were also consumed and the carbonized remains of cherries, figs, almonds, and pine nuts have come to light in different excavations.¹⁰ Additionally, depictions of pomegranates appear on ceramic vases coming from Llíria (Valencia), and images of date palms from Zama (Hellín, Albacete). They used honey to sweeten food and drinks. Bees were quite well loved by the Iberians, and apiaries in the form of ceramic tubes have been found amongst the houses in numerous excavations. Gathering honey, traditionally associated with women, was of considerable importance in the acquisition of foodstuffs. Tomb 200 of El Cigarralejo (Mula, Murcia) brought to light diverse food dedications, deposited together with the funerary remains: amongst other items were a wholly carbonized basket containing wheat, acorns, almonds, and pine nuts—preferred items for long-term storage.¹¹ The grain, once de-chaffed, was stored in subterranean silos,¹² or in different types of containers.¹³

Women, possibly aided by children, were also responsible for fetching water. In this way, aquatic spaces such as springs, fountains, and rivers also came to serve as places of gathering and communication amongst women. Through these practices, women not only took care of food processing and the nutritional requirements of the group, but they also passed on their knowledge to the other women in their community inasmuch as these techniques required considerable effort to teach across the generations. In this way, women were also the transmitters of knowledge and technologies and were responsible for maintaining the strategies of livelihood in the family unit. Additionally, they took charge of the manufacture of tools and kitchen wares, which generally continued to be made by hand in spite of the prevalence of the pottery wheel, following the trend of other contemporary Mediterranean cultures.

Health and care of members of the community

Women were responsible for the care of the familial unit—of children, the elderly, and the ill. For this they were required to know herbal medicine and therapeutic techniques, as well as having knowledge about more “feminine” matters such as pregnancy, parturition, and lactation. In this time period, the curative properties of diverse plants were known, as well as their abilities to ease pain and soothe

emotional disorders. For this we rely on an interesting funerary sculpture of a woman who holds a poppy plant in her hand—the “Lady of Alcudia” (Elche, Alicante) (see [Figure 71.5](#)).¹⁴ The poppy was a Mediterranean plant well known for its medicinal properties and therapeutic uses and specifically as an analgesic/narcotic. Its leaves were used in the creation of balms and its pods for infusions, having anesthetic and sedative qualities. Another item highlighted in the Iberian iconography was the pomegranate. This fruit has been used since antiquity for its cooling properties and as an astringent for inflammation.¹⁵ Pomegranates were also linked to the world of the dead, which accounts for their depictions in some burials (www.florayfaunaiberica.org). In the same fashion, some anatomical votives present in the sanctuaries (third to second centuries BCE)—depictions of feet, arms, teeth, and eyes—transport us to the world of healing sanctuaries and medicinal waters.¹⁶

Marriage, lineage, and reproduction

Matrimonial unions would have had as their objective the perpetuation of the household, as families were the core of city life. The incorporation of adolescents into the realm of adulthood was accomplished through the rite of marriage, as is reflected in numerous *ex votos* deposited in the sanctuaries, in bronze, stone, or terracotta. This is especially so concerning the bronze votives from the sanctuaries of Collado de los Jardines and La Cueva de La Lobera, in Jaén.¹⁷ Here were found numerous figurines of women which we interpret as young women of marriageable age, characterized by their coiffures consisting of two braids, and their lack of jewelry (see [Figure 71.4](#)). By contrast, those figures we take to be “brides” or married women appear veiled and adorned with fancy clothing and jewelry, signifying their matrimonial dowries (see [Figure 71.6](#)).



Figure 71.5 The “Lady of La Alcudia” (Elche, Alicante). (Photo Fundación Universitaria La Alcudia de Investigación Arqueológica.)



Figure 71.6 Bronze figurine from the sanctuary of Castellar (Jaén).
(Photo Archive Nicolini.)

The wedding is also an important economic transaction, expressed precisely through the dowry and gift exchange. Jewelry, however, although always present on the depictions of aristocratic Iberian women (Figures 71.2, 71.3, 71.6, and 71.7), was not deposited in their graves, as excavations of their tombs have revealed. The absence of this part of the feminine trousseau in the Iberian necropoleis might be explained by the fact that such jewelry was part of the *family* wealth, an important symbol that had to be passed on to the next generation, evincing the role that women played in matrimonial alliances.¹⁸ For this reason, we do not find the expensive necklaces, earrings, or diadems in the necropoleis which appear on images of great ladies in the Iberian plastic arts, such as the sculptures from the sanctuary of cerro de los Santos (Figure 71.2) or the funerary images of the Lady of Elche (Figure 71.3), or the Lady of Baza (Figure 71.7), or some of the bronze votives (Figure 71.6) or those in terracotta (Figure 71.8).

On some painted ceramics, such as those deriving from the village

of San Miquel de Liria, ancient Edeta (Figure 71.9), we see scenes of dance in which youth of both sexes participate, which have been interpreted by C. Aranegui as possible nuptial celebrations.¹⁹ Likewise, as we have just mentioned, the *ex votos* from the sanctuaries reflect the existence of such nuptial rites.²⁰ In a similar fashion, we would note some funerary images, called “The Little Ladies” (“*Damitas*”) of Corral de Saus (Valencia), which depict young women coiffed with braids, a symbol of youth, who hold quinces in their hands, a fruit that was offered at weddings in the Mediterranean ambit and is associated with the goddess Aphrodite.²¹



Figure 71.7 The “Lady of Baza” (Granada). (Photo Museo Arqueológico Nacional.)



Figure 71.8 Ex voto from the sanctuary of La Serreta (Alcoy, Alicante).
 (Photo Museu Arqueològic Municipal d'Alcoi. Camil Visedo Moltó.)



Figure 71.9 Relief with representation of a Family. Sanctuary Las Atalayuelas (Jaén). (Photo Instituto Universitario de Investigación en Arqueología Ibérica. University of Jaén.)

As is logical, one of the fundamental roles of women in Iberian society was reproduction, both biological and social. Fertility—as we have learned through the *ex votos* deposited in the sanctuaries—was a major preoccupation of Iberian women. Maternity did not only consist of giving birth, but entailed a series of activities and actions necessary to maintain that new life and to foster infants' growth and development. Furthermore, the mortality of both mother and child during childbirth must have been very high. We have no depictions of women at the moment of parturition, but indeed the deposition of *ex votos* of pregnant women from the Cordovan sanctuary of Torreparedones (**Figure 71.10**),²² of new-born children from Collado de los Jardines (Santa Elena, Jaén) (**Figure 71.11**), and of votive uteri (**Figure 71.12**), were solicitations for female fertility, safe parturition, or lactation, etc.²³

The period of lactation was also fundamental. We might highlight the presence of diverse terracottas representing nursing deities, especially Punic models, both in burials and in sanctuaries, as at La Serreta de Alcoy (Alicante) (**Figure 71.13**).²⁴ Likewise, we have encountered in some tombs objects identified as baby bottles and feeders, some in the form of a bird, a symbol of feminine divinity. The mother took charge of feeding the baby until a relatively advanced age,²⁵ at which time the child changed its style of life, slowly but surely integrating itself into the world of adults.²⁶



Figure 71.10 *Ex voto* from the sanctuary of Torreparedones (Baena, Córdoba). (Photo Museo Arqueológico de Córdoba.)



Figure 71.11 Bronze figurine of a swaddled baby. Collado de los Jardines (Jaén). (Photo Museo Arqueológico Nacional.)



Figure 71.12 Ex voto shaped like a uterus. Collado de los Jardines (Jaén). (Photo Museo Arqueológico Nacional.)



Figure 71.13 Terracotta representing a nurturing divinity. La Serreta

Textile manufacture and production

An important domestic chore was spinning thread and using it to make clothing. This could be accomplished with vegetable fibers, especially linen, or animal fibers, such as wool. The image of the spinning or weaving woman was prodigious in the Mediterranean (see Gleba, this volume), serving as a symbol associated with the aristocratic segment of the society. Iconographic representations, and most especially funerary depictions in stone, such as the well-known couple from the necropolis of Albufereta (Alicante), now lost, also recall the idea of the aristocratic Iberian woman associated with textile work (Figure 71.14).

This activity held great importance in the sphere of domestic production, both in terms of how much was required just for personal use (clothing, bedding, etc.) and what was required for more public functions, including economic exchange and use in both civic and religious functions. In order to spin or weave good light was necessary, and thus the vertical looms appeared in more open-air parts of the domicile, such as the patio or entrance. Nevertheless, in most cases, archaeological excavations have found spindle whorls and loom weights in the house interior, which may be where they were stored after the day's work.²⁷ Also shears were often found in these domestic spaces, as at La Bastida de Les Alcusses (Valencia),²⁸ which were also found in some tombs, probably symbolizing ownership of livestock. It occasionally happened that domestic production surpassed family consumption and became a full-scale commercial venture. The expertise of Iberian women in creating textiles was even noted by several Classical authors, such as Strabo, Polybios, and Pliny. We might cite the famous passage attributed to Ephoros that underscored the importance of this activity:

The women of the Iberians every year display in public the fabrics which they have woven. Some men are elected to judge these and they honor the woman who has worked the most.

*(Nicolas of Damascus frag. 102 y Fragmenta
Historicorum Graecorum, III, 456)*

Similarly:

Among the Iberians there is a village where they have a festival to honor with gifts all the women who had crafted the greatest number and the most

beautiful cloths, which they exhibit in public on this occasion.

(Paradoxographus Vaticanus, 25, ed. A. Giannini. NB: I thank Professor A. Domínguez Monedero for his translation²⁹)

Iberian women wore over-tunics of distinct color and design, decorated with tablet-woven figural borders. The materials used—wool and linen—dyed with natural colorants, have come down to the present day, especially in iconographic depictions, of which the most significant is the Lady of Baza (fourth century BCE), because of the preservation of her polychrome decoration (Figure 71.7). There are many tombs of women that contain elements pertaining to textile work, such as spindle whorls, loom weights, small bone reeds, etc., all associated primarily with feminine burials. We might highlight in this context the wealth of double Tomb 200—containing a woman and a boy—of the necropolis at El Cigarralejo (Mula, Murcia), dated to c.400–350 BCE. This is a burial containing a rich complement of grave goods in which the profusion of textile equipment truly stands out—fifty-seven spindle whorls, a spindle, reeds (possibly tablets for a vertical loom), needles in bronze, and bone awls. Likewise, analyses of the textile remains identified the presence of wool and linen. In the same fashion, numerous fibulae of bronze of different sizes lead us to believe that there was a deposition of different vestments: cloaks, tunics, fine veils, etc.³⁰ The presence of textile equipment consistently in feminine burials also indicates to us the symbolic character with which these items were endowed—whorls, loom weights, tablets—all associated with textile activities which, as we shall see, were also present in the sanctuaries where they were offered as dedications to a female divinity.



Figure 71.14 Funerary relief from La Albufereta (Alicante). Today missing. (Photo Archivo del MARQ. Museo Arqueológico de Alicante.)

Funerary contexts: funerary ritual and representations of aristocratic women

The Iberian culture practiced cremation, which makes physical anthropological studies quite difficult. If we follow the funerary customs of the Phoenico-Punic peoples and the other cultures of the Mediterranean,³¹ we can suppose that the Iberian woman was in charge of the care and preparation of the corpse, anointing it with unguents and perfumed oils, dressing it, and protecting it with apotropaic amulets, all before transporting it to the funeral pyre. So much might be indicated by the frequent discovery in specific tombs

of deposits of such items as small containers for perfumes or oils. Likewise, the archaeological data indicate that, just as with other Mediterranean cultures, so too in Iberia were the women responsible for the care of the tombs themselves. In this regard, in some burials, such as the previously cited 200 and also 277 of El Cigarralejo, we seem to find evidence of cultic rituals as well as the maintenance of tombs, as also occurred in the Greek regions. Objects discovered in proximity to these tombs, such as an Attic kantharos and bone needles in Tomb 200, or a miniature vase and a batch of spindle whorls in Tomb 277, have led some scholars to interpret these items as offerings made by women during such rituals and periods of maintenance.³² Furthermore, we know that they participated in funerary rituals in their roles as mourners/lamenters, as appears on a depiction of a funerary monument from Alcoy (Alicante);³³ as musicians; or carrying offerings, clearly represented on another funerary monument from Osuna (Sevilla), now on display in the National Archaeological Museum.

The end of the fifth into the early fourth century BCE was a period of profound social and economic change, and Iberian funerary praxis reflects a series of transformations which manifest in a clear process of social “hierarchization” of burials. In this period, an elite of warriors, land-owners, and cattle ranchers consolidated their power. Many of the funerary monuments emerged at this time, a clear manifestation of territorial control. As this change in ideology occurred, we begin to see women belonging to this aristocracy in the repertoire of funerary sculpture, demonstrating their status with jewelry and their wealthy apparel, and through the wealth of their grave goods, which, as we noted above, did not include these notable gems. Instead, they included personal objects, such as finger rings, perfume containers, and various ceramics, both indigenous and imported (Greek, Punic, etc.). The female grave goods also included, as we saw above, objects such as spindle whorls, loom weights, and tablets, which symbolically connected these women to the realm of textile working. Additionally, some female tombs contain weapons—typical of a warrior elite—as part of their funerary goods.³⁴ As a result of this, at this moment in Iberian culture, we might say that some women represented themselves in positions of power. Furthermore, it is quite possible that women played an important role in the transmission of lineage.³⁵

One of the most interesting cases of Iberian funerary archaeology concerns Tomb 155 of the necropolis at Baza, in ancient Bastetania, modern Granada, whence comes the famous statue of the “Lady of Baza” (Figure 71.7).³⁶ This tomb consists of a funerary chamber $2.6 \times 1.8 \text{ m}^2$ excavated in 1971 and dated to the beginning of the fourth

century.³⁷ Inside appeared a female sculpture of colored limestone, transformed into a funerary urn, containing the cremated remains of an individual who, osteological analysis determined, was a woman of approximately 30 years of age.³⁸ In addition to other funerary offerings, amongst which were four exceptional white vases decorated with floral motifs, was the best collection of arms and weapons found in an Iberian tomb to date, altogether some four complete panoplies.³⁹ The sculpture itself depicts a seated woman in wealthy apparel—a blue tunic decorated with edge borders, beneath which were two fine petticoats. She is covered head to toe with a long, open mantle. She flaunts several jewels characteristic of elite women, such as a tiara appearing beneath the mantle, necklaces and collars, rings and large pendants. She was found seated upon a winged throne whose front feet ended in animal paws and which contained on one side the cremated remains of the deceased. The statue's feet, bedecked with red footwear, rest upon a footstool. In her partially closed left hand, she reveals a blue dove. Several scholars have suggested the possibility that this statue represents a divinity, although in reality it appears to portray the image of the deceased. The Lady of Baza incarnates the depiction of a real person, accompanied on her way to the Great Beyond with symbols of immortality, such as her winged throne and the dove, which manifest the heroization of the deceased. The portrayal of this aristocrat expresses her power through her rich clothing with its multiplicity of richly decorated fabrics and her jewels, and also by means of her symbols of immortality. The wealth of her funerary goods is exemplified by the deposition of the panoplies, and it is also important to highlight the significant and intentional absence of foreign goods, Greek or Punic, in this funerary context. Ultimately, we find ourselves facing a person of high rank whose grave goods, including the four panoplies, we might use to position her amongst the dominant lineage or lineages. This sense of symbolism and offering may justify as well the placement of weapons in other tombs of females and even children in the Iberian ambit, even if they appear far less frequently than they do in male burials.⁴⁰ So much also appears in other geographic regions, as on the eastern peninsula, where the archaeology has revealed the inclusion of the image of the aristocratic female in the repertoire of funerary sculptures since the end of the fifth and early fourth centuries, such as the well-known examples from Alicante of the Lady of Elche ([Figure 71.3](#)), the Lady of Alcudia ([Figure 71.5](#)), the Cabezo Lucero, and that of El Cigarralejo, in Murcia.⁴¹

Double burials

We would like to include here an aspect of Iberian culture that is most interesting yet little studied: double burials. The most common are those of women and infants. This datum allows us to verify that some infant burials, generally inhumations, were located in the necropoleis together with the cremated remains of adults; we take these to be familial sepulchers, specifically mother and child. For the infant's grave goods, in those few cases where they might be distinguished, we might include small objects of adornment, probably protective amulets, ceramics, and also objects relating to the world of adulthood, such as weapons, or remains from the funerary banquet.

Amongst the double tombs we might also note those that contain two adults, one of each sex. One of the most interesting examples is the double burial of a man and a woman at cerrillo de Hornos, in Peal de Becerro (Jaén). This is an isolated tumulus, noteworthy not only for its great height and dimensions, but also for its red painted façade which, no doubt, once transformed the edifice into an important territorial marker and symbol of the countryside. The remains from the funerary pyre were in the top of the tumulus, which showed signs of burning contemporary with the two cremated individuals. The tomb had been robbed, possibly soon after the burial and its grave goods stolen. All that was left were the urns with the cremated remains. Results of the osteological studies indicated that the male suffered from various ailments, while the female's remains were those of a healthy individual. The notion that quickly emerged was the possibility that the woman had been sacrificed in order to accompany the man on his final journey, but we do not have a single datum or any other similar examples which would either confirm or deny such a hypothesis.⁴²

Otherwise, we have already mentioned other interesting double burials in the necropolis of El Cigarralejo, specifically Tombs 200 and 277.⁴³ In the case of Tomb 200 (400–350 BCE), together with the collection of weapons was a gathering of objects most clearly associated with the feminine realm (spindle whorls, tablets, garments in wool and linen), as well as toilette objects (small wooden containers, oils, and other beauty products). Likewise, we note the presence of foodstuffs, such as cereal, wheat, and small acorns in a thoroughly carbonized basket; according to Pliny the Elder, such goods were well appreciated in Spain for making desserts (NH XVI 6). Likewise, Strabo highlighted in Book III of his *Geography*—on Iberia—that in the mountainous regions ground, dried acorns were used to make bread, which could be kept for extended periods of time. In addition, we should note the presence in the tomb of a hand-made cooking pot with lid.⁴⁴

Religion: women's participation in the sanctuaries

Finally, we would like to present the role of women in the sanctuaries. Communal, familial, and personal rites took place in these sanctuaries. Here, the rituals were associated with the cycles of the year, demarcating the agricultural seasons between the solstices and equinoxes. Offerings were placed in “natural” sanctuaries (caves, coves, etc.), as well as in urban sanctuaries, or so-called territorial sanctuaries, which allowed for the configuration and organization of space in one or more communities. *Ex votos* of stone, bronze, and clay have come to light here which depict those offering prayers or votives—both men and women—as well as animals and anatomical votives (feet, arms, teeth). The *ex votos* had their apogee in the third to second centuries and represented body parts that had been healed. Also dedicated were articles of clothing, as we can tell from the existence of fibulae of different sizes, belt buckles, dress pins, and other objects related to the realm of textiles, such as whorls and needles.

Offerings of food and drink are confirmed by the presence of animal bones and cooking pots which contained traces of honey, milk, beer, and/or wine in addition to other substances. Likewise, we must keep in mind that other, non-durable offerings were made, such as breads and confections for specific celebrations, as appear in the hands of several figurines (Figure 71.4), as well as aromatic and curative plants and flowers. Some of these festivities took place in the village or *oppidum*, while other celebrations occurred in the territorial sanctuaries or were even pan-regional, possibly tied to agricultural celebrations, which also had an economic aspect to them, such as the sale of agricultural products and cattle, crafts and artworks, marriage alliances, etc. Women would have had an important role in all of these celebrations, as we know from the numerous offerings associated with the realm of the female and, most especially, the “spheres of divine influence” apparent at some of these sanctuaries. Furthermore, study of the *ex votos* allows us not only to learn something about the aristocrats, as was the case with the funerary remains, but also a larger and more varied portion of society, especially the villagers and, as we have noted, women.

In many cases these practices reveal a collective participation, although in other instances the evidence suggests that some rites took place in more intimate settings with a restricted group of participants. In the sanctuaries, the majority of which emerged in the fourth to second centuries, we find *ex votos* that depict people of both sexes in prayer, with a “language of gesture” that reflects what is found in

other Mediterranean sanctuaries.⁴⁵ Amongst the *ex votos* we also discern the celebration of initiatory rites, such as coming-of-age rituals or marriage, as appears in figurines of bronze depicting young, nude, ithyphallic warriors raising their arms to the godhead, especially prevalent in the sanctuary of Collado de los Jardines (Santa Elena, Jaén).⁴⁶ For their own part, feminine figurines represent age groups, including young women who have not yet married, as we can tell from their heads coiffed with braids, offering a cake or fruit to the deity (Figure 71.4). Other figurines depict women with veils who display their dowries—jewelry and rich clothing—as a symbol of matrimony, as with the bronze figurines from the sanctuaries of Collado de los Jardines and Cueva de la Lobera (Jaén), or the terracottas of La Serreta de Alcoy (Alicante), amongst others (Figures 71.6 and 71.8).⁴⁷ Alternatively, many *ex votos* represent a feminine aspect of life, such as the request for a favorable parturition, especially notable in the stone votives depicting pregnant women coming from the sanctuary of Torreparedones (Córdoba) (Figure 71.10), or the presence of infants in bronze, as from the sanctuary of Collado de los Jardines (Figure 71.11), or votive uteri (Figure 71.12). These might be dated, as in the Etruscan and Italic sanctuaries, to the third to second centuries (see Bonfante, this volume). Visible prayers for lactation appear in Punic-style terracotta wet-nurses appearing in sanctuaries, such as La Lobera (Castellar, Jaén).⁴⁸ Likewise, we have one instance, in the area of the sanctuary of Las Atalayuelas in the province of Jaén, which depicts a familial group.⁴⁹ Rites of commensality might be both familial and communal. Perhaps in this we come to understand the importance of the large number of cooking pots containing the remains of casseroles made or offered at these festivals present in the Iberian sanctuaries, behind whose presence we must see the active role of women.

With regard to the dedications offered by the votive figurines, both male and female, we see that these were objects equally dedicated by both sexes, such as calyx-shaped vases, so common in the sanctuary of cerro de los Santos (Albacete), or breads and cakes which we are shown by the bronze figurines from Collado de los Jardines and La Lobera (Jaén). However, the offering of a bird, linked to the realm of women, appears exclusively as a feminine offering.⁵⁰ We must also associate with women offerings of spindle whorls, needles, and pins, very common in La Cueva de La Lobera (Castellas, Jaén), where the overwhelming majority of feminine votives leads us to believe that this was a sanctuary primarily frequented by women. Likewise, women appear to have taken part in the organization of rituals, as would seem to be indicated by figurines interpreted as “priests” and

“priestesses” from “El Collado de los Jardines” (Despeñaperros),⁵¹ or as is evident on the so-called plaque of Torreparedones ([Figure 71.15](#)) which depicts two women making a libation, possibly before the façade of a commemorative, monumental sanctuary.⁵²

The latest Ibero-Roman sanctuary (dating from the second century BCE to the first century CE) stands out for its blatantly oriental roots. Here we might mention an *ex voto* with a late inscription to the “*Dea Caelestis*,” a divinity with attributes similar to those of Phoenician Astarte, Punic Tanit, or the later Roman Juno.⁵³ At the sanctuary of Torreparedones, she is strongly correlated with Juno Lucina, protective goddess of pregnant women and childbirth. The Matronalia festival was celebrated in her honor, as we know from a graffito inscribed upon a pottery fragment discovered in the sanctuary where some fifty stone votives were also found, several representing pregnant women ([Figure 71.10](#)).



[Figure 71.15](#) Two female figures playing a ritual activity.
Torreparedones (Baena, Córdoba). (Photo José Antonio

Ultimately, we can confirm that rites of initiation, coming-of-age, marriage, birth, agricultural celebrations, etc., took place in the sanctuaries, blessed by the community mortal and immortal which regulated the existence of the group and encompassed, both in life and in death, all the members of that group even though not all of them could participate in the same way in the celebration and practice of these actions. In the end, rituals tied to procreation and care of the community, in which, we must emphasize, women predominate, are highlighted in some sanctuaries, such as those already mentioned at Cueva de la Lobera in Castellar (Jaén) and Torreparedones (Baena-Casto del Río, Córdoba).

For all we have seen in this chapter, we might summarize that the Iberian woman who belonged to the elite, although still having a lower status than males, displayed herself in the cadres of power through her grave goods and artistic depictions. Furthermore, the active participation of women, especially those of the farming class, can be seen in the archaeology, thanks especially to their maintenance activities in the domestic sphere and their participation in the religious rituals in the sanctuaries.

Notes

- 1 Aranegui 2012; Belén and Chapa 2010; Bendala 2000; Cruz Andreotti 1999, 2002; Gracia Alonso 2008; Ruiz and Molinos 1992; VV.AA.1998.
- 2 De Hoz 1998, 2009.
- 3 Olmos and Tortosa 1997.
- 4 Chapa 2005; Izquierdo and Prados 2004; Prados and Izquierdo 2006; Rísquez and García Luque 2008.
- 5 Ruiz and Molinos 1992, 2007; Cunliffe and Fernández Castro 1999.
- 6 Bonet 1995; Bonet *et al.* 1994; Grau 2002; Pons 2000.
- 7 Ruiz and Molinos 2007; Bonet 1995.
- 8 Montón-Subías and Sánchez-Romero 2008.
- 9 Chapa and Mayoral 2007.
- 10 Oliver Foix 2000; Cuadrado 1987.
- 11 Cuadrado 1987; Rísquez and García-Luque 2008.
- 12 Pons 2000.
- 13 Oliver Foix 2000; Chapa and Mayoral 2007.
- 14 Izquierdo 2012; Prados 2010a, fig 6.
- 15 Izquierdo 1997.
- 16 Prados 1997.

- 17 Álvarez Ossorio 1941; Calvo and Cabré 1917, 1918, 1919; Nicolini 1969, 1977; Nicolini *et al.* 2004; Prados 1992, 1997, 2008; Rueda 2008; Rísquez and Rueda (eds.) 2013.
- 18 Chapa and Pereira 1991.
- 19 Aranegui 1997, 2008: 1997.
- 20 Prados 2013; 1997.
- 21 Izquierdo 2012; www.florayfaunaiberica.org.
- 22 Cunliffe and Fernández Castro 1999.
- 23 Prados 2013.
- 24 Grau *et al.* 2008; Prados 2014.
- 25 Based on comparison with other ancient societies this could be up to 3 or even 5 years of age.
- 26 Chapa 2008; Sánchez Romero 2008; Prados 2013.
- 27 Aranegui 2012; Chapa and Mayoral 2007.
- 28 Bonet *et al.* 1994.
- 29 Into Spanish thence into English by S.L. Budin.
- 30 Cuadrado 1987; Rísquez and García-Luque 2008.
- 31 Delgado and Ferrer 2012.
- 32 Lucas 2002; Rísquez and García Luque 2008, 2012.
- 33 Grau 2002; Prados 2010a.
- 34 Quesada 2010, 2012.
- 35 Ruiz and Molinos 2007.
- 36 Chapa and Izquierdo 2010; Díaz-Andreu and Tortosa 1998; Prados 2010b.
- 37 Presedo 1973, 1982.
- 38 Trancho and Robledo 2010.
- 39 Quesada 2010, 2012.
- 40 Quesada 2012.
- 41 Chapa and Izquierdo 2010; Prados 2010a, 2010b,
- 42 Molinos and Ruiz 2007; Prados 2012.
- 43 Cuadrado 1987.
- 44 Cuadrado 1987; Rísquez and García Luque 2008, 2012.
- 45 Nicolini 1968.
- 46 Nicolini 1968; Prados 1992.
- 47 Prados 1997.
- 48 Rueda *et al.* 2008; Rueda 2011; Prados 2013; Rísquez and Rueda 2013.
- 49 Olmos 2006.
- 50 Prados 2004.
- 51 Nicolini 1969; Prados 1992, 1997.
- 52 Morena 2000.
- 53 Marín ceballos 1995.

References

- Álvarez Ossorio, F. (1941) *Catálogo de los Exvotos de Bronce. Ibéricos. Museo Arqueologico nacional*. Madrid.
- Aranegui, C. (ed.) (1997) *Damas y Caballeros en la Ciudad Ibérica. Las cerámicas Decoradas de Llíria (Valencia)*. Madrid: Cátedra.
- Aranegui, C. (2008) La prevalencia de representaciones femeninas: el caso de la cultura ibérica. In L. Prados and C. Ruiz (eds) *Arqueología y género*. Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, pp. 205–223.
- Aranegui, C. (2012) *Los Iberos ayer y hoy. Arqueología y Cultura*. Madrid: Marcial Pons.
- Belén, M. and Chapa, T. (2010) *La Edad del Hierro*. Madrid: Síntesis.
- Bendala, M. (2000) *Tartessos, Iberos y celtas: Pueblos, Culturas y Colonizadores de la Hispania Antigua*. Madrid: Temas Hoy.
- Bonet, H. (1995) *El Tossal de Sant Miquel de Llíria. La Antigua Edeta y su territorio*. Valencia, Spain: Diputación.
- Bonet, H., Guérin, P. and Mata, C. (1994) “Urbanisme i habitatge ibèrics al país Valencià”, *Cota Zero X*: 115–130.
- Calvo, I. and Cabre, J. (1917) Excavaciones en la Cueva y Collado de los Jardines (Santa Elena, Jaen). Campaña de 1916. *Memorias de la Junta Superior de Excavaciones y Antigüedades*, 8. Madrid.
- Calvo, I. and Cabre, J. (1918) Excavaciones y Exploraciones en la Cueva y Collado de los Jardines (Santa Elena, Jaen). Campaña de 1917. *Memorias de la Junta Superior de Excavaciones y Antigüedades*, 16. Madrid.
- Calvo, I. and Cabre, J. (1919) Excavaciones en la Cueva y Collado de los Jardines (Santa Elena, Jaen). Campaña 1918. *Memorias de la Junta Superior de Excavaciones y Antigüedades*, 22. Madrid.
- Chapa, T. (2005) Espacio vivido y espacio representado. Las mujeres en la sociedad ibérica. In A. Lavrin and M. A. Querol (eds) *Historia de las Mujeres en España y América Latina*. Madrid: Cátedra, pp. 117–137.
- Chapa, T. (2008) Presencia infantil y ritual funerario en el mundo ibérico. In F. Gusi, S. Muriel and C. Olaria (eds) *Nasciturus, infans, puerulus vobis mater terra*. Castelló, Spain: Diputación de Castelló, pp. 619–642.
- Chapa, T. and Pereira, J. (1991) El oro como elemento de prestigio social en época ibérica. *Archivo Español de Arqueología* 64: 23–35.
- Chapa, T. and Mayoral, V. (2007) *Arqueología del trabajo. El ciclo de la vida en un poblado ibérico*. Madrid: Akal.
- Chapa, T. and Izquierdo, I. (eds) (2010) *La Dama de Baza. Un viaje femenino al más allá*. Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura.
- Cruz Andreotti, G. (ed.) (1999) *Estrabon e Iberia. Nuevas perspectivas de estudio*. Málaga, Spain: Universidad de Málaga.

- Cruz Andreotti, G. (2002) Iberia e Iberos en las fuentes histórico-geográficas griegas: Una propuesta de análisis. *Mainake* 24: 153–180.
- Cuadrado, E. (1987) *La necrópolis del Cigarralejo, Mula, Murcia*. Madrid: Biblioteca Praehistórica Hispana, Vol. XXIII.
- Cunliffe, B. W. and Fernández Castro, M. C. (1999) *The Guadajoz Project. Andalucía in the First Millennium B.C. Torreparedones and its Hinterland*. Volume 1. Oxford, UK: Institute of Archaeology.
- De Hoz, J. (1998) La escritura ibérica. In VV.AA. (1998) *Los Iberos. Príncipes de Occidente*. Catálogo de la exposición París-Bonn-Barcelona, pp. 190–204.
- De Hoz, J. (2009) El problema de los límites de la lengua ibérica como lengua vernácula. *Paleohispánica* 9: 413–433.
- Delgado Hervad, A. and Ferrer Martín, M. (2012) La muerte visita la casa: Mujeres, cuidado y memorias familiares en los rituales funerarios fenicio-púnicos. In L. Prados Torreira (ed.) *La Arqueología Funeraria desde una perspectiva de género*. Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, pp. 123–155.
- Díaz-Andreu, M. and Tortosa, T. (1998) Gender, symbolism and power in Iberian societies. In P. Funari, M. May and S. Jones (eds) *Historical Archaeology. Back from the Edge*. London: Routledge, pp. 99–121.
- Gracia Alonso, F. (2008) *De Iberia a Hispania*. Madrid: Ariel.
- Grau, I. (2002) *La Organización del Territorio en el Área central de la Contestania Ibérica*. Alicante, Spain: Universidad de Alicante.
- Grau, I., Olmos, R. and Perea, A. (2008) La habitacion sagrada de la ciudad iberica de la Serreta. *Archivo Español de Arqueología* 81: 5–29.
- Izquierdo, I. (1997) Granadas y adormideras en la cultura ibérica y el contexto del mediterráneo antiguo. *Pyrenae* 28: 65–98.
- Izquierdo, I. (2012) Mujeres y plantas en el imaginario ibérico de la muerte. In L. Prados Torreira (ed.) *La Arqueología funeraria desde una perspectiva de género*. Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, pp. 277–298.
- Izquierdo, I. and Prados, L. (2004) Espacios funerarios y religiosos en la Cultura Ibérica: lecturas desde el género en Arqueología. *SPAL. Revista de Prehistoria y Arqueología de la Universidad de Sevilla* 13: 155–180.
- Lucas Pellicer, M. R. (2002) Entre dioses y hombres: El paradigma de El Cigarralejo (Mula, Murcia). *Anales de Murcia* 16/17: 147–158.
- Marín ceballos, M. C. (1995) Dea Caelestis en un santuario ibérico. In M. Molina, J. L. Cunchillos and A. González Blanco (eds) *El Mundo*

- Púnico: *Historia, Sociedad y Cultura*. Congreso Internacional del Mundo Púnico, 16–19 noviembre 1990. Cartagena, Colombia, pp. 217–226.
- Molinos, M. and Ruiz, A. (2007) *El Hipogeo Ibérico del cerrillo de la Compañía de Hornos (Peal de Becerro, Jaén)*. Jaén, Spain: Universidad de Jaén.
- Montón-Subías, M. and Sánchez-Romero, M. (eds) (2008) *Engendering Social Dynamics: The Archaeology of Maintenance Activities*. Oxford, UK: BAR Int. Series 1862.
- Morena López, J. A. (2000) El sillar decorado de Torreparedones: Una pieza excepcional de la plástica ibérica en piedra en el Museo Histórico Municipal de Cañete de las Torres. *Boletín de la Asociación Provincial de Museos Locales de Córdoba*, nº 1, pp. 45–66.
- Nicolini, G. (1968) Gestes et attitudes culturels des figurines de bronze ibériques. *Melanges de la Casa de Velázquez* IV: 27–50.
- Nicolini, G. (1969) *Les Bronzes Figurés des Sanctuaires Ibériques*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
- Nicolini, G. (1977) *Bronces Ibéricos*. Barcelona, Spain: Gustavo Gili.
- Nicolini, G., Risquez, C., Ruiz, A. and Zafra, N. (2004) *El Santuario Ibérico de Castellar, Jaén. Intervenciones arqueológicas 1966–1991*. Seville, Spain: Arqueología Monografías, Junta de Andalucía.
- Oliver Foix, A. (2000) *La Cultura de la Alimentación en el Mundo Ibérico*. Castelló, Spain: Diputació de Castelló.
- Olmos, R. (2006) El coleccionista y el bronce: La ofrenda ibérica en los exvotos del Valencia de Don Juan. In M. Moreno (ed.) *Exvotos Ibéricos*. Volume 1. Jaén, Spain: El Instituto Valencia de Don Juan, pp. 15–30.
- Olmos Romera, R. and Tortosa Rocamora, T. (eds) (1997) *La Dama de Elche: Lecturas Desde la Diversidad*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas.
- Pons, E. (2000) *L'hàbitat Protohistòric a Catalunya, Rosselló i Languedoc Occidental. Actualitat de l'arqueologia de L'edat del Ferro*. Girona, Spain: Museu d'Arqueologia de Catalunya-Girona.
- Prados Torreira, L. (1992) *Los Exvotos Ibéricos de Bronce del Museo Arqueológico Nacional*. Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura.
- Prados Torreira, L. (1997) Los ritos de paso y su reflejo en la touretica iberica. In R. Olmos and J. Santos (eds) *Iconografía Ibérica, Iconografía Itálica: Propuestas de Interpretación y Lectura. Congreso Internacional*, Rome 11–13 noviembre 1993. Serie Varia 3. Madrid: Universidad Autonoma de Madrid, pp. 273–282.
- Prados Torreira, L. (2004) Un viaje seguro. Las representaciones de pies y aves en la iconografía de época Ibérica. *Cuadernos de*

- Prehistoria y Arqueología*, volume 30. Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, pp. 91–104.
- Prados Torreira, L. (2008) Mujer y espacio sagrado: haciendo visibles a las mujeres en los lugares de culto de época ibérica. In M. Sánchez Romero (ed.) *Arqueología de las Mujeres y de las Relaciones de Género. Complutum* 18: 217–225.
- Prados Torreira, L. (2010a) La mujer aristocrática en el paisaje funerario ibérico. In T. Chapa and I. Izquierdo (eds) *La Dama de Baza. Un viaje femenino al más allá*. Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, pp. 223–242.
- Prados Torreira, L. (2010b) Gender and identity in Iberian funerary contexts (5th–3rd century BC). In L. H. Dommasnes, T. Hjørungdal, S. Montón, M. Sánchez Romero and N. L. Wicker (eds) *Situating Gender in European Archaeologies*. Budapest, Hungary: Archaeolingua, pp. 205–224.
- Prados Torreira, L. (2012) Si las muertas hablaran... Una aproximación a los contextos funerarios de la Cultura Ibérica. In L. Prados (ed.) *La Arqueología Funeraria Desde una Perspectiva de Género*. Madrid: Publicaciones Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, pp. 233–256.
- Prados Torreira, L. (2013) ¿Por qué se ofrecían los exvotos de recién nacidos? Una aproximación a la presencia de “bebés enfajados” en el santuario ibérico de Collado de los Jardines (Sant. Elena, Jaén, España). In C. Rísquez and C. Rueda (eds) *Santuarios Iberos: Territorio, Ritualidad y Memoria. Actas del Congreso El Santuario de la Cueva de La Lobera de Castellar. 1912–2012*. Jaén, Spain, pp. 325–340.
- Prados Torreira, L. (2014) La participación de la comunidad, las unidades domésticas y los individuos en los rituales de los santuarios de la Cultura Ibérica. In T. Tortosa (ed.) *Diálogo de Identidades Bajo el Prisma de las Manifestaciones Religiosas en el Ámbito Mediterráneo (s. III aC-s. I.d.C.)*. Madrid: Anejos de Archivo Español de Arqueología, pp. 123–134.
- Prados Torreira, L. and Izquierdo, I. (2006) The image of women in Iberian culture (6th–1st century BC). In C. C. Mattusch, A. A. Donohue and A. Brauer (eds) *Proceedings of the XVIth International Congress of Classical Archaeology*, pp. 491–494.
- Presedo Velo, F. J. (1973) La Dama de Baza. *Trabajos de Prehistoria* 30: 151–216.
- Presedo Velo, F. J. (1982) *La Necrópolis de Baza, Excavaciones Arqueológicas en España*, 119. Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura.
- Quesada Sanz, F. (2010) Las armas de la sepultura 155 de la necrópolis de Baza. In T. Chapa and I. Izquierdo (eds) *La Dama de*

- Baza. *Un Viaje Femenino al Más Allá*. Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, pp. 149–170.
- Quesada Sanz, F. (2012) Mujeres, amazonas, tumbas y armas: una aproximación transcultural. In L. Prados Torreira (ed.) *La Arqueología Funeraria Desde una Perspectiva de Género*. Madrid: Publicaciones Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, pp. 317–364.
- Rísquez, C. and García Luque, M. A. (2008) ¿Actividades de mantenimiento en el registro funerario? El caso de las necrópolis ibéricas. In P. González Marcén *et al.* (eds) *Interpreting Household Practices: Reflections on the Social and Cultural Roles of Maintenance Activities*. *Treballs d'Arqueologia* 13: 147–173.
- Rísquez, C. and García Luque, M. A. (2012) Identidades de género y prácticas sociales en el registro funerario ibérico. La necrópolis de El Cigarralejo. In L. Prados Torreira (ed.) *La Arqueología Funeraria desde una perspectiva de género*. Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, pp. 257–276.
- Rísquez, C. and Rueda, C. (eds) (2013) *Santuarios Iberos: Territorio, Ritualidad y Memoria. El Santuario de La Cueva de La Lobera de Castellar 1912–2012*. Jaén, Madrid: Actas del Congreso Internacional.
- Rueda, C. (2008) Las imágenes de los santuarios de Castulo: Los exvotos ibéricos en bronce de Collado de los Jardines (Santa Elena) y Los Altos del Sotillo (Castellar). *Paleohispánica* 8: 55–87.
- Rueda, C. (2011) *Territorio, Culto e Iconografía en los Santuarios Iberos del Alto Guadalquivir*. Jaén, Spain: Universidad de Jaén.
- Rueda, C., García, A., Ortega, C. and Rísquez, C. (2008) El ámbito infantil en los espacios de culto de Cástulo (Jaén, España). In F. Gusi, S. Muriel and C. Olaria (eds) *Nasciturus, Infans, Puerulusvobis Mater Terra*. Castelló, Spain: Diputació, pp. 473–496.
- Ruiz, A. and Molinos, M. (1992) *Los Iberos. Análisis arqueológico de un proceso histórico*. Barcelona, Spain: Crítica.
- Ruiz, A. and Molinos, M. (2007) *Iberos en Jaén*. Jaén, Spain: Universidad de Jaén.
- Sánchez Romero, M. (2008) Childhood and the construction of gender identities through material culture. *International Journal of Childhood in the Past* 1: 17–37.
- Trancho, G. and Robledo, B. (2010) La Dama de Baza: Análisis paleoantropológico de una cremación ibérica. In T. Chapa and I. Izquierdo (eds) *La Dama de Baza. Un viaje femenino al más allá*. Madrid: Ministerio de Cultura, pp. 119–136.
- VV.AA (various authors) (1998) *Los Iberos. Príncipes de Occidente*. Catálogo de la exposición París-Bonn-Barcelona: Ministerio de

VIRAGOS AND VIRGINS

Women in the celtic world

Miranda Aldhouse-Green

A whole troop of foreigners would not be able to withstand a single Gaul if he called his wife to his assistance, who is usually very strong and with blue eyes; especially when, swelling her neck, gnashing her teeth, and brandishing her sallow arms of enormous size, she begins to strike blows mingled with kicks, as if they were so many missiles sent from the string of a catapult. ¹

So wrote the Roman author, Ammianus Marcellinus, in the late fourth century AD. He has been called the last of the great historians of ancient Rome and he certainly follows in the footsteps of a long line of chroniclers of the Roman Empire, including its outlying provinces such as Gaul and Britain. As is necessary with all ancient Classical commentaries on ‘barbarian’ Europe, the testimony of Ammianus needs to be unpacked. In part, at least, what he did was to provide a window on a land far to the north and west of his Mediterranean homeland, but a window whose lens was tinted (and tainted) by the inevitable double bind of ignorance and bias. So it was that, in this passage, the Gallic women he describes are presented as the absolute antithesis of their Roman sisters: large, blue-eyed, ferocious and indomitable. So what was the reality of celtic women? What do we know about their lives and their status in society? Did they wield independent power? How do we know? These are just some of the issues considered in this chapter.

Setting the scene: time and space

The use of the term ‘celts’ to describe the inhabitants of ancient Europe has been challenged since the 1990s, particularly by British archaeologists working in Iron Age and Roman studies.² Their arguments are based upon the ambiguity with which Classical writers

used words, such as ‘Keltai’ (Greek)/celtae (Latin), or ethnic names, such as Belgae in their chronicles of Gaul, Germany west of the Rhine, Spain and other parts of northwest Europe. There is also the fact that no Classical author ever used the term to describe the occupants of Britain. These issues, together with the way that using the term to identify peoples’ ethnicity for virtually the whole of the non-Mediterranean west, mask regional and chronological diversities and present a timeless continuum for the whole of the Iron Age everywhere. This is not the appropriate place to engage with the celtic controversy. For present purposes, I intend to include Britannia, Gallia and Germania (modern Britain, France, Belgium, Switzerland, northern Italy the Netherlands and Germany west of the Rhine), together with Lower Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein, Denmark, Austria and relevant parts of eastern Europe. The chronological parameters are the European Iron Age (c.700 BC to the Roman period (wherever it is possible to untangle local ‘celtic’ threads from those of *romanitas*). There is an implicit irony here insofar as, despite the problems of cultural interaction, the introduction of Roman traditions, such as epigraphy and mass-production of iconography, paradoxically allows for a fuller understanding of celtic customs and practices than is possible for the more archaeologically reticent Iron Age. However, just as it is necessary to be wary of taking Classical writers on the celts as a window on reality, so we must be careful with the use of Roman-period evidence. It is both impossible and unhelpful to try to disentangle the archaeology of celts and Romans in the so-called Romano-celtic provinces. By the time that *romanitas* was well established in these regions, a new cultural tradition had been born, one that was neither Roman nor celtic, but a fusion of the two.

The nature of the evidence

The testimony of Classical authors has been touched on above. It is of limited value for the study of celtic women, particularly as they were of comparatively little interest to (male) Graeco-Roman historians. So otherwise valuable commentators on Gaul and Britain, such as Julius Caesar and Tacitus, rarely mention women in general and very seldom are individual females identified by name. Caesar barely alludes to Gallo-British women at all, except to note marriage customs, although he spent ten years in Gaul and made two expeditions to Britain. Tacitus gives a voice to two British women: Boudica and Cartimandua, both of whom played a pivotal role in the formation of Britannia as a Roman province. He also discusses another politically influential woman, the Batavian (German) prophetess, Veleda. Classical writers

on the celts wrote from the perspective of their own cultural perspective (as do all historians to a degree); each had an agenda when writing about their barbarian neighbours. Tacitus was a complex chronicler. He was a member of the Roman imperial court, but he nursed a loathing for the pretentious decadence of the emperor and the aristocracy so that his bias against the uncivilised lands of Gaul, Germany and Britain was tempered with the notion of the Noble Savage, uncorrupted by soft living and the machinations of imperial court life. So, for instance, he had sneaking sympathies for the British rebel queen Boudica.

Archaeological evidence is kinder to women. For most of the Iron Age, our knowledge is built largely upon sepulchral remains, together with rare images. Even with the latter, we have to be cautious because we have no way of knowing whether such iconography represents real women, goddesses or creatures of lost myths. Apart from 'normal' graves, a rich vein of evidence survives in the form of bog bodies, the remains of women deliberately placed in marshy ground for whatever reason. They occur in regions with large stretches of raised peat-bog: parts of Britain, Ireland, northern Germany, the Drenthe region of the Netherlands and Denmark, and this kind of burial spans the whole Iron Age and the first few centuries AD. The bog acids and, in particular, the *sphagnum* moss present in raised bogs, served to preserve these bodies more or less intact, including soft tissue, skin, hair and internal organs. This unique resource allows detailed study of ancient bodies, many of whom were women.

In the Roman period, and immediately before, the Mediterranean practice of epigraphy percolated westwards to Gaul and Britain. Inscriptions bridge the gap between literature and archaeology. They are part of material culture, but they are also written records. Inscribed tombstones tell us a fair amount about women. Sometimes they give information about their professions: one, a lady from Metz in eastern Gaul, was a doctor, and several Gallic business women were commemorated in stone when they died.³ The freedom of celtic women to engage in professional lives and own property independently is borne out by another class of epigraphy, the *defixiones* (lead curse-tablets) from Britain (particularly from the shrines at Bath and Uley) and all over Gaul.⁴ One woman, the subject of a curse inscribed on a tile found in the Gallo-Roman town of Châteaubleau in northern France, was a cattle-dealer called Papissona.⁵ Such 'documents' also attest to the power of women not in mainstream religion, but in the more subversive magical arts.

The archaeology of 'big' women

Imaging female prominence

Depictions of two women, similar in date but geographically distant from each other, may serve to throw light on attitudes to females in Early Iron Age society. We need to be careful with images, because there is no way of being sure that their depictions represented real people as opposed to deities or mythic creatures. But the females depicted at Strettweg in Austria and Ballachulish in western Scotland are at least worthy of consideration as portrayals of genuine – albeit special – women. Both were heavily associated with ritual practices. The statuette from Ballachulish (Argyll) ([Figure 72.1](#)) is a rare example of a wooden image; radiocarbon dates put her as belonging to the earliest period of the Iron Age (728–525 BC). She is the only unequivocally female wooden image from Britain and Ireland. The figure, carved from alder, represents a large (almost life-size) naked female with exaggerated genitals. Her eyes were inlaid quartz pebbles that would have caught the light.⁶

Like all prehistoric figures, the Ballachulish image was preserved because of the watery environment in which it was deposited. She had been deliberately placed in a pool within a bog, and weighted down with hurdles. Such treatment, and her nakedness, align closely with that meted out to several Iron Age female bog bodies, who are discussed later in this chapter. Was she a surrogate sacrificial victim? The over-emphasised pudendum indicates that her gender played an important role in her production, use and ultimate disposal. Was the image meant as a fertility offering to the local bog-spirits? Did she represent a particular woman in the local community who had such influence within it that her likeness was consigned to this special place. Was she, perhaps, a surrogate human sacrificial victim?

The second image formed part of a group of figures, and accompanied a high-ranking male burial in about 600 BC at Strettweg in Austria. The most spectacular grave-furniture consisted of a bronze, four-wheeled, 'cult-wagon' upon which were several people, some on horseback, and a pair of stags ([Figure 72.2](#)). The central figure was a woman, much the largest of the group, who stands towering over them, her hands upraised to hold a large vessel aloft. Her face shows her maturity, and she is naked but for a decorated girdle and a pair of hooped earrings.⁷

Her centrality within the group and her physical size indicate her superiority and high status. The scene has been interpreted as a stag-

hunt and, if so, the female figure may well represent a priestess, holding up a bowl of blood as a kind of 'first-fruits' sacrifice to the gods. The scene also resonates with the Greek geographer Strabo's testimony (below) concerning the collection of human sacrificial blood in cauldrons by Germanic priestesses.

Grave testimony

Consideration of the woman from Strettweg, found in a tomb, leads to a major assemblage of archaeological evidence for significant women's burials. Consideration of just two is sufficient to indicate the high regard with which some women were held, apparently independent of men. Around the end of the sixth century BC, an important woman in her early thirties died and was interred with great ceremony under a great tumulus at Vix in northern Burgundy. The burial mound was huge: 42 m in diameter and 6 m high and visible for miles around. The body was laid out on a four-wheeled hearse, together with a rich assemblage of grave-goods, including a massive bronze *krater* (wine-mixing vessel) standing 1.64 m high that had been transported in pieces from Corinth or Etruria. Around the dead woman's neck was a solid gold torque, probably made by a Greek goldsmith. Her tomb was constructed close to the great upland stronghold of Mont Lassois. No comparable male burial has been found in the vicinity, and the richness of the Vix woman's tomb suggests that she was once a person of exceptional importance and prestige at the hillfort. An interesting feature of her grave-furniture is the inclusion of a wide variety of objects, some exotic, from many different regions, as though to symbolise the woman's suzerainty over large sweeps of territory and her associations with the Mediterranean world.⁸

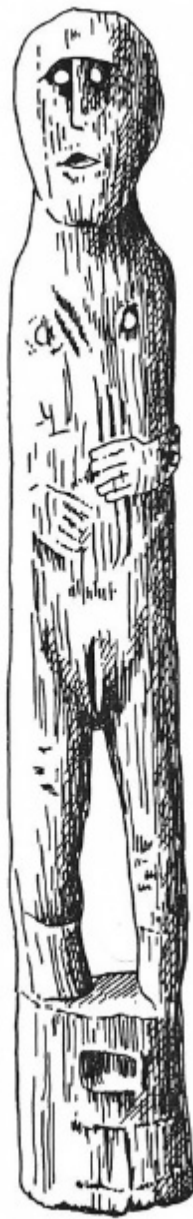


Figure 72.1 Statuette from Ballachulish (Argyll).

Far away from Vix, and a couple of centuries later, a woman of similar age was interred at Wetwang in East Yorkshire, with great riches. Once again, her tomb contained a vehicle, but this one was a fast two-wheeled chariot rather than a ponderous four-wheeler and her body did not lie on top of it. Instead, the chassis of the cart, together with its pole and the yoke for its two ponies, were carefully

placed over the body. A mirror lay on the woman's shins and joints of pork upon her torso. This burial belongs to a group of middle-Iron-Age so-called 'chariot-burials' from the region, but what made this tomb remarkable was the quantity of red coral, imported from the Mediterranean, that had been used in the decoration of the grave-goods, particularly the horse-gear. Forensic analysis of the Wetwang woman's body revealed something very curious: a malformation of the bones at the side of her nasal cavity indicating that she had suffered from a highly disfiguring, bright red facial growth. It is surely beyond happenstance that this woman's grave should have been laden with similarly coloured coral; it is almost as though her abnormality were being celebrated. Her burial was an elaborate affair and the great wealth of her grave suggests that she enjoyed high status both in life and in death. She may even, like the British warrior-queen Boudica (see below), have driven the chariot with which she was interred. But the mirror buried with her might indicate another aspect to this woman's power. It is possible that she was a seer, who used her mirror to tell the future, and it was for this reason that she was interred with such apparent reverence by her community.⁹



Figure 72.2 Bronze, four-wheeled, 'cult-wagon'. Stettweg, Austria. 600 BC.

Tales of ancient bog women

Then you were clothed in sable and marten
And decked with precious jewels,
Gems and pearls in your golden hair,
Wicked thoughts on your mind.¹⁰

So wrote the Danish poet, Steen Steensen Blicher, in 1841, seven years

after the discovery of a female bog body in the Juthe Fen, Haraldskaer in Jutland. His poem, entitled 'Queen Gunhild', because the body was first thought to be that of a Norwegian Viking queen, is divided into alternate verses that describe the contrast between the onetime splendour of the living woman and her current state as a bald, naked and blackened bog body. 'Queen Gunhild' was a handsome, healthy and well-nourished middle-aged woman when she was killed and fastened by wooden hurdles to the bottom of the bog. One stake had actually pierced through her knee-joint, which had then swelled. It was this feature that led her nineteenth-century investigators to believe that the branch had been driven through her leg while she was still alive and that she had been drowned. However, forensic analyses of the Haraldskaer woman undertaken at the University of Århus carried out in 2000 revealed that the woman met her death by strangulation, and that the swelling of the knee-joint was caused naturally by the action of bog acids.¹¹ Radiocarbon dates indicate that this woman died in about 490 BC. Her interment raises a range of questions: why was she killed and interred in a bog? Why were there no grave-goods? What sort of person was she? She was not only well-fed and well-groomed but, for an Iron Age woman of about 45 years old, her body showed none of the usual wear and tear resulting from a life of hard manual work (many skeletons of this time bear signs of arthritis due to a lifetime tilling the fields and grinding corn). So in life, the Haraldskaer woman seems to have enjoyed relatively privileged status. But her death and non-normative interment (most people accorded formal burial during this period were cremated, others inhumed in dry tombs) suggests that she was purposely and probably ritually killed. The absence of accompanying personal objects is typical of Iron Age bog bodies and may have resulted from a desire to strip the corpse of identity. A lock of her shorn hair was found beside her.

Two further instances of Danish female bog-killings strengthen the notion that these were no ordinary deaths. Both were mature women. The cause of death suffered by a woman from Borremose (one of three bodies found here) is unknown but someone had done something dreadful to her face at or shortly after the time of death: her facial bones were deliberately crushed and partly removed. She died at the very beginning of the Iron Age, in about 700 BC.¹² The abuse of this woman's body is not atypical of bog people. A third Danish woman, buried in the Huldremose bog in about AD 100, had suffered repeated physical injuries prior to her death, the most severe being the amputation of her right arm which was found placed by her body. Her left arm was bound tightly to her torso by a leather thong and a long

skein of her hair had been wound around her neck. Like the other two Danish women, she was buried naked, but her clothes – two fur cloaks, a skirt and a scarf – were placed on top of her body.¹³

A fourth female bog victim, this time from the Drenthe boglands of the northern Netherlands, was little more than a child when she met her death, an adolescent about 14 to 16 years old, in the first century AD.¹⁴ Her body was found in 1897 by peat cutters near the village of Yde. Her long blonde hair had been torn out of half her scalp and lay beside her body, and she had been throttled with a cord, probably her own girdle. She had a short and hard life. Not only was she brutally killed but X-rays of her body revealed severe idiopathic scoliosis (curvature of the spine), a condition which stunted her growth, forced her to walk with a peculiar lurching gait and caused her constant pain.

These women all met untimely ends and had special burial places. Their deaths at the hands of others may have been the result of execution or murder. If they had suffered capital punishment for a misdemeanour, their deaths were still likely to have been ritualised, because of the need to neutralise the pollution with which they had infected their communities. However, I suspect that they were the victims of human sacrifice. But, if so, how were such people chosen and why? And what was the reason for putting them in marshy places? There is evidence that, in the Classical world, bogs were regarded as dangerous, toxic environments, their miasmatic vapours harbouring all manner of diseases.¹⁵ Marshes were liminal spaces, neither land nor water; they were capricious, seemingly innocuous but deadly to the unwary walker. Bogs were *terra inculta*, wild, chaotic uncultivable places, beyond the reach of human order. So the singling out of boggy ground for the deposition of corpses is likely to have also reflected some kind of marginality associated with the dead themselves. Tacitus comments that among the ancient Germans, immersion in swamps was the punishment meted out to cowards, shirkers and what he terms the ‘disreputable of body’ or the ‘unnaturally vicious’, who were drowned and covered by hurdles.¹⁶ This last is highly reminiscent of the manner in which certain bog bodies – including the lady from Haraldskaer (and the surrogate wooden body from Ballachulish, above) – were pegged down. Tacitus’s Germans inhabited what is now Germany, together with a large part of Denmark, precisely the region in which many Iron Age bog bodies have been discovered. Tacitus also observes that women accused of adultery had their hair shaved off by their husbands before they were stripped, flogged and ejected from their home and village.¹⁷ On the face of it, then, it is at least possible that the bog women

considered above were executed for some form of misconduct, the disgrace of their end augmented by their nakedness, shorn hair and lack of grave-goods.¹⁸ Given Tacitus's testimony, why should human sacrifice be argued as a reason for these women's bog-deaths? To answer this, it is necessary to put the killing and deposition of these four women into the wider context of north European bog body deaths. Several patterns of their peri-mortem treatment can be identified. One is the 'last meal' many had consumed just prior to death, and revealed by the contents of their gut, preserved by the bog. Another is the 'overkill' violence to which the victims had been subjected both before and after death. The Haraldskaer woman was throttled and then viciously pegged down with timbers rammed into her body; the lady from Huldremose had a broken leg, an amputated arm and the other immobilised so that she would have had no chance of saving herself when thrown into the mire. The Yde girl was not only strangled but stabbed in the neck as well. The facial disfigurement of the Borremose woman was also an excessively violent and savage act. Lastly, there remain the properties of the bogs themselves. It is *sphagnum* that is the active preservative ingredient in raised bogs, and the non-decay of organic material must have been well-known to Iron Age people. Indeed, they actually used bogs as ancient fridges to preserve foodstuffs such as butter.¹⁹ And human bodies were not the only 'offerings' made to the bog-spirits: countless weapons, ornaments and other precious objects were ritually deposited in marshes during the Bronze and Iron Ages.²⁰ certainly the deaths and interment of the bog people, including our four women, were steeped in ritual, and the likely purpose for such ceremonies was appeasement and propitiation of the spirits perceived to reside in the bogs.

A final observation concerns the treatment of the bog women's hair. A recurrent pattern of 'head-dressing' can be identified, involving the cropping or shaving of part of the head but retaining the shorn tresses either next to the body or wound round the neck. It may be somewhat fanciful to make the connection but I wonder whether something similar might be depicted on the Gundestrup Cauldron. This iconic (literally) object consists of a large gilded silver cult-vessel made in about 100 BC, which was discovered dismantled into its component plates and deposited in a peat-bog in Jutland. The vessel bears rich imagery in the form of mythical scenes and portraits (probably) of deities. One of the outer plates portrays a hair-dressing scene in which a large central female figure is having her long hair braided by a diminutive 'servant' (Figure 72.3). Many other images on the cauldron show women with similar hairstyles. Significantly, the crowns of the

women's heads are shaven.²¹ Given the context and location of the cauldron, it is tempting to relate such a 'hair-dressing' scene to the treatment some of the northern bog women underwent before their ritual deaths.



Figure 72.3 Gundestrup Cauldron.

Walking on the dark side

The final archaeological section of this chapter is concerned with women who may have occupied positions on the lower margins of society and who may have engaged in pseudo-religious practices, as sorceresses. There is a large body of evidence suggesting their presence in ancient Britain and Gaul. But there is space to look at just two examples. One is a burial, the other an inscription.

A British Iron Age witch?

In 1996, a rescue excavation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology at Great Houghton, Northampton, in advance of a proposed water pipeline. An Iron Age settlement was uncovered, together with a circular pit containing the inhumed skeleton of a mature woman, who died in about 400 BC. She was in poor health, with bad teeth and arthritic joints, but her burial indicates that she was someone out of the ordinary. Her tightly flexed body indicates that she went into the ground face down and bound hand and foot; most curious of all was the torque around her neck, for it was made of lead (rather than the more usual bronze, silver or gold) and it was worn back-to-front.²² Lead is a base metal and, in antiquity, it was often associated with 'bad' magic, cursing and sorcery. The choice of metal, the inversion of the torque, the binding and the body's prone position all suggest that this woman was special. She had a rare deformity in her wrist that may have lent credence to this view. The peculiar ritual associated with her interment might relate to her place in the community; perhaps she was a marginal being, someone skilled in the magical arts. She may have been regarded as sufficiently dangerous to require restraint and the neutralisation of her power even in death, so that her spirit would not walk and interfere with the living.

A Clamour of Cursing Women

In this, this enchantment of women,
upon their names, those hereunder,
the enchantment of the seeress, the seeress of this binding,
O Adsagsona, look twice upon Severa Tertionigna,
their diviner, their restrainer,
so that she shall commit it (the enchantment)
when they are bound by malediction!²³ *(From the Larzac curse)*

The burial of the Great Houghton 'witch' brings to mind a group of inscribed lead tablets called *defixiones* (or binding curses) from the very late Iron Age and Roman period found in Gaul and Britain. One is particularly striking for its female focus. It comes from Larzac in southern France and was written in the Gaulish language ([Figure](#)

72.4). The tablet was found broken in two on top of a cremation urn inscribed with the name of the dead person, a woman called ‘Gemma’.

The curse, identified in the inscription as a *ducelinata* (‘evil death song’) is directed against named pairs of women – mothers and daughters (or foster-daughters), the curser was the seeress, Severa Tertioncna, and the spirit invoked in the *defixio* was a chthonic goddess, Adsagsona. The written spell may have been laid upon Gemma’s remains in order to facilitate the descent of the message to the Underworld.²⁴ The Larzac curse serves as a reminder of the power wielded by the sub-stratum of religion, and the part played by women in such dark magic.

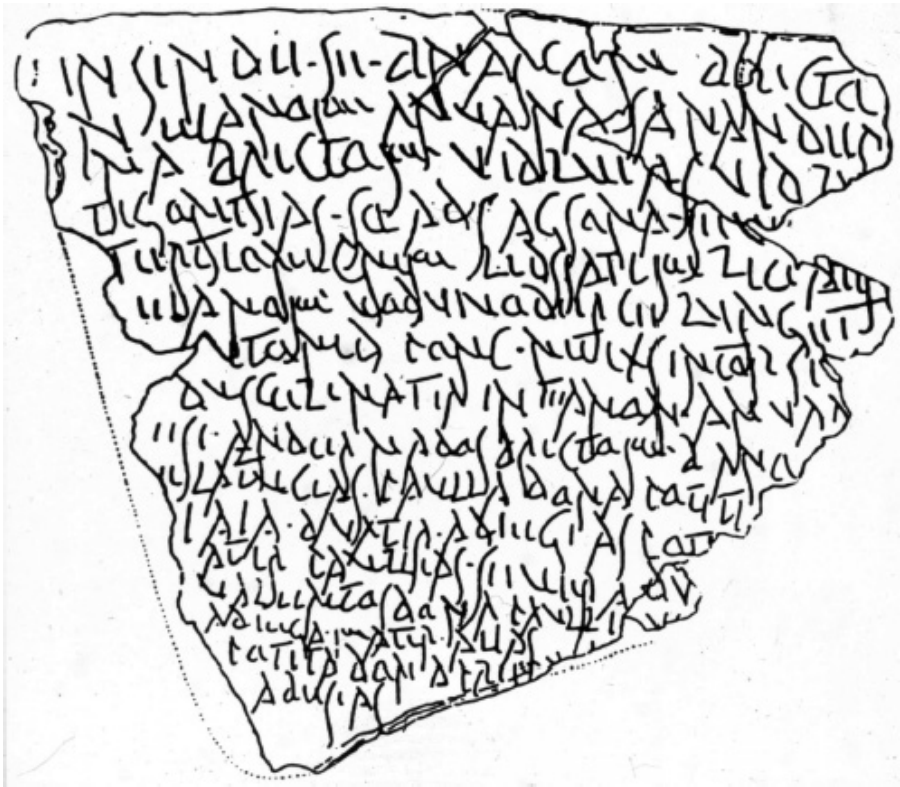


Figure 72.4 Tablet inscribed with name of dead person, ‘Gemma’. Larzac, France.

Women in Gallo-German society

When a man marries, he contributes from his own property an amount calculated to match whatever he has received from his wife as her dowry. A joint account is kept of all this property and the profits from it are set aside. Whichever of the two outlives the other gets both shares, together with the profits that have accumulated over the years. Husbands have power of life and death over their wives as well as over their children.²⁵

Caesar's observations seem to demonstrate a seeming ambiguity in the status of Gallic women in the mid-first century BC. According to his testimony, on the one hand, they were clearly able to own property and even to enter into business transactions yet, on the other, the ultimate authority lay with the male head of the household, similar to that wielded by the Roman *paterfamilias*. Caesar is unlikely to have invented all this: he was in Gaul for more than ten years and, what is more, he was accompanied by senior officers, like Quintus Cicero, who would have blown the gaff had Caesar's commentaries been too way off the mark.²⁶ Inscriptions from the Roman period attest to the opportunities afforded by Gallic women to pursue their own careers: the doctor from Metz has already been cited. André Pelletier²⁷ provides many other examples of female entrepreneurship: from owners of pharmacies to purveyors of wine. Inscribed curse-tablets from Roman Bath indicate that women as well as men could be heads of families, engage in business and own property.²⁸ It is interesting that in the medieval Laws of Hywel Dda, a millennium later than Caesar, women enjoyed similar levels of 'autonomy', particularly in terms of property ownership.²⁹

In commenting on German customs more than 100 years later, at the end of the first century AD, Tacitus emphasised the importance of chastity among the Teutonic peoples living east of the Rhine, for both men and women.³⁰ He also makes the interesting comment that 'a woman must not imagine herself free to neglect the manly virtues or immune from the hazards of war'. Like Ammianus on their Gallic sisters (opening quote), Tacitus speaks of the valour of German women, who took an active part in battle not, like Ammianus's Gallic women, participating in the actual fighting but in exhorting their menfolk to greater efforts when defeat seemed in sight.³¹ Tacitus paints a picture of austere, duty-ridden married life for German married women in which they not only shouldered the traditionally female responsibilities of raising the children but also worked in the fields, as well as contributing to warfare. When not involved in military campaigns, German men apparently did a little desultory hunting but otherwise lay about feasting and sleeping.³²

Holy women

They believe that there resides in women an element of holiness and prophecy, and so they do not scorn to ask their advice or lightly disregard their replies.³³

(Tacitus Germania)

Tacitus's remarks are seemingly at odds with Caesar's comment concerning German wives' subservience to their husbands. But, as in many ancient societies, including Greece and Rome, it seems to have been the sphere of religion in which women came into their own. Strabo tells of holy women among the Cimbri, a people whose territory lay in what is today southern Denmark and North Germany. They were renowned for their warlike nature and made periodic raids into Gaul for plunder in the second century BC.³⁴ The Greek geographer gives an account of the sacrifice of prisoners-of-war by elderly Cimbrian priestesses, dressed in white robes. Each hapless captive was led to a huge bronze cauldron and a priestess would lean over from a raised platform, cut his throat with a sword and let the blood gush into the vessel. Some of the holy women would tell the future from examining the blood while others disembowelled the corpses and prophesy victory for their army by study of the entrails.³⁵ Was Strabo, or his earlier source Posidonius, simply inventing all this? I suspect there is a germ of reality in his narrative, albeit probably liberally seasoned with hyperbole and imagination.

The Cimbrian priestesses were set apart from other women. They were elders, both in age and in status. Strabo gives them the wisdom that comes with age. Perhaps, too, their post-menopausal state, beyond their reproductive capacity, caused them to be perceived as other than female, maybe even as belonging to a third gender or even sexless.³⁶ Their choice of swords as killing-tools is interesting, in the context of their gender and their acts of human sacrifice during battle, for sword-wielding was a male preserve. Strabo's Cimbrian priestesses thus present a layered complexity in which their function as religious officials allowed them to bend traditional gender-rules.

One holy woman described by Tacitus was a prophetess called Veleda. According to his *Histories*,³⁷ Veleda belonged to the Germanic tribe of the Batavii, whose lands were around the Rhine delta. She came to Roman attention during the infamous Year of the Four Emperors', AD 68/9, after Nero died, leaving a dangerous dynastic void. Four military commanders, each with their supporting armies – Otho, Vitellius, Galba and Vespasian – all vied for the imperial purple. It was during this power-struggle, when Rome was deemed to be at

her weakest, that rebellion broke out among the Rhenish tribes, led by Julius Civilis, who was of German royal descent. Veleda was held in particularly high esteem owing to her correct prophecy that the rebels would rout the Roman army in battle. Civilis was so impressed that he sent the defeated Roman general, Munius Lupercus, to the prophetess as a gift. Later on in Civilis's anti-Roman campaign, just before his ultimate defeat by the Roman army, Veleda was presented with an even more valuable present: a captured Roman flagship. Tacitus provides substantial information about Veleda. She was an unmarried woman, although whether or not she was a virgin is not specified in his account. She was particularly skilled in prophecy, but she was also a brilliant negotiator. When the citizens of Cologne, a Roman foundation, were wavering in their support for Civilis, because of their allegiance to Rome, Veleda was instrumental in arbitrating between the people of the city and the rebel leaders. But Tacitus presents Veleda's authority in an ambiguous light. On the one hand, she was highly respected, even venerated by her people. But the quotation that follows shows a different aspect to her status:

But any personal approach to Veleda or speech with her was forbidden. This refusal to permit the envoys [from Cologne] to see her was intended to enhance the aura of veneration that surrounded the prophetess. She remained immured in a high tower, one of her relatives being deputed to transmit questions and answers as if he were mediating between a god and his worshippers.³⁸

There is a great deal in this short passage. The first thing to notice is that others (men) were in control of the prophetess. She was guarded, sequestered from the outside world and physically incarcerated (whether by consent or against her will). So she presents a paradox of authority and powerlessness. Tacitus's description is in fact highly reminiscent of Virgil's account of the Cumaean Sibyl whom Aeneas consulted before his descent into Hades to look for his dead father Anchises.³⁹ The Sibyl was a highly venerated prophetess, but she too was sequestered, deep in a cave. But Veleda's tower and the Sibyl's cavern have meanings additional to those of separation from the human world. Both were marginal spaces that could be perceived as being on the boundary between the realms of people and the gods. Caves deep underground and towers soaring into the air are liminal images indicative of penetration into spirit worlds. To what extent Tacitus was influenced by Virgil's text cannot be judged. But what he presents in his description of the Batavian seeress may, at the least, demonstrate the ambivalence with which empowered women might be regarded by Roman chroniclers. Like Strabo's Cimbrian sacrificers, the virgin Veleda was outside normal sexual parameters. She was adult, but sexually inactive and childless. Veleda's purity –

particularly if virgin – perhaps endowed her with an undissipated and thus particularly potent sexual charge that gave her the power to communicate with the gods. If so, the irony is that she was prevented from speaking directly to her people.

Ruling Britannia: Boudica and Cartimandua

Although descriptions of celtic and Germanic women in Classical literature seem to suggest that they enjoyed greater freedom and empowerment than their Greek and Roman sisters, it was Britain that appears – from the texts – to have provided women with the greatest opportunities for independent advancement. Britain was on the very western edge of the known world, and it is perfectly possible that Classical writers invented, or at least embellished, some their chronicles of this weird and outlandish region, including their narratives of significant women. Tacitus and his later counterpart, Dio Cassius, make detailed reference to two outstanding British women – Cartimandua and Boudica – each of whom is presented not only as having autonomy outside male patronage but as possessing very real power. The very recording of their names is extraordinary: this privilege was accorded to only a very few celtic women in Classical literature. Both women were prominent in shaping the fledgling Roman province of Britannia in the mid-first century AD.

It was a great victory. Caratacus' wife and daughter were captured: his brother surrendered. He himself sought sanctuary with Cartimandua, queen of the Brigantes. But the defeated have no refuge. He was arrested, and handed over to the conquerors.⁴⁰

(Tacitus)

Cartimandua (the name means 'shining pony') ruled the great northern British tribal hegemony of the Brigantes in the AD 50s, at the time when the British freedom-fighter, Caratacus, was whipping up anti-Roman sedition, first in his home region of the Catuvellauni in south-east England and then among the belligerent Silures of south Wales. She was also a quisling, a pro-Roman collaborator. She was a 'client-ruler', one of many dotted about the fringes of the Roman Empire, who entered into treaties with Rome in order to maintain 'independent' control over their territories in exchange for acting as buffers between Roman provinces and unconquered territory, agreeing to keep the *pax romana* in their own lands and to support Roman interests. Such alliances were highly advantageous to Rome since it reduced the number of troops required to police and control frontier regions. Brigantia was huge, powerful and – according to some

Classical writers – wild. In his peculiar satire on the emperor Claudius,⁴¹ the Roman writer and philosopher Seneca alludes to ‘blue Brigantes’, presumably a reference to their woad-painted bodies, a popular image of barbarism used in Roman literature.⁴²

Tacitus identifies Cartimandua as the ‘tribal queen’, a reigning monarch, not a king’s consort, describing her thus: ‘She had been for some time ruler of the Brigantes, and was a princess of high birth and hence influence’.⁴³ He goes on to explain⁴⁴ that she was married to a fervently anti-Roman warrior named Venutius. The inevitable tension of a factional split between the couple was exacerbated by Cartimandua’s tactless infidelity with her husband’s armour-bearer, Velllocatus, conduct that added humiliation to her husband’s cuckoldry. Venutius initiated hostilities first against his wife and her pro-Roman kin and friends, then against the Romans themselves. Cartimandua demanded help from her powerful ally and Venutius was defeated. Cartimandua now passes out of history, having not escaped opprobrium for her treachery and lack of patriotism. She did not take the battlefield herself but sheltered behind her Roman allies. Tacitus paints a picture of a complacent, amoral woman whose warfare was conducted in the bedroom. Yet she wielded immense influence inasmuch as her behaviour was the catalyst that triggered the final showdown between the Roman army and the Brigantian freedom fighters under Venutius. Is this an accurate picture of Cartimandua? Was Tacitus guilty of Roman gender-bias in emphasising her lack of chastity and moral fibre together with her timidity when faced with a realm riven with opposing factions? Tacitus secretly condemned the moral corruption of the imperial court in which he lived. There is even a possibility that his presentation of Cartimandua was coloured by the character of Messalina, who had been the young, promiscuous and vicious wife of the emperor Claudius in the final years of his reign.⁴⁵

Boudica, queen of the Iceni in East Anglia, is painted in very different colours from Cartimandua by her chronicler Tacitus and the later writer, Dio Cassius. Hers was a British name that meant ‘victorious one’. Despite her ‘proxy’ royal status as widow of the client-king Prasutagus, her behaviour is projected by her foreign narrators with the respect due to a powerful and almost invincible war-leader. Indeed Tacitus emphasises her own royal descent, commenting that ‘Britons make no distinction of sex in their leaders’.⁴⁶ She appears in the historical accounts of both Tacitus and Dio as the British rebel leader who almost wrested the province of Britannia from the emperor Nero. Dio provides a wonderful image of her physical appearance:

In stature she was very tall and grim in appearance, with a piercing gaze and a harsh voice. She had a mass of very fair hair which she grew down to her hips, and wore a great gold torque and a multi-coloured tunic folded around her, over which was a thick cloak fastened with a brooch. This is how she always looked.⁴⁷

(Dio Cassius)

No images of Boudica – either coin-portraits or sculptures – exist to support or refute Dio's description of this British woman. Whether by accident or design, Dio presents her as the very antithesis of Italianate Roman women. Indeed, her size and loud voice endow her with masculine rather than feminine properties. In the same passage, Dio tells of the spear she grasped in order to give her *gravitas* when about to harangue her people (and the Romans). So what did Dio actually know of Boudica's appearance? After all, his *Roman History* was written in the third century AD, 200 years after the Boudican Rebellion. Was he relying on earlier texts that have since been lost or was he projecting a deliberate image of outlandish barbarism?

The story of Boudica began with a series of appalling Roman political and military blunders, triggered by the death of Prasutagus, Rome's loyal client-ruler who had kept his Icenian lands under control. The legal position was that the relationship between Rome and her client-monarchs involved a personal alliance between the emperor and a provincial individual. This meant that when a client-ruler died, the alliance was void until and unless Rome entered into similar negotiations with a successor. This was important for the Iceni, for they were a rich tribe, their wealth probably derived mainly from the salt-trade. (Archaeological testament to Icenian prosperity is particularly vocal in the Snettisham Treasure, the great hoard of gold and silver jewellery (mainly torcs/neckrings) found in the 1950s and 1990s.⁴⁸) This meant that the Romans perhaps had a vested interest in nullifying the treaty when the current ruler died. Prasutagus had left a will that divided his legacy between the emperor and his two daughters. This was a shrewd move in that by making a will in Nero's favour, he hoped that the rest of Icenian assets might be left with the tribe. It is interesting that Boudica was not mentioned in this will, and this seeming oddity might actually provide a clue to subsequent events. If, unlike her husband, Boudica entertained anti-Roman sympathies, that helps explain her savage treatment at Roman hands. For when the Roman governor, Suetonius Paulinus was away in the north-west, intent on smashing the Druidic stronghold on Anglesey, the Finance Minister, Decianus Catus, summarily seized Icenian assets. When Boudica opposed him, he retaliated by allowing his soldiers to rape her adolescent daughters and to flog the queen herself.

Boudica led the Iceni into violent rebellion. The tribe was not alone in its grievances against Rome. The neighbouring Trinovantes had suffered much from the Roman occupation. Their lands had been confiscated to make room for the military town (*colonia*) of Colchester, built on the site of their old tribal capital, Camulodunum. Not only that but taxation was crippling, and the Trinovantes were also expected to pay for the construction and upkeep of a hated emblem of *romanitas*, the great temple of Claudius at Colchester.⁴⁹ So the aggrieved Trinovantes readily joined in Boudica's revolt. In the absence of nearly all Britain's garrison, the avenging queen began to devastate the fledgling province. She virtually annihilated a Roman legion (Legion IX) that had marched south from the Midlands to fight her, and she laid waste large parts of three major Roman towns in the south-east: Colchester (including its hated temple), London and Verulamium. On hearing of the disaster, Paulinus left Anglesey and turned his troops in a forced march to the south. Boudica was defeated in a pitched battle, its precise location unknown, but probably somewhere in the south Midlands. Catus, the procurator, was disgraced and Paulinus recalled to Rome, but not before he had wreaked terrible vengeance on the Britons. Severely shaken by the near loss of his newest province, Nero hastily appointed a new procurator, a Gaul from Trier named Classicianus, who reported Paulinus's excesses to Nero, resulting in his sacking and replacement by a new governor, Publius Petronius Turpilianus, a peace-maker whose job was to take the heat out of the situation, effect reconciliation and facilitate the recovery of the province.

Despite all the rhetoric, the story of the Boudican Rebellion tells us something about the unique nature of Britain, the land on the western edge of the known world. It was possible for women to wield both political and military power independent of men. In one piece of reported speech, Boudica is alleged to have proclaimed 'we British are used to women commanders in war'.⁵⁰ Her iron determination brought Britannia to its knees and forced a complete reversal of Roman imperial policy. Boudica is still today an iconic hero, the epitome of British indomitability. Public images of the red-haired warrior-queen can be found all over the country: from the great bronze statue of the fierce chariot-driver with her scythed wheels on the Thames Embankment in London to the young spear-bearing freedom-fighter depicted on a stained-glass 'Queens' Window' in the town hall at Colchester (Figure 72.5) and the marble sculpture of a more peaceful, mature maternal protectress with her two teenage daughters in the Cardiff City Hall.⁵¹

Conclusion

Having made her speech, Boudica then engaged in a type of divination by releasing a hare from the fold of her tunic, and since it ran on what was for them the lucky side, the whole mass of people shouted for joy and Boudica raised her hand to heaven and said 'I thank you, Andraste [goddess of Victory], and I call upon you woman to woman'.⁵²

(Dio Cassius)

Study of 'celtic' women in Iron Age Britain and Europe reveals some telling contrasts between their life-experiences and those of their sisters in the Mediterranean world. Not least, the testimony of Classical chroniclers, endorsed by that of archaeology, indicates that women perhaps enjoyed some degree of freedom from male domination (although I would not want to take this too far). But it also seems that women had the capacity for independent acquisition of political and even military powers: this is particularly evident in the Britain of the first century AD. Like their counterparts in the Greek and Roman world, celtic and Germanic women appear to have been accorded especial respect when it came to religious matters, particularly divination. It is fitting to give the Larzac curse the last word, for it provides a fascinating insight into a complex subtext of women in which goddesses, prophetesses, the victims of spells and even the innocent dead, like Gemma, could be involved in a network of dark magic that was steeped in femininity.



Figure 72.5 Boudica depicted in ‘Queens’ Window’ in the town hall at Colchester.

Just as she is holding their mouths tied
so, too, are their mouths not
bearing judgement on anyone
when they are bound by the enchantment of the infernal one.⁵³

Notes

- 1 Ammianus Marcellinus *Histories* XV, 12, after Caldecott 1988: 4.
- 2 For instance Collis 2003; James 1999.
- 3 Green 1995: 23; Pelletier 1984: 59–63.
- 4 Mees 2009; Allason-Jones 1989: 21.
- 5 Mees 2009: 78–82.
- 6 Coles 1990: 320, 1998: 165; Aldhouse-Green 2004: 90–91. Note that in her earlier publication, Coles states that the figure was made of oak, but re-identified it as alder in her 1998 publication.
- 7 Bonenfant and Guillaumet 1998: 59–64, figs. 32–36; Aldhouse-Green 2004: 71–72, 129, figs. 3.9, 5.7.
- 8 Pelletier 1984: 13; Green 1995: 146–147; Rolley 2003; Aldhouse-Green 2010: 147.
- 9 Hill 2001: 2–3; Fulford and Creighton 1998. The notion of a connection between mirrors and ‘second sight’ is by no means certain. There are plenty of other examples of Iron Age female mirror-burials, and their presence might simply reflect a favoured personal possession.
- 10 From a poem called ‘Queen Gunhild’ by Steen Steensen Blicher written in 1841 and published in the Danish journal *Brage og Idun*, after Sanders 2009: 94.
- 11 Hvass 1998; Aldhouse-Green 2001: 201.
- 12 Asingh 2007a: 299; Glob 1969: plate 32.
- 13 Asingh 2007a: 296; Aldhouse-Green 2001: 159, colour plate 2.
- 14 Beuker 2002: 107.
- 15 Borca 2000: 74–75.
- 16 Tacitus *Germania* 12.
- 17 Tacitus *Germania* 19.
- 18 Aldhouse-Green 2015: *passim*.
- 19 Asingh 2007b: 280.
- 20 Asingh 2007b: 275.
- 21 Kaul 1991: 32, pl. 26. I should add that some of the men depicted on the vessel also have shaven crowns, although this is not seen on male bog bodies.
- 22 Chapman 2001: 9–11.
- 23 Mees 2009: 55.
- 24 Mees 2009: 50–69.
- 25 Julius Caesar *De Bello Gallico* 6, 19, trans. Wiseman and Wiseman 1980: 124.
- 26 Louis Rawlings pers. comm.
- 27 Pelletier 1984: 59–63.
- 28 Allason-Jones 1989: 21.
- 29 Green and Howell 2000: 115. Medieval Irish Brehon Law similarly protected women’s property rights: ‘Husband and wife retain individual rights to all lands, flocks and household goods each brings to the marriage’. www.irishcentral.com/roots/-irelands-brehon-laws-were-before-their-time-100680164-237762681.html.
- 30 Tacitus *Germania* 18, trans. Mattingly 1948: 116.
- 31 Tacitus *Germania* 8.
- 32 Tacitus *Germania* 15.

- 33 Tacitus *Germania* 8, trans. Mattingly 1948: 107.
- 34 James 1993: 74; Brunaux 1988: 103; Rankin 1987: 19; Livy *Periochae* Book 67.
- 35 Strabo *Geography* 7, 2.3.
- 36 For a discussion of alternative genders in European antiquity see Green 1997.
- 37 Tacitus *The Histories* 4.13.
- 38 Tacitus *Histories* 4.65; trans. Wellesley 1964: 250.
- 39 Virgil *Aeneid* 6.
- 40 Tacitus *Annals* 12.36, trans. Grant 1956: 258.
- 41 *Apocolocyntosis* (or the 'Pumpkinification' of Claudius) 12. 13–18.
- 42 See, for example, Caesar *De Bello Gallico* 5.14; Herodian *History* 3. 14, 67. But there may be a grain of truth in such tales: the bog body from Lindow Moss in Cheshire, known as Lindow III, was found to have traces of blue-green body-paint on his skin: Pyatt *et al.* 1995.
- 43 Tacitus *Histories* 3.45.
- 44 Tacitus *Annals* 12.39.
- 45 Aldhouse-Green 2006: 128.
- 46 *Agricola* 16; trans. Mattingly 1948: 66.
- 47 Dio Cassius *Roman History* 62.2; trans. Ireland 1996: 63–70.
- 48 Stead 1991.
- 49 Tacitus *Annals* 14.30–14.33.
- 50 Tacitus *Annals* 14.35.
- 51 Aldhouse-Green 2006, colour plates 24, 25 and 9, respectively. All three were created in the early twentieth century.
- 52 Dio Cassius *Roman History* 62.6, trans. Ireland 1996: 66.
- 53 Mees 2009: 64.

References

- Aldhouse-Green, M. J. (2001) *Dying for the Gods*. Stroud, UK: Tempus.
- Aldhouse-Green, M. J. (2004) *An Archaeology of Images*. London: Routledge.
- Aldhouse-Green, M. J. (2006) *Boudica Britannia*. London: Pearson Longman.
- Aldhouse-Green, M. J. (2010) *Caesar's Druids*. New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press.
- Aldhouse-Green, M. J. (2015) *The Bog Bodies Uncovered: Solving an Ancient Mystery*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Aldhouse-Green, M. J. and Howell, R. (2000) *celtic Wales*. Cardiff, UK: University of Wales Press.
- Allason-Jones, L. (1989) *Women in Roman Britain*. London: British Museum Press.
- Asingh, P. (2007a) The bog people. In P. Asingh and N. Lynnerup

- (eds) *Grauballe Man. An Iron Age Bog Body Revisited*. Århus, Denmark: Moesgaard Museum/Jutland Archaeological Society, pp. 291–323.
- Asingh, P. (2007b). The magical bog. In P. Asingh and N. Lynnerup (eds) *Grauballe Man. An Iron Age Bog Body Revisited*. Århus, Denmark: Moesgaard Museum/Jutland Archaeological Society, pp. 275–289.
- Beuker, J. R. (2002) The girl and the devil. In C. Bergen, M. J. L. T. Niekus and V. T. Van Vilsteren (eds) *The Mysterious Bog People*. Zwolle, The Netherlands: Waanders, p. 107.
- Bonenfant, P.-B. and Guillaumet, J.-P. (1998) *La Statuaire Anthropomorphe du Premier Âge du Fer*. Besançon, France: Annales Littéraires de l'Université de Franche-Comte, no. 667.
- Borca, F. (2000) Towns and marshes in the ancient world. In V. M. Hope and E. Marshall (eds) *Death and Disease in the Ancient City*. London: Routledge, pp. 74–84.
- Brunaux, J.-L. (1988) *The celtic Gauls: Gods, Rites and Sanctuaries*, trans. D. Nash. London: Seaby.
- Caldecott, M. (1988) *Women in celtic Myth*. London: Hutchinson/Arrow.
- Chapman, A. (2001) Excavation of an Iron Age settlement and a Middle Saxon cemetery at Great Houghton, Northampton, 1996. *Northamptonshire Archaeology* 20: 1–42.
- Coles, B. (1990) Anthropomorphic wooden figures from Britain and Ireland. *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 56: 315–333.
- Coles, B. (1998) Wood species for wooden figures: A glimpse of a pattern. In A. Gibson and D. Simpson (eds) *Prehistoric Ritual and Religion*. Stroud, UK: Sutton, pp. 163–173.
- Collis, J. (2003) *The celts: Origins, Myths, Inventions*. Stroud, UK: Tempus.
- Fulford, M. G. and Creighton, J. (1998) A Late Iron Age mirror burial from Latchmere Green, near Silchester, Hampshire. *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 64: 331–342.
- Glob, P. V. (1969) *The Bog People: Iron-Age Man Preserved*. Translated from the Danish by R. Bruce-Mitford. London: Faber and Faber.
- Grant, M. (1956) *Tacitus: The Annals of Imperial Rome*. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin.
- Green, M. J. (1995) *celtic Goddesses*. London: British Museum Press.
- Green, M. J. (1997) Images in opposition: Polarity, ambivalence and liminality in cult representation. *Antiquity* 71(274): 898–911.
- Hill, J. D. (2001) A new cart/chariot burial from Wetwang, East Yorkshire. *PAST* 38.

- Hvass, L. (1998) *Dronning Gunhild – et moselig fra jernalderen*. Vejle, Denmark: Sesam.
- Ireland, S. (1996) *Roman Britain: A Sourcebook*. London: Routledge.
- James, S. (1993) *Exploring the World of the Celts*. London: Thames & Hudson.
- James, S. (1999) *The Atlantic Celts. Ancient People or Modern Invention?* London: British Museum Press.
- Kaul, F. (1991) *Gundestrupkedlen*. Copenhagen: Nationalmuseet/Nyd Forlag Arnold Busck.
- Mattingly, H. (1948) *Tacitus on Britain and Germany*. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin.
- Mees, B. (2009) *Celtic Curses*. Cambridge, UK: Boydell Press.
- Pelletier, A. (1984) *La femme dans la Société Gallo-Romaine*. Paris: Picard.
- Pyatt, F. B., Beaumont, E. H., Buckland, P. C., Lacy, D., Magilton, J. R. and Storey, D. M. (1995) Mobilisation of elements from the bog bodies Lindow II and III, and some observations on body painting. In R. C. Turner and R. G. Scaife (eds) *Bog Bodies. New Discoveries and New Perspectives*. London: British Museum Press, pp. 62–73.
- Rankin, D. (1987) *Celts and the Classical World*. London: Routledge.
- Rolley, C. (2003) *La Tombe Princière de Vix*. Paris: Picard.
- Sanders, K. (2009) *Bodies in the Bog and the Archaeological Imagination*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago.
- Stead, I. M. (1991) The Snettisham treasure: Excavations in 1990. *Antiquity* 65(248): 447–465.
- Wellesley, K. (1964) *Tacitus. The Histories*. Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin.
- Wiseman, A. and Wiseman, P. (1980) *Julius Caesar. The Battle for Gaul*. London: Chatto and Windus.

WOMEN IN THE ROMAN IRON AGE (AD 0–400) IN SCANDINAVIA

Nancy L. Wicker

Although the Romans never made it to Scandinavia, the region was not untouched by the Roman Empire. In fact, within Scandinavian archaeology, the period from the birth of Christ until around AD 400 is called the Roman Iron Age due to the presence of elite Roman goods, including weapons and military equipment as well as bronze and glass vessels. These goods reflect networks of contacts with Rome by way of trade, gifts, and the return of soldiers who had served the Empire. Studies of the Scandinavian Roman Iron Age have focused on weapons found in graves and war booty in bogs (see Jørgensen *et al.* 2003) to such a great extent that Bjørn Myhre (2003: 74) states that this “society was dominated by a martial ideology” (my trans.). Yet the impact of Rome was felt not only in Danish votive military offerings but also in the rich graves of elite women throughout the North.

Beginning with a short article by Jenny-Rita Næss (1974) on women of the Viking Age (c. AD 800–1050, which is part of the Iron Age in Scandinavia), Norwegian archaeologists began to inquire about the roles of women in prehistory. In 1979 the conference “Were they all men?” was held in Norway, although the proceedings were published several years later (Bertelsen *et al.* 1987), thus appearing after Margaret Conkey and Janet Spector’s 1984 breakthrough article “Archaeology and the study of gender.” While Viking-Age women have received a great deal of attention in English-language publications (e.g., Jesch 1991; Jochens 1995, 1996), investigations of women of the earlier part of the Iron Age have not been widely disseminated. Thus, I focus here on the Scandinavian Roman Iron Age (divided into Early and Later phases, c. AD 0–200 and c. AD 200–400, respectively) to shed light on what is known about women of northern Europe during the Late Antique Period.

Elite burials with Roman goods

Burial practices are key to the study of this time period, particularly because there have been relatively few settlement excavations. As Tove Hjørungdal (1992: 63) notes, archaeologists measure status in the Early Iron Age in Scandinavia on the basis of the nature and number of grave goods as well as the size of grave mounds. Although both cremation and inhumation with mortuary objects were practiced during the Early Roman Iron Age, inhumation gradually becomes more common. Burial with clothing, jewelry, tools, and household or military equipment becomes the norm for elite members of society in Scandinavia, and Roman luxury items were often interred in high-status graves of both males and females (Figure 73.1). These foreign goods include bronze cauldrons, bronze and silver wine-serving sets (consisting of pitcher, ladle, strainer, and cups), silver spoons, glass beakers, jewelry, clothing fasteners, and weapons (e.g., Lund Hansen 1987; Näsman 1984).

Although cremation fires destroyed many personal objects, fragments of some remain; in addition, items were often added after incineration. Inhumed bodies were laid in the grave fully clothed with fastenings and also with grave gifts. The inclusion of Roman or provincial Roman items apparently lent prestige to the grave ritual, showing connections to the Empire and, often, knowledge of the attributes of Roman hospitality. Some of the foreign objects discovered in Scandinavia may originally have been gifts given to northern soldiers for their service in the Roman army. Gad Rausing (1987) describes how these men brought not only goods but also foreign customs with them when they returned home. In addition, some exotic but relatively common items—in particular, glass beads—may have reached the North through trade, but Ingegerd Holand (2001: 83) proposes that exceptional vessels may be interpreted as “the result of unique events, such as gift-exchange or marriage.” Such a special item may be the remarkable glass beaker from a Norwegian grave mound at Tu in Klepp parish south of Stavanger, which is inscribed “Drink and live well” in Greek letters (Magnus and Myhre 1992: 335). To convey a sense of the wealth of the Roman and provincial Roman items that reached Scandinavian graves, I will summarize the contents of a few elite women’s graves in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden.



Figure 73.1 Roman wine service from burial at Öremölla, Skivarp parish, Scania, Sweden. Roman Iron Age. Stockholm, Statens Historiska Museum, inv. no. 4792. (Photo: Sören Hallgren.)

Denmark

Ulla Lund Hansen (1987: 257) reports that in the third and fourth centuries, 63 percent of Roman and Roman provincial goods discovered in Scandinavia were found in Denmark, 21 percent in Norway, and 16 percent in Sweden. Among the Danish finds are objects from a woman's grave (gr. no. 1949, 2) dating to c. AD 200 at Himlingøje in eastern Zealand. The impressive grave inventory includes gold arm and finger rings, a silver rosette fibula, a very long string of glass and amber beads that reaches to the knees, a silver and gold hairpin, a silver amulet box, glass beakers, a bronze drinking service, a denarius of Titus (AD 79–81), and a small piece of gold in the mouth, which may have served as a Charon's coin (Lund Hansen

1995: 152–158). At Blidegn in Brænde Lydinge parish on the island of Funen, a female grave contained glass beads, a Roman drinking service, and two bronze saucepans with the stamp “LANSIEPAPHROD” [L(usius) Ansi(us) Epaphrod(itus)]. Jørgen Jensen (2003: 305) explains that this was a well-known maker’s mark found at Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Norway

Roman objects abound in wealthy burials in eastern and western Norway. At Store-Dal in Østfold, a female grave of the Early Roman Iron Age yielded a bronze Roman wine service with turquoise blue glass drinking bowls, silver brooches, a gold pendant, and gold finger rings (Magnus and Myhre 1992: 327). The widespread Roman blue glass type is found from India to the British Isles, as well as in Norway and Sweden (Burenhult 1999: 276). The pendant style with granulation influenced by Roman techniques is well known throughout Scandinavia, numbering at least 127 specimens (Andersson 1995: 121). At Geite near Levanger, north of Trondheim, a woman dressed in a colorful garment was interred around AD 300 in a grave with Roman bronze vessels, a bronze wine sieve, and gold finger rings (Solberg 2006: 111). Lise Bender Jørgensen (1986: 140, 246) suggests that the “Virring-type” cloth worn by the Geite woman may have been made in the Gallo-Roman provinces. High status of the wearer might be conveyed both because the cloth was imported and by the distinctive colors, which Bergljot Solberg (2006: 170) notes may reflect social position.

Sweden

An impressive 45 cm high Roman bronze vessel with silver inlay and an inscription to Apollo Grannus served as a burial urn at Fycklinge in the province of Västmanland, Sweden. The c. AD 100 cremation was marked by an external arrangement of stones, and the vase contained burnt bone fragments and melted glass pieces, which perhaps are the remains of a woman’s string of beads (Fernstål 2003). Later finds in the same province include female chamber graves and boat graves at Tuna in Badelunda parish, ranging from the Later Roman Iron Age to the beginning of the Viking Age, c. AD 800. At Tuna, the most impressive burial, chamber grave “X,” dating to c. AD 300, contained Roman goods—two silver spoons, three bronze vessels, and a glass beaker—as well as an abundance of Nordic gold jewelry (Nylén and Schönback 1994a: 18–35, 1994b: 157–167). In later periods, women

at Tuna were buried in boats—in contrast to customs in the nearby province of Uppland where only men were interred in boat graves—thus confirming women’s important long-term role in the local power structure.

Sex/gender determination

I have highlighted a few burials with Roman or provincial Roman goods that have been identified as female, but how do we know they are women’s graves? The most common methods that form the basis for gender identification in Scandinavia include the archaeological study of grave goods, morphological analysis of the shape of graves, and osteological examination of skeletal material.

Liv Helga Dommasnes (2006: 82) emphasizes that the objects people use provide the basis for our experience of sex/gender, which we trace archaeologically by the contexts in which these goods are found. Tove Hjørungdal (1996: 150) points out that an interest in identifying specific items for assigning the sex of individuals in northern European graves first appears in the 1837 *Mecklenburgisches Jahrbuch*. In that study, weapons were assumed to designate males and sewing needles to indicate females; since then scholars have refined the categories of objects by which to distinguish sex/gender. Weapons continue to be recognized as diagnostic for men, but spindle whorls and certain types of jewelry used to fasten clothing more reliably indicate females than the sewing needles that were considered indicative in 1837. However, which items are reliable for gender designation vary regionally and chronologically (Hjørungdal 1991: 72).

Some graves entirely lack items that are diagnostic for sex assignment yet have been assumed to be male due to the high status of the contents. Dommasnes (2006: 111–112) critiques such an assumption for a fourth-century “chieftain’s” cremation at Haram in Sunnmøre, Norway, in which the burnt bones were wrapped in a bearskin and the bundle was placed into a bronze vessel. The grave also contained playing pieces, glass, and over a half kilogram of gold, including a Roman medallion, an arm ring, and three finger rings—jewelry that is not gender-specific. In this case and others, marking status may have taken precedence over signifying sex/gender, and we should not assume that an elite grave is a male grave.

Task differentiation and use of space

Some tools and equipment associated with the sex/gender of individuals in burials reflect task differentiation or a division of labor that can be traced in settlement data. Smithing and carpentry tools are occasionally found in male graves (Henning 1991), so men are often assumed to have been smiths and builders. Spindle whorls for spinning yarn are considered diagnostic for women in burials, and these objects are foremost among examples of textile equipment found on habitation floors. Textile implements found in sunken pit houses may reveal the locations of weaving rooms that resemble descriptions of workshops used by women in medieval Icelandic sagas (Burenhult 1999: 203). Another tool found in Early Roman Iron Age female burials is the half-moon-shaped knife (Swedish, *krumkniv*) (Figure 73.2).

Ulf Erik Hagberg (1967: 115) proposes that such iron knives found in graves on the Baltic island of Öland identify women who worked hides, producing leather that was supplied to the Roman Empire for protective clothing, saddles, and tents. Similarly, so-called “meat knives” of bone found in wealthy female interments at Store-Dal in Norway may also have been used in the preparation of furs and leather that were important as trade goods (Solberg 2006: 99). Gendered task differentiation of some home-crafts can be traced in settlement context, but the goods cannot be used to sex graves. For instance, Solberg (2006: 97) reports that fingernail impressions in the walls of ceramic vessels show that women formed pottery, yet not surprisingly such containers are found in both male and female graves.

Lil Gustafson (1981) underscores the important role that women played in the economy by producing such goods, and she also cautions us that our contemporary gender roles shape how we see the past. Bente Magnus and Bjørn Myhre (1992: 269–270) propose that women ground grain with a rotary quern found in situ on a floor at Ullandhaug near Stavanger, although they do not explain why they categorize this activity as “women’s work.” Solberg (2006: 155) identifies the threshold of the dwelling house as the symbolic border for the sphere of women who worked inside grinding grain, preparing food, spinning, weaving, and working hides. Ellen Høigaard Hofseth (1985) refers to the dichotomy of “sword and distaff” (Norwegian, *sverd og spinnehjul*, “sword and spinning wheel”) to refer to the domains of men and women. Following earlier research on leather-working by Hagberg (1967) and others, Erika Räf (2006) re-examines the process and organization of this craft from a gendered perspective. She proposes that leather-working knives had symbolic significance and that both men and women were involved in various phases of the

craft of preparing leather. Louise Ströbeck (1999) emphasizes that we are constrained by our biases and often limited to stereotypical analogies from our recent past in identifying task differentiation in the distant past. Identification of sex/gender from grave goods presupposes our emphasis on elite burials that contain numerous personal items as well as tools and equipment. Yet another way to display the high status of the deceased (and of the survivors) was to build visible grave monuments.



Figure 73.2 Iron knife for leather-working, from Skogsby, Torslunda parish, Öland, Sweden. Roman Iron Age. Stockholm, Statens Historiska Museum, inv. no. 13192. (Photo: Karin Olsson.)

Grave construction

In some cases, analyses of sex/gender based on grave goods has allowed us to identify external and internal forms of graves that are gender-specific. Hjørungdal (1991: 89–92) discerns an asymmetric marking of gender in graves in the province of Sunnmøre, Norway,

where visible phallic “holy white stones” (Norwegian, *hellige hvite steiner*) mark male graves, but “hidden” grave goods mark female graves—thus giving the title of her study, *The Hidden Sex* (Norwegian, *Der skjulte kjønn*). Trond Løken (1987) analyzes the correlation between grave monuments and grave goods in two regions of Norway, Østfold and Vestfold, concluding that burial customs governing the construction of grave monuments resulted in the purposeful marking of the sex of the dead. In a study of the external and internal structure (grave morphology) of Migration Period graves in the Lake Mälaren region of Sweden, Agneta Bennett (1987: 147) notes that women were most often buried under round stone settings whereas men were laid beneath stone settings of other shapes (Figure 73.3). Nevertheless, only burials of select members of these societies were marked with visible grave monuments; the remains of most people were likely cremated and dispersed on flat ground or buried into the side of the grave mounds of more elite individuals (Magnus and Myhre 1992: 364–365).

Besides the identification of gendered grave constructions and the analysis of grave goods, another method that may also give us insight into women in the past is the examination of their bones.

Osteological analyses

When skeletons and cremated bones are sexed osteologically, the results often—although not always—correspond well with gender identification by grave goods. Such analyses can also remedy incorrect assumptions based on grave goods. For instance, supported by results from osteological analyses, Jutta Waller (1996) demonstrates that dress pins that were considered diagnostic markers of women were also used by men. Bows and arrows are often regarded as male objects, with metal arrow points found only in men’s graves. Yet bone arrow points are found with both men and women, and thus may be considered gender neutral (Solberg 2006: 86)—perhaps distinguishing martial from hunting activities. Skeletal analyses also provide demographic information about the broader population. A large project sponsored by the Danish Research Council for the Humanities culminated in the publication of *Iron Age Man in Denmark* (Sellevold *et al.* 1984), a collaboration by archaeologists and physical anthropologists to study all Iron Age skeletal material from Danish cemeteries as well as isolated finds made since 1821. Prominent among the conclusions of the study is that women are underrepresented in the Iron Age in Denmark. The authors note that the cause of this relative absence could be that sex determinations are

incorrect or that female graves are disregarded, because they are less visible than male graves, either externally or due to the absence of grave goods that could be sexed (Sellevold *et al.* 1984: 209).

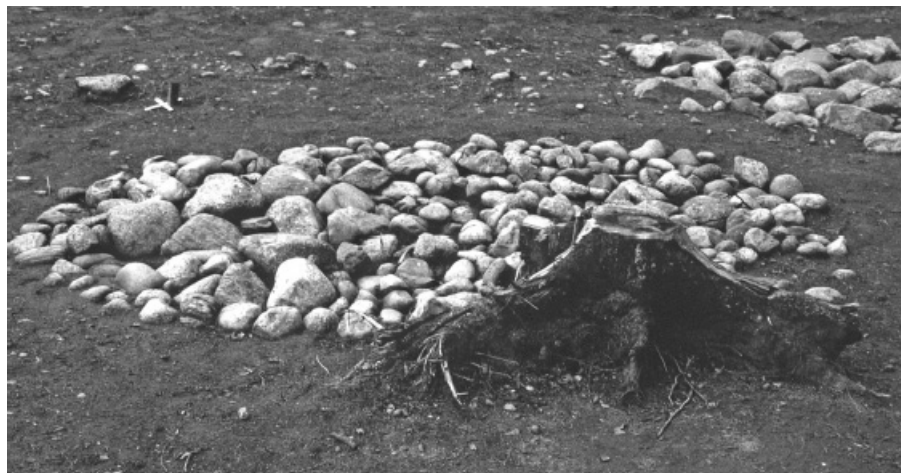


Figure 73.3 Round stone-setting over cremation burial, Åby, Västerhaninge parish, Södermanland, Sweden. Roman Iron Age. (Photo: Nancy L. Wicker.)

From Sellevold's demographic data, Jørgen Jensen (2003: 324) summarizes that during the Early Iron Age men's average height was 174.3 cm (5 ft. 8 5/8 in.) and women's was 161.7 cm (5 ft. 3 5/8 in.). Once again, we must take into account that the skeletal information is gathered from high-status graves with Roman imports, precious metals, and numerous grave goods. Likewise, we recognize a correlation of access to superior food, shelter, and working conditions with the overall health (including dental health) and stature of individuals. Berta Stjernquist (2002) writes about one of these privileged women, a "tall Iron Age lady" whose height is estimated to have been 176 cm (5 ft. 9 3/8 in.). Her late fourth-century burial at Järrestad, Scania, in southernmost Sweden, contained luxurious grave goods, including several brooches, 310 glass and amber beads, and a glass beaker that may reveal trade or gift connections with the Continent. The inventories of such elite women's graves sometimes suggest exogamy—marrying outside the group—as an explanation for how items from faraway lands reached Scandinavia, thus positing that women were buried in new lands with items brought from their ancestral homes.

Evidence of exogamy

Dommasnes (2006: 114) and Lillehammer (1996: 80) point out that among the graves that can be gender-identified, women's are the richest. Examples of women buried with exotic luxury goods—Roman and non-Roman—are numerous, and such individuals may well have been the links between distant geographic areas (Przybyła 2011). The very rich woman's grave dating to c. AD 200 at Himlingøje on the island of Zealand, which I discussed above, includes a rosette fibula of a type found on the lower Oder and in Moldavia (Černjachov culture) (Lund Hansen 1995: 455). In addition, pendant-shaped amber beads from this burial also support a connection with the Black Sea region. Jensen (2003: 435) proposes that this woman came from southeastern Europe and was married into an elite local family in Zealand. The burial of a female in a late fourth-century double grave from Årslev on Funen in Denmark also contains jewelry that reveals connections with the Černjachov culture and is interpreted as evidence of exogamous relationships with southeastern Europe (Storgaard 1990; 1994). In addition, the Årslev grave displays what Birger Storgaard (1990) refers to as dynastic connections with a burial at Varpelev on Zealand, based on nearly identical garnet-studded gold hair pins with pendant pelta-shapes (illustrated in Jensen 2003: 440, 457), thus linking the two major islands of Denmark.

Other internal Scandinavian connections are evident in a woman's grave at Store-Dal in Østfold, Norway, which I also introduced above. Besides the distinctive Roman blue glass bowls found here, the grave contains ornaments that suggests a Danish origin: two gold pendant beads possibly from Jutland and other pieces with ties to the island of Lolland. Therefore, Solberg (2006: 94–95) proposes that the Store-Dal woman came from southern Scandinavia. Besides using the jewelry as evidence, she points to the presence of Jutish-type vessels made of east-Norwegian clay, suggesting that since the ceramics are too fragile to transport, the woman had brought a potter with her from their Danish home. Moreover, rosette brooches from two third-century women's graves at Bringsvær in Fjære, Aust-Agder, demonstrate intra-Scandinavian links between Østfold and Zealand (Solberg 2006: 97); therefore, Eldrid Straume (1988) posits dynastic connections between the two areas. In addition, Solberg (2006: 160) points out that fibulae and textiles from fourth-century graves at Kvassheim in Rogaland, southwestern Norway, are comparable to those found in northern Jutland. Based on such correspondences of material culture, she suggests that women's graves with non-local jewelry are evidence of marriage alliances between those areas. The wealthy woman's grave at Tuna in Badelunda, Sweden, is another likely example of intra-Nordic connections, and Stig Welinder (2009: 431) proposes that the

woman buried in this grave came from Zealand to Västmanland with her bridal gifts. A woman may have brought special pieces of jewelry from home when she was sent abroad to marry and strengthen political alliances. Although heirlooms and additional adornments were placed in her grave upon death, she would be buried with a grave construction and grave gifts that were customary in her adopted home.

Analysis of mitochondrial DNA and other forms of bone chemistry (such as strontium as well as oxygen, carbon, and nitrogen isotopes) that allow us to examine place of origin and diet promise to expand our understanding of the movement of people, such as women who relocated for exogamous marriages. Mitochondrial DNA analysis of a cemetery at Skovgårde on Zealand (Melchior *et al.* 2008) lends support for the practice of exogamy, as summarized by Lund Hansen (2011: 36–37). The results of that study show that none of thirteen women and four girls that were analyzed were blood relatives; thus what archaeologists had previously explained as a family group at Skovgårde more likely reflects the presence of women from far-off regions. While few such scientific investigations have been carried out on Roman Iron Age remains in Scandinavia, research on Viking Period remains has produced significant results. Notably, the Norwegian origin of a Viking woman buried at Adwick-le-Street in South Yorkshire, England, was identified by isotopic analysis of her teeth (Speed and Rogers 2004). However, because dental and skeletal material was not often retained from early excavations in Scandinavia, we still are largely dependent upon grave goods and jewelry for gender determination. For ideas about how these objects were transmitted and used in life, we turn to comparative studies.

Women and gold in the hall

How Roman and other luxury goods reached Scandinavia—whether with returning soldiers, as diplomatic gifts, as trade items, or as marriage gifts—is beyond the scope of this chapter (e.g., Lund Hansen 1987; Rausing 1997; Grane 2007, 2013). Nonetheless, we assume that these items were handled, displayed, and given as gifts in the North before they were deposited in graves. The locus for the distribution of prestige items may have been the large structure known as the Iron Age Germanic hall (Herschend 1997), as described in *Beowulf*, an eighth-century Old English epic poem set in Scandinavia. From this work, we learn that Hrothgar, king of the Danes, and the Geatish hero, Beowulf, bestowed gold on both men and women in the mead-hall called Heorot. Hospitality and drinking ceremonies in the hall—

sometimes using Roman wine sets—played an important part in Germanic society. Michael Enright (1988) examines the central role played by the queen or hostess in drinking rituals to create bonds among the retinue of a chieftain’s followers, as we see in art of the Migration Period (c. AD 400–550) and subsequent periods. Images pressed on tiny gold foils (Swedish, *guldgubbar*) dating to the sixth and seventh centuries (Watt 2011) and picture stones of the eighth and ninth centuries on Gotland in Sweden (Göransson 1999) depict women presenting drinking horns to men. Overall, anthropomorphic images are unusual, but perhaps of cultic importance in Iron Age art which is largely zoomorphic and highly stylized.

In *Beowulf* (lines 1948–1951), a bride was adorned with gold jewelry and presented to her in-laws in the hall; this may also have been the place where marriage alliances were settled. Birgit Arrhenius (1995) proposes that Nordic fifth- and sixth-century Migration Period gold bracteates, which were modeled after fourth-century Roman medallions and medallion imitations (Wicker 2008), represent examples of the “morning-gift” of jewelry given by a man to his bride. Arrhenius thus explains the presence of Scandinavian-made bracteates in women’s graves in central Europe and England as evidence of exogamy, even though the medallion models for bracteates had been given by Roman emperors for distribution to worthy men (Wicker 2013). The process by which these apparently male-gendered objects became associated with women underscores the importance of women in Nordic Iron Age culture.

The power of women

In addition to women’s significance for cementing political and dynastic ties, they probably played a vital role in religious and cultic functions. Tacitus (1970) in his first-century *Germania* ([chapter 40](#)) describes a mother goddess, Nerthus, who was worshiped in a region that has been localized to southern Jutland; however, most of our sources of knowledge about Iron Age Scandinavian religion are based on Viking-Age material culture and runic inscriptions, which in turn depend upon later medieval Old Norse literature preserved in Iceland. Rich Iron Age female graves sometimes contain items associated with fertility rituals—as identified from later sources—including egg-shaped quartz stones in a burial at Kvåle in Sogndal, Norway (Solberg 2006: 171), and a meat knife made of bone inscribed *linalaukar* (“linen, leek”) in runes found in another Norwegian grave dating to c. AD 300 at Fløksand in Meland, Hordaland (Dommasnes 2006: 101–102). Terje Spurkland (2005: 46) notes the medicinal and preservative

uses of linen and leeks, but Gro Steinsland and Kari Vogt (1981) further explain the significance of the two items by citing a ritual in which a horse phallus and leeks were wrapped in linen, known from a short narrative, the *Völsaþattr* in *Flateyjarbók*, an Icelandic medieval manuscript of the 1380s.

The general tenor of the Early Iron Age may be reflected in the thirteenth Icelandic *Poetic Edda* which describes two families of deities, the Vanir and the Æsir. The former group may have been based on an ancient pan-Scandinavian fertility cult in which women played a large part, in contrast to the succeeding set of gods which emphasized the masculine and militaristic world of the Odin cult (Steinsland 1985: 33–34). The earlier Vanir reflected the significance of fertility on the farm, the domain of women, according to Dommasnes (2006: 99). The lay of *Völuspá* (stanzas 23–24) of the *Poetic Edda* mentions an epic battle between the Vanir and Æsir, told in more detail by Snorri Sturluson (1998) in the *Skáldskaparmál* (chapter 57) of the *Prose Edda*. Dommasnes (2006: 103) proposes that the struggle between the indigenous fertility cult and the introduced Odin cult took place during the Roman Iron Age, with the supremacy of the male gods complete by the Migration Period (AD 400–600); the *Völsaþattr* has thus been interpreted as a late remnant of this opposition of male and female gods, but also acknowledging the authority that women previously wielded in cultic activities.

Why did elite women in Early Iron Age Scandinavia apparently hold such power in life, and why were they so often well equipped with luxuries in death? Jensen (2003: 311) declares that there is “no reason to outfit women with rich grave goods if status is expressed only in the man’s line” (my trans.). Thus the assumption is that women could inherit. Lotte Hedeager (1990: 133) contrasts the Danish islands, where strong marking of female status reveals matrilineal descent, with the Jutish peninsula, where men marked by weapons are evidence of a patrilineal society. For Norway, Hjørungdal (1992) proposes that women held power because men were often away for military or economic purposes. Solberg (2006: 170) even interprets a miniature shield in a fifth-century female grave at Hauge in Klepp, Rogaland, as a symbol of the power that women held to control the farm while men were absent. On the other hand, Dommasnes (2006: 121) brings attention to the asymmetrical power and status held by men and women afforded by different possibilities for mobility. A few high-status women were transported to establish marriage links beyond the local area, but men came into contact with other Germanic groups and Romans in the provinces through trade and warfare. In contrast to Myhre’s (2003: 74) assertion that Early Iron Age society

was dominated by a martial ideology, Hjørungdal (1992: 63) observes that from the women's perspective, conflict and violence were not the essence of the Early Iron Age in Scandinavia. In fact, women had power in the spheres of production and reproduction, as well as religious and social life.

References

- Andersson, K. (1995) *Romartida guldsmide i Norden III: Övriga smycken, teknisk analys och versktadsgrupper*. Uppsala, Sweden: University of Uppsala, Department of Archaeology.
- Arrhenius, B. (1995) Women and gold: On the role of women at the time of the great migrations and their relationship to the production and distribution of ornaments. In H. G. Resi (ed.) *Produksjon og samfunn: Beretning fra 2. Nordiske jernaldersymposium på Granavolden 7.–10. Mai 1992*. Oslo, Norway: Universitetets Oldsaksamling, pp. 85–96.
- Bender Jørgensen, L. (1986) *Forhistoriske Textiler i Skandinavien. Prehistoric Scandinavian Textiles*. Copenhagen, Denmark: Det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskriftselskab.
- Bennett, A. (1987) *Graven—religiös och social symbol: Strukturer i folkvandringstidens gravskick i Mälaramrådet*. Theses and papers in North-European Archaeology 18. Stockholm, Sweden: Stockholms Universitet, Institutionen för arkeologi.
- Beowulf. A New Verse Translation* (2000) S. Heaney (trans.). Bilingual edition. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Beowulf (2014) *Klaeber's Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*. In R. D. Fulk, R. E. Bjork and J. D. Niles (eds) fourth edition, with corrections. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.
- Bertelsen, R., Lillehammer, A. and Næss, J.-R. (eds) (1987) *Were They All Men? An Examination of Sex Roles in Prehistoric Society*. Stavanger, Norway: Arkeologisk museum i Stavanger.
- Burenhult, G. (ed.) (1999) *Arkeologi i Norden 2*. Stockholm, Sweden: Natur och Kultur.
- Conkey, M. W. and Spector, J. D. (1984) Archaeology and the study of gender. *Advances in Archaeological Method and Theory* 7: 1–38.
- Dommasnes, L. H. (2006) *Vestnorsk forhistorie: Et personlig perspektiv*. Bergen, Norway: Vigmostad og Bjørke.
- Enright, M. J. (1988) Lady with a mead-cup: Ritual, group cohesion and hierarchy in the Germanic warband. *Frühmittelalterliches Studien* 22: 170–223.
- Fernstål, L. (2003) Where different waters met: Aspects on the Apollo

- Grannus Vase and its position near Sagån in the province of Västmanland. *Current Swedish Archaeology* 11: 25–44.
- Göransson, E.-M. Y. (1999) *Bilder av kvinnor och kvinnlighet: Genus och kroppsspråk under övergången till kristendomen*. Stockholm, Sweden: Stockholms Universitet, Arkeologiska institutionen.
- Grane, T. (2007) Southern Scandinavian Foederati and Auxilarii? In T. Grane (ed.) *Beyond the Roman Frontier: Roman Influences on the Northern Barbaricum*. Rome: Quasar, pp. 83–104.
- Grane, T. (2013) Roman imports in Scandinavia: Their purpose and meaning? In P. S. Wells (ed.) *Rome Beyond Its Frontiers: Imports, Attitudes and Practices*. Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, pp. 29–44.
- Gustafson, L. (1981) Krumkniver og kvinnearbeid. *Nicolay* 36: 16–25.
- Hagberg, U. E. (1967) *The Archaeology of Skedemosse I. The Votive Deposits in the Skedemosse Fen and Their Relation to the Iron-Age Settlement on Öland, Sweden*. Stockholm, Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell.
- Hedeager, L. (1990) *Danmarks jernalder: Mellem stamme og stat*. Århus, Denmark: Aarhus universitetsforlag.
- Henning, J. (1991) Schmiedegräber nördlich der Alpen: Germanische Handwerk zwischen keltischer Tradition und römischen Einfluß. *Saalburg Jarhbuch* 46: 65–82.
- Herschend, F. (1997) *Livet i hallen*. Uppsala, Sweden: Institutionen för arkeologi och antik historia, Uppsala universitet.
- Hjørungdal, T. (1991) *Det skjulte kjønn: Patriarkal tradisjon og feministisk visjon i arkeologien belyst med focus på en jernalderkontekst*. Lund, Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell International.
- Hjørungdal, T. (1992) Mot et nytt bilde av eldre jernalder. *Nytt om kvinneforskning* 1: 63–69.
- Hjørungdal, T. (1996) En gammal historia Arkeologins mans- og kvinnogruvar. *Arkeologi i Norr* 1994/1995, 6/7: 145–164.
- Høigaard Hofseth, E. (1985) Spinnehjul—symbolet for kvinne. *Frå haug ok heiðni* 2: 213–215.
- Holand, I. (2001) *Sustaining Life: Vessel Import to Norway in the First Millennium AD*. Stavanger, Norway: Arkeologisk museum i Stavanger.
- Jensen, J. (2003) *Danmarks Oldtid: Ældre Jernalder, 500 f.Kr.–400 e.Kr.* Copenhagen, Denmark: Gyldendal.
- Jesch, J. (1991) *Women in the Viking Age*. Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press.
- Jochens, J. (1995) *Women in Old Norse Society*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

- Jochens, J. (1996) *Old Norse Images of Women*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Jørgensen, L., Storgaard, B. and Thomsen, L. G. (eds) (2003) *The Spoils of Victory: The North in the Shadow of the Roman Empire*. Copenhagen, Denmark: Nationalmuseet.
- Lillehammer, G. (1996) *Død og grav: Gravskikk på Kvassheimfelte, Hå i Rogaland, SV Norge*. Stavanger, Norway: Arkeologisk museum i Stavanger.
- Løken, T. (1987) The correlation between the shape of grave monuments and sex in the Iron Age, based on material from Østfold and Vestfold. In R. Bertelsen, A. Lillehammer and J.-R. Næss (eds) *Were They All Men? An Examination of Sex Roles in Prehistoric Society*. Stavanger, Norway: Arkeologisk museum i Stavanger, 53–64.
- Lund Hansen, U. (1987) *Römischer Import in Norden*. Copenhagen, Denmark: Det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskriftselskab.
- Lund Hansen, U. (1995) *Himlingøje—Seeland—Europa: Ein Gräberfeld der jüngeren römischen Kaiserzeit auf Seeland, seine Bedeutung und internationalen Beziehungen*. Copenhagen, Denmark: Det kongelige nordiske Oldskriftselskab.
- Lund Hansen, U. (2011) Women's world? Female elite graves in Late Roman Denmark. In D. Quast (ed.) *Weibliche Eliten in der Frühgeschichte: Female Elites in Protohistoric Europe*. Mainz, Germany: Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseum, pp. 33–40.
- Magnus, B. and Myhre, B. (1992) *Norges Historie. Vol. 1: Forhistorien: Fra jegergrupper til høvdingsamfunn*. Oslo, Norway: J. W. Cappelens Forlag.
- Melchior, L., Gilberg, M. T. P., Kivisild, T., Lynnerup, N. and Dissing, J. (2008) Rare mtDNA Haplogroups and genetic differences in rich and poor Danish Iron-Age villages. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 135: 206–215.
- Myhre, B. (2003) The Iron Age. In K. Helle (ed.) *The Cambridge of History of Scandinavia. Vol. 1: Prehistory to 1520*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 60–93.
- Næss, J.-R. (1974) Kvinner i vikingtid. *Frå haug ok heiðni* 5(2): 124–139.
- Näsman, U. (1984) *Glas och handel i senromersk tid och folkevandringstid. En studie kring glas från Eketorp II, Öland*. Uppsala, Sweden: Institutionen för arkeologi.
- Nylén, E. and Schönback, B. (1994a) *Tuna i Badelunda: Guld, Kvinnor, Båtar 1*. Västerås, Sweden: Kulturnämnden.
- Nylén, E. and Schönback, B. (1994b) *Tuna i Badelunda: Guld, Kvinnor, Båtar 2*. Västerås, Sweden: Kulturnämnden.

- Poetic Edda. (1962) *Edda: Die Lieder des Codex Regius*. Fourth edition. G. Neckel and H. Kuhn (eds). Heidelberg, Germany: Carl Winter.
- Przybyła, M. J. (2011) Migration of individuals in the Roman period: Testimonies of fine female dress in Scandinavia. *Acta Archaeologica* 82: 227–251.
- Räf, E. (2006) Bara skinn och ben?—att söka efter hantverksspår. In L. Hedeager (ed.) *Oslo Arkeologiske Serie 7*. Oslo, Norway: Unipub Forlag, pp. 87–107.
- Rausing, G. (1987) Barbarian mercenaries or Roman citizens? *Fornvännen* 82: 126–131.
- Sellekvold, B. J., Lund Hansen, U. and Jørgensen, J. B. (1984) *Iron Age Man in Denmark*. Copenhagen, Denmark: Det kongelige nordiske Oldskriftselskab.
- Snorri Sturluson (1998) *Edda. Skáldskaparmál. I. Introduction, Text and Notes*. A. Faulkes (ed.). London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
- Solberg, B. (2006) *Jernalderen i Norge: 4500 før Kristus til 1030 etter Kristus*. Second edition. Oslo, Norway: Cappelen Akademisk Forlag.
- Speed, G. and Rogers, P. W. (2004) A Burial of a Viking woman at Adwick-le-Street, South Yorkshire. *Medieval Archaeology* 48: 51–90.
- Spurkland, T. (2005) *Norwegian Runes and Runic Inscriptions*. Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press.
- Steinsland, G. (1985) Kvinner och kult i Vikingetid. In R. Andersen, L. H. Dommasnes, M. Stefánsson and I. Øye (eds) *Kvinnearbeid i Norden fra vikingtiden til reformasjonen*. Bergen, Norway: Universitetet i Bergen, pp. 31–42.
- Steinsland, G. and K. Vogt. (1981) 'Aukinn ertu U olse ok vpp vm tekinn'. En religionshistorisk analyse av *Völsaþattr* i *Flateyjarbók*. *Arkiv for nordisk filologi* 96: 87–106.
- Stjernquist, B. (2002) A tall Iron Age lady with magnificent jewellery. In B. Hårdh and L. Larsson (eds) *central Places in the Migration and Merovingian Period*. Lund, Sweden: Department of Archaeology and Ancient History.
- Storgaard, B. (1990) Årslev-fundet—et fynsk gravfund fra slutningen af yngre romersk jernalder. *Aarbøger for nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie*, pp. 23–58.
- Storgaard, B. (1994) The Årslev grave and connections between Funen and the continent at the end of the Later Roman Iron Age. In P. O. Nielsen, K. Randsborg and H. Thrane (eds) *The Archaeology of Gudme and Lundeberg*. Copenhagen, Denmark: Akademisk Forlag, pp. 160–168.
- Straume, E. (1988) The grave from Nordre Rør, Rygge, Østfold. In B.

- Hårdh, L. Larsson, D. Olausson and R. Petré (eds) *Trade and Exchange in Prehistory*. Lund, Sweden: Lund Universitets Historiska Museum, pp. 167–176.
- Ströbeck, L. (1999) On studies of task differentiation between men and women in the Scandinavian Iron Age. *Current Swedish Archaeology* 7: 161–172.
- Tacitus. (1970) *Agricola, Germania, Dialogus*, M. Hutton and W. Peterson (trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Waller, J. (1996) Dräknålar—manliga eller kvinnliga tillbehör? *Fornvännen* 81: 145–157.
- Watt, M. (2011) Images of the female “elite”? Gold foil figures (Guldgubbar) from the 6th and 7th century Scandinavia. In D. Quast (ed.) *Weibliche Eliten in der Frühgeschichte: Female Elites in Protohistoric Europe*. Mainz, Germany: Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, pp. 229–250.
- Welinder, S. (2009) *Sveriges Historia: 13000 f.Kr.–600 e.Kr.* Stockholm, Sweden: Norstedts.
- Wicker, N. L. (2008) Scandinavian migration period bracteates found outside the Nordic area: Import or imitation? In P. F. Biehl and Y. Y. Rassamakin (eds) *Import and Imitation in Archaeology*. Langenweißbach, Germany: Beier und Beran, pp. 243–252.
- Wicker, N. L. (2013) Inspiring the barbarians? The transformation from Roman medallions to Scandinavian bracteates. In P. S. Wells (ed.) *Rome Beyond Its Frontiers: Imports, Attitudes and Practices*. Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archaeology, pp. 191–120.

PART X

Coda

CONTINUITIES IN RAPE AND TYRANNY IN MARTIAL SOCIETIES FROM ANTIQUITY ONWARD

Kathy L. Gaca

Introduction

As I argue in this chapter, the martial rape and enslavement of war-captive women and girls have a long history as organized acts of ravaging warfare and ensuing social inequities. First presented in Homeric epic and the Hebrew Bible, these practices are still at work in the modern day with persistent continuities disclosing a tradition of inculcated martial aggression and a related problematic ethos or mindset that has had a strong hand in shaping society to be martially run across generations from antiquity to modernity.

Here I begin by defining martial ravaging and rape and socially contextualizing its magnitude in antiquity. This section highlights why it is inadequate to regard ancient ravaging warfare simply as men's business of exercising lethal force on one another. War ravaging in and since antiquity has also been a veritable industry of raping, dominating, and enslaving war-captive women and girls of ravaged peoples, subjecting them to compulsory procreation, and exploiting their offspring as slaves and other socially degraded human resources across generations. Then I present a diachronic sketch of spear-conquered wives or concubines to deepen our understanding of salient continuities in this martial substitute for marriage from antiquity to modernity. This section concentrates on two experiences and one legendary (but historically relevant and normative) portrayal of girls and young women subjected to this treatment. Starting in modernity and excavating earlier from there, these are Ancille, a Tutsi woman in Rwanda in 1994; an unnamed girl of Turkish descent born in Greece during the ravaging Greek War of Independence from 1821–1829; and

legendary Briseis and her ravaged people as recounted in the *Iliad*.¹ One noteworthy continuity in their experience is the extreme interpersonal tyranny in which women and girls are held as ravaged domestic inmates. The designated martial keeper and handler has the power to kill his female captive not only with impunity but righteously if he finds her insubordinate.

Martial ravaging and rape

In the repertoire of martial aggression, populace-ravaging or ravaging warfare counts among the more commonly practiced techniques, with recurrent patterns of slaughter, rape, and enslavement by focused criteria of sex and age among the attacked. Girls and women exclusively or foremost are the ones wanted alive, depending on the method of ravaging employed. Martial rape is the signature aggression in attacking the girls and women of a ravaged people and in the social aftermath of keeping the young and fertile ones alive for the compulsory procreation of offspring, male and female, raised from birth to fill their subordinate, gendered work roles.

Like war ravaging in general, martial rape was no free-for-all violence in antiquity. It was a directed sexual aggression in compliance with top-down orders and peer-pressure agreements, with punishment for forces who disobeyed the rules for allocating the girls and women. Martial rape is included as part of the ravaging orders and pacts in the *Iliad* (2.354–359, 3.297–301; Gaca 2014: 305 n. 8), for example, and is recognized in Deuteronomy (21:14, 28:30). In martial aristocracies, as in the *Iliad*, female captives were hoarded among the male elite; in male-egalitarian brotherhoods, as among the pre-monarchic Israelites, every man should get his own spear-conquered girl or woman before any man gets two or more (*Iliad* 2.224–228; Judges 21:1–15; cf. 1 Samuel 30:24).

War ravaging, a strikingly gendered and age-based practice, begins with the effort to massacre either all the fighting-age males or all the males, little boys and infants too, among targeted peoples. It was known as ‘andrapodizing’ in ancient Greek when the fighting-age males were targeted for slaughter in ravaging warfare (Gaca 2010, 2011a, 2012, 2014, 2015). The aggression culminates in the individual or limited serial rape of girls and young women as a way to enslave them. The martial rape of young fertile women and girls is generally meant to be a survivable ordeal, even though it too can kill, and its violent sexual coercion accordingly has rules circumscribing sexual access. The rapes have worked as an injurious hazing to

forcibly demote and induct female war-captives seized and wanted alive from ravaged peoples into a characteristic array of slave and slavish social roles in the martially run society of their conquerors. This includes using them as vehicles of compulsory procreation to produce, maintain, and often to increase the number of socially debased and compliant subordinate offspring, male and female alike, to be put to their assigned tasks in martial society. This ensuing domination works differently depending on whether the offspring are female or male, for it is directed toward raising girls and boys to work and mind their gendered stations in the lower echelons of the hierarchy in martially run society. Many of the people produced from ravaged female war-captives are slaves or slavish and constitute the lower echelons of the society. By 'slavish' I mean that they are on the lower rungs of martial social order and relatively powerless and with few privileges even if not necessarily identified as slaves. Individually, they might be, for example, concubines on the female side and dogs of war or soldiers' grooms on the male side. Collectively, they would be among the mob from antiquity onward, the *ochlos* or *vulgus*.

Martial rape is accordingly heterosexual as organized ravaging aggression. The ravaging forces use rape to attack and dominate the girls and women of targeted people, not least because, historically, forced impregnation and compulsory procreation were part of the agenda to augment the ethnic or ethno-religious numbers and strength of the conquerors.² When the boys were enslaved instead of killed, it historically was one martial norm to castrate them.³ This treatment of the boys shows another signature feature of martial power, the proclivity to cut off extremities, especially soft body parts, as part of the enslaving and as a way to punish and degrade the insubordinate (Middle Assyrian Laws A4, 9 Roth 1997).⁴

In addition, during ravaging and its early aftermath, a number of grown and mature women are killed, a number of them gang-raped to death (Herodotos 8.33, 4.202.1; Isocrates *Letter to Archidamus* 9.10; Diodorus Siculus 33.14.1–5). Lethal gang rape is unrestricted-access rape, a mob rape for lower-echelon forces to do with the women they get to have.⁵ It is distinct in practice and purpose especially from the limited-access rape of girls and young women wanted alive. Unrestricted gang rape is on record as being deliberately lethal (Pausanias 10.22.2–4; Carnegie 1993/1913: 304–305). Among other functions, it is designed to snap mother–daughter bonding in two by having lower-echelon forces kill the grown and older living women and leave the young women and girls as more readily enslavable isolates among the upper-echelon forces. Since antiquity, then, martial rape has had these dual purposes in ravaging warfare. These forms of

extreme sexual violence against girls and women constitute martial rape and are the second fundamental component of ravaging warfare. Thus, the organized violence of populace-ravaging warfare is made up of male massacre, martial rape against the females of the targeted people, and killing grown and mature women. Unrestricted gang rape, a form of martial rape, is a basic way to kill the women.⁶ Martial rape is consequently integral to ravaging warfare (Gaca 2008: 149, nn. 11–13, 158, n. 35, 167, n. 62, 2011b, 2012: 93–106, 2014, 2015).

In the breakdown of the former Yugoslavia in 1992, for example, the young Bosnian Muslim woman, Emina, testifies that “The Chetniks entered our village with their tanks and armored cars . . . They killed men between the ages of 14 and 60 right off.” Emina’s account describes one fundamental practice of ravaging warfare, namely the systematic killing of fighting-age males (Stiglmayer 1994: 97). Livy 26.25.11 confirms that non-elite fighting-age males were 14 or 15 to 60 years old in antiquity, and Justin that 60 years of age was its conventional upper limit (*Epitome*. 11.6.6), no small sector of a male populace, and indispensable to their people. Hence this male fighting-age range is a solid continuity in ravaging from antiquity to modernity (UN Document S/1994/674/230i), not separately invented in the Hellenistic era, in Roman society, and in Bosnia. After the massacre of those considered fighting-age men in the village, the ‘Chetnik’ or Serbian martial forces rounded up Emina and other Bosnian Muslim girls and women and started stripping, beating, and subjecting them to martial rape in public and in detention camps, some to be killed and others kept alive (S/1994/674/230e/o).

War ravaging is succinctly described in the *Iliad*, one of our earliest sources on the practice. “They kill the men (ἄνδρες)” and “lead away the children and women” (*Iliad* 9.593–594). This early portrayal of the two-stage ravaging procedure highlights only the commandeering abduction of women and children seized alive. But martial rape is acknowledged in a provocative euphemism as part of Nestor’s order to the Greek forces, “Let no man go home until each one has slept with a Trojan wife” to avenge Helen (2.354–359), an order reinforced with a threat of death against any Greek forces who would rather take to their ships and go home instead. Further, the main body of Greek forces have a sworn pact to carry out martial rape once the Trojans break a truce: “Let the women” of the Trojan enemy “be sexually penetrated” (μυγεῖεν) or “tamed” (δομειεῖεν) by the Greek forces once they carry out the male massacre of Trojans (3.301).

The live commandeering and sexual domination are openly acknowledged in the *Iliad* as female enslavement, “taking the day of

freedom away” from the womenfolk of a ravaged people, a social category including girls and women (Gaca 2014: 304). Once girls and women of targeted peoples were reduced to being ravaged war-captives in antiquity, little or nothing of their sexual or other volition was granted any recognition and respect, for that was the mark of freedom, and their freedom was revoked (Gaca 2012: 94, 2014: 346). As summed up from direct experience by another Bosnian girl named Alma, when Serbian soldiers attacked her village in 1992, “They separated the men from the women, children, and elderly, raped the women, and shot the men. They herded pubescent girls and young women into trucks” (Kara 2009: 142–143). In these ancient and modern examples, the two aspects of war ravaging, the killing of males en masse and the lethal or domineering penetrative sexual aggression against captured females, are reaffirmed as basic components of populace-ravaging. For the girls and young women to be martially commandeered alive marked the beginning of their status as slaves or as slavish subordinates.

Ravaging is historically one form of warfare, albeit a prevalent one in and since antiquity. Not all armies and not all soldiers practiced this kind of warfare or committed martial rape when they took up arms, just as today not all soldiers and armies practice warfare in this manner. In antiquity, for instance, many fought to defend their own peoples and neighboring allies from being ravaged, so long as the regional defense coalition was still safe and neither intimidated nor bribed into being complicit with the ravagers. As ancient military defense policy, children and mothers were the ones “for whom wars are customarily taken up” to protect them from martial aggressors (Justin 26.2.3; Synesius, *Calvitii encomium* 21.9–11). Ravaging was prevalent in antiquity because its enslaving and exploitative aims have been fundamental to what aggressive warfare was for, to create exploitable and relatively expendable human resources and to keep this lower-echelon mob well stocked and usable. In war ravaging, girls and young women foremost have been the ones historically sought for rape, enslavement, and compulsory procreation or forced prostitution, along with other characteristic labors such as grinding grain, making bread, lugging water, and being multi-purpose maids as coerced auxiliaries for the conquering troops and for the rest of the troops’ beneficiary people.

Heterosexual martial rape for compulsory procreation goes back to antiquity.⁷ But it was not until Bosnia in the early 1990s that we finally receive a detailed account of the premeditated violence of compulsory procreation and its social import as disclosed by captured and coerced girls and women. The Serbian martial program of rape

and compulsory procreation was enacted with ethno-religious triumph and domination, as testified by many women and girls, all Bosnian Muslim, from their direct experience in many towns and counties where they and their families and people used to live. In Doboj, numerous martial rapes were “to make Chetnik babies.” In Foca and Kalinovik counties, twelve women abducted and raped together were told, “Now you are going to have our children. You are going to have our little Chetniks.” In Tesanj, twenty-five women were taken to a nearby forest and serially raped, with one of the women told by a Serbian guard, “Now you will have Serbian babies for the rest of your life.” Likewise, war-captive young women in Teslic, “were raped in front of each other and were told that they would bear Serbian children.”⁸ These plans were reinforced through detention. In Grbavica, a 15-year-old girl and twenty other girls were kept by Serb forces in a small room and raped until they were impregnated. So too in Sokolac, local Serbs kept thirteen young women locked up and raped them, most of them 18 years old or younger, but one of them only 6, “saying they intended to have Muslim women give birth to Chetniks.” When these war-captives were released in a prisoner exchange, “all but the six year old were pregnant.” In Koto Varos, a number of the women were “impregnated and detained until it was not possible to obtain abortions.” Aggravated battery was standard practice in these rape ordeals, as was also the case in antiquity (Askin, 1997; Gaca 2015: 306; UN Document S/1994/674/247). As a related ritual in this ethno-religious takeover, some of the girls and women were forced to renounce Islam and to adopt orthodox Christianity (Stiglmayer 1994: 118, 128).

Martial forces, in addition to subjecting targeted peoples to ravaging, also threatened targeted peoples with this treatment unless they surrendered and became forced laborers for their conquerors (Deuteronomy 20:10–14; cf. Herodotus 2.102.1–106.5). When a people surrendered to forced labor under these coercive terms, they did so in order to forestall being ravaged and thus to retain what they still could of their former familial structure and local culture that ravaging would destroy. Nonetheless, they were still pulled into being a martially run society, the young men put to being lower-echelon forces (e.g., Polybius 10.17.6–16) and the girls and women doing their characteristic auxiliary labors for the troops. This martial complex has always been a travesty of human potential and an injustice for the peoples subjected to it through surrender in lieu of being ravaged or through fighting back and being vanquished and ravaged.⁹

Under conditions of surrender, the girls and women among the peoples turned into forced laborers should in principle not be sexually

maltreated by the occupying troops, even if they were put to doing other usual women's work labors. This is basic to what surrender was meant to allow, to have the womenfolk still able to reproduce and rear children in accordance with their cultural traditions of regenerative kinship prior to conquest. We see the principle in its shocking breach in 205 BCE, later in the Second Punic War, when Carthaginian forces under Hasdrubal implemented Hannibal's scornful decision to ravage (καταφρονῶν ἔγνω διαρπάσαι) all the Italian cities still controlled and occupied with Carthaginian garrisons. The plan was to ravage the cities as though they were alien (ἀλλότριοι), not as though they were still occupied, obedient, and subordinate (ὕπηκοοι) to Hannibal. Treaty-breaking as Hannibal's directive was, and despite some compunction on his part, he knew that he would keep his army loyal to him by making them rich (πλουτίσας) in the countless virgin-aged girls they forcibly commandeered, a haul-off en masse (παρθένων ἀπαγωγαί) that involved much "outrage against the women and tortuous slaughter,"¹⁰ that is, the killing of males and interfering and unwanted women in these cities, many of the women through unrestricted gang rape (γυναικῶν ὕβρις). Hence, like the cities in southern Italy held under Hannibal's martial power, the people who surrendered under the threat of being ravaged weighed the risk and decided surrendering under oath was more trustworthy and secure. It was better to stay together as a people than to be ravaged, heavily massacred, and have their last generation of girls and women raped, dominated, and enslaved. The cities in southern Italy turned out to have misplaced their trust. Hatred of Phoenician treachery and the desire to destroy Carthage spiked because of the astonishing transgression, the opportunist ravaging and haul-off of girls and young women by the city load from cities whose men and women surrendered to avoid having their people and daughters so treated. *Punica fides* regains its ability to jolt when we give women and girls their due in ancient warfare.

As a telling indicator of the martial ethos and the braggart soldier misogyny pervading it, martial aggressors recognized nothing about the prudential weighing of risk or the loving bonds of a people that informed surrender in the face of organized and formidable martial bullies. The peoples who surrendered to stay together were not understood by their aggressors as looking to the best interests of their constituency as a whole, especially their girls and boys as the basis of their next generation. They were considered a bunch of cowardly women at heart, literally pussies or even cunts who deserved to be forced laborers in thrall to the martial running of society.¹¹ Martialy run societies were historically where women and girls first became

“only women,” for auxiliary functions were all they were thought to be worth. Girls and women could never make it to the inner circle as fighting men, not that this was an attractive place to be, even if they were allowed. But it is one of the dismaying facts of history that the androcentric core was where martially run governance was crafted and perpetuated in canonical forms that had women surrounded without fully letting them in, martial monarchy, aristocracy, and male-egalitarian brotherhoods, the latter the spawning grounds of ancient democracy that systematically left women out.

Populace-ravaging warfare has long been, and still is, regularly misunderstood and misrepresented simply as lethal force, as though its organized aggression were tantamount to massacre (Carlton 1994; Katz 1994). Many modern historians of ancient warfare, even siege warfare, have concentrated on the lethally oriented fighting among adult armed males as though this were the only warfare worth knowing in antiquity. The number of books on ancient warfare that give little or no mention to women and martial rape are legion.¹² But several pioneering studies have led the way helpfully to move beyond this reductive identification of ravaging with massacre to discuss the sexual violence historically meted out to war-captive women and children (Pritchett 1991; Finley 1998; Kern 1999; Ducrey 1999; Goldstein 2001; De Sensi Sestito 1999; Scheidel 2009; Nadali and Jordi, eds. 2014).

My research, however, is the first seriously to question the lethal paradigm of warfare, be it men killing men in battle or civilian carnage repeatedly and often wrongly portrayed as indiscriminate, to show the long duration of the calculated age-and-sex patterns in the live human commandeering at work as the second step along with massacre in ravaging warfare. This step was orchestrated aggression, marked by a trumpet call for the attackers to turn from killing to seizing the plunder (Polybius 10.15.8–9), plunder foremost in the bodily persons of women and children. As in southern Italy, the ravaging pattern is to kill some of the people or leave them for dead, mainly male but also mature female, and to get rich by dragging the ones wanted alive from hiding to commandeer and exploit alive. This human gold was mainly or exclusively girls and young women.

It is a modern misunderstanding, not an ancient one, to consider ravaging as tantamount to massacre and to downplay the acquisitive rapacity and penetrative sexual aggression directed against girls and young women wanted alive and sought out from the ravaged people. As is true still today, ravaging was known in antiquity as slaughter and captivity, and “a big slaughter” (e.g., Herodotus 7.170.3, μέγας

φόνος, here μέγιστος) and “plentiful captivity (αἰχμαλωσία πολλή)” (e.g., Theophanes *Chronicle* 257) when the ravaged people were numerous (Procopius *Gothic War*. 6.21.38–40; Gaca 2008: 149, 158, n. 35; 2012: 93–106, 2014: 309, 327). The captivity was a doing of “incurables” so painful to the women and girls kept alive that they pleaded to be killed but were denied this release (Procop. *Goth.* 5.9.24), for those in charge wanted them alive and subservient. Ordeals featuring limited-access rape are a basic feature in the big captivity, such as, in the modern day, sending girls and young women on marches soon after serially raping them, many of them naked and bleeding, and forcing them to learn and sing militia songs (Human Rights Watch/Africa 1996: 53–54). This is Camp Martial, the boot camp division for first-generation war-captive girls and young women. The Carthaginian martial παρθένων ἀπαγωγαί from southern Italy was functionally an ancient counterpart to these doings.

It is important to wrap our minds around the magnitude of captivity through ravaging in antiquity, especially in the absence of indisputable prisoner counts and population estimates. How many girls were taken to Carthage from southern Italy? Well, a lot. More or less than the 32,000 Midianite virgin girls said to have been ravaged by Israelite forces (Numbers 31:35)? I would bet more, but who knows. Percentages help to gain some clarity in this murk. These indicate that the number of non-adult male war-captives seized through ravaging per attacked community was generally bigger and more plentiful than the killing meted out to the fighting-age males. The fighting-age males on average numbered only 25 percent of a people, based on reliably attested demographic percentages from antiquity. These include the numbers of men, women, children, and elderly transcribed from the census or martial personnel tablets of the Helvetii and allied peoples on the move in 58 BCE, and from the rounded estimates of Persians and Armenians ravaged through Roman conquest near Amida in 504 CE.¹³ The rest of the people in a community constituted the remaining 75 percent, the women, children, and elderly who made up the “non-fighting throng” (*imbellis multitudo*), as Livy terms them (e.g., 7.27.8, 9.15.5).

Thus, to treat ravaging largely as tantamount to fighting-age male massacre is unwittingly to say that 75 out of every 100 people per ravaged community do not matter in our understanding of ravaging warfare. Only 25 of them matter, none of them girls and women. Further, all 25 who do matter are dead or wanted that way, even though the male killing was carried out so that other adult male martial aggressors and their beneficiary peoples could commandeer, dominate, and enslave the girls and young women of those worsted

men.¹⁴ This is to remain blind to the enslaving and related social debasement functions of ravaging warfare as worked on and through the bodies and minds of first-generation ravaged girls and women and their male and female offspring going back to their martially enslaved first-generation war-captive foremothers. This is to act as though war ravaging has had nothing to do with deliberately precipitating the extreme martial power imbalance in gendered interpersonal relations that have made life miserable for countless myriads of people, not least by excluding women from participating in governance and leaving martial governance models in place.

Widely attested as a broadly regional practice in the Mediterranean and Near East in and since antiquity, ravaging and its gendered procedures of massacre and enslavement were taken more globally from there, where it still persists in direct active warfare, as fallout from past ravaging wars, and in lingering aspects of the martial mindset that informs them. The more notable martial colonizing vectors that featured ravaging include the Hellenistic one led eastward by the Macedonian Alexander and his forces (e.g., Burstein 2012); the medieval one partly led back westward by the Mongols, Genghis Khan and Timur, and their forces, and the trans-Atlantic one started by Columbus and his forces. In addition, there is the massive and decentralized martial ravaging and other slaving by armed force in Africa for the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Through these vectors, practices of ravaging have roped more peoples into enslavement and their descendants into martially run governance, thereby adding to the massive damage done to genuinely civil human civilization. To mention a relatively late but highly important instance, starting against the Taino or Arawak on Hispaniola in 1492:

Two principal customs have been employed by the Spaniards in extirpating the peoples. After having slain all the native-born lords and adult males, it is the Spaniards' custom in their wars to allow only young boys and females to live, and they oppress them with bondage.

(de las Casas 2006: 12)

Ravaging and its braggart soldier martial worldview have consequently led to dehumanizing social consequences of a lingering and pervasive sort that weigh on all of us, but variably depending on our sex and on other aspects of what we are raised to regard as our social identity from birth. This is true especially of ethnicity, which is now partly merged with nationality, and of religious identity. Both religion and ethnicity have been reshaped with the pliancy of play-

doh squeezed in the hands of martial power. Religion has historically been used to instill a sense of divine mission and power to ravaging martial aggression. For example, Moses as mediator of the Lord issues this ravaging martial policy to the Israelites—a policy that also shows the peculiarly martial notion that it constitutes peace to surrender to forced labor under martial occupation and ravaging held in abeyance but at the ready to strike on call. Among cities at a distance:

When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it. And if its answer to you is peace and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labor for you and shall serve you. But if it makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it; and when the Lord your God gives it into your hand you shall put all its males to the sword. But the women and the little ones, the cattle, and everything else in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as booty for yourselves; and you shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the Lord your God has given you.

(Deuteronomy 20:10–14, RSV)

ISIS similarly regards it as an established divine mandate of their religion when they “executed Yazidi men and kept the dead men’s wives for unmarried jihadi fighters” (*New York Times* 8 August 2014, A1, print). As seen in Deuteronomy, their view that martially constructed religion warrants their behavior is historically correct, every minute of that history morally problematic.

Further, ethnicity has been retooled into a martial brand name for various contingents of men and their motley hanger-on women and children who were coerced and co-opted and raised to be subservient to the men and to see them as their pack to run with and howl for. This can be seen most readily and succinctly in social groups renamed in their ethnicity after regional martial overlords, such as the Etruscan Rhaetians from Rhaetus and the celts or Gallic peoples turned Frankish and French from their Frankish martial overlord so named (Justin’s *Epitome*, 20.9.5; Lydus *De magistratibus populi Romani*, 56). As disclosed in the Serbian martial project of using ravaged Bosnian Muslim girls and young women as Chetnik reproductive vessels, both martial ethnicity and religion work together and constitute strongly partisan strains of ethno-religious identity in martially run societies.

The martial worldview is consequently dysfunctional, locked into having friends and enemies, friends as the male members’ in-group of people deserving to be the beneficiary recipients of martial plunder and its reproductive and other proceeds, at the expense of worsted peoples treated as enemies to ravage or dominate and exploit under threat of ravaging them if they disobey. As epitomized by ravaging, the martial mindset knows and allows only winners who get to exult

in their rip-offs against the losers they kill, dispossess, rape, dominate, and exploit. What a bunch of women the losers are, their only value is to get rid of the men or the men and boys and have their bitches work for us. The martial ethos is too stunted and partisan in its moral and intellectual development to know how to do universal human dignity, by putting women and children first as their own inviolable persons, not as violable martial army-issue property for violable men killing men to fight over, gain, and lose.

Ancille, the Muslim Mädchen, and Briseis: common ground in individual female experiences of martial ravaging and rape

To incite the fervor required for martial rape, the forces are provoked as well as given their orders to rape (Gaca 2014: 305, n. 8). Demagoguery is a key element in the provocation. The commanders “must say the things by which the minds of the soldiers are stirred with anger and outrage into hatred of their enemies (*dicenda etiam quibus militum mentes in odium adversariorum ira et indignatione moveantur*),” as the ancient Roman strategist Vegetius notes (*Epicitoma rei militaris* 3.12.4).

As a complement to the hatred stirred up by outrage and anger, a wrathful sexual desire impels martial rape in particular. Martial rape is not rape eroticized as rough sex in the bodice-ripper mode of Rhett doing Scarlett in *Gone with the Wind*, where Scarlett’s life is not in danger and she is staged giving a sassy smile of pleasure after the rape. That too is a problematic rape, but not in the same mode or to the same formidable degree as martial rape. Martial rape is also not any shade of gray. Consensual sadomasochism stimulates pleasurable pain and has safe words and gestures indicating ‘stop’ if the feeling becomes hurtful pain. A bond of trust is there that requires respecting the safe words, like the game of falling backwards and having your friends catch you. By contrast, the desire that spurs martial rape is triggered by stimulating hatred, as noted by the prophet Ezekiel (23:29), and it openly has a murderous capability. When a man has a captive woman or girl in his possession, he can kill her with impunity if he finds her insubordinate, and he shows her that he wields this lethal power over her unless she remains submissive to him and his people, as I now discuss.

It is easy to imagine that martial rape would be ugly up close given the company it keeps with massacre and arson. But to comprehend the absolute tyranny of martial spear-conquest marriage, we need to

understand the experience from the perspective of girls and women who have lived through being turned into this kind of so-called wife or concubine, or the closest approximations to lived female experience in ancient sources. While female testimonials based on experience start only in the twentieth century, earlier evidence shows striking continuities with their modern counterparts. This institutionalized rape is a deeply alienating anti-intimacy that instills even more fear and loathing in the women and girls for the men as the men have been provoked into feeling for them, for the men can kill their female captives with righteous entitlement. I start my diachronic sketch with the Tutsi Ancille in Rwanda in 1994. The organized aggression in Rwanda, three months long at peak intensity, started as populace-ravaging in the first several weeks with its characteristic yield of live girls and young women to rape and enslave. Then the genocide continued to have aspects of this practice, even when the aggression turned toward a more indiscriminate and totalizing martial slaughter, girls and women included.¹⁵

Ancille was 23 years old when about forty Hutu militia broke into her family home and killed her four brothers and her mother in front of her (Human Rights Watch/Africa 1996: 56–57). Nothing of basic civil interaction is at work when a ravaging martial soldier claims a woman or girl of the enemy as his own. At the time, Ancille was engaged to be married, but that was not allowed to matter anymore. One of the Hutu assailants claimed her as his own. Marking Ancille as his, he “started hitting me,” she states. “He cut me on the leg and told me that I was going to be his wife.” Along with the hitting, the cutting in particular meant Ancille belonged to him.

The Hutu man remains unnamed in Ancille’s testimony, and there is no indication that she ever knew his name. He never said anything to her like “hello, my name is Joseph, it is a pleasure to meet you. What is your name?” In civil society from antiquity to today, there is an extensive and gracious etiquette for strangers to get to know one another and to pick spouses with parental negotiation and approval. All of that is destroyed in ravaging, and its stand-in is the man beating and slashing the girl or woman.

Just like Achilles killing Briseis’s brothers and husband, the Hutu man helped slaughter Ancille’s beloved relatives, in her case her mother and brothers, thereby severing her from her network of supportive kin. The Athenian martial colonizers of erstwhile Carian Miletus in the later Greek dark age behaved similarly. They killed the Carian mothers, brothers, and fathers of the young Carian daughters they kept alive and sexually coerced into being their domestic inmates

(Herodotus 1.146.1–2). In this ancient incident too, the communication between the surviving Carian female war-captives and their dominators was virtually nil, as Herodotus notes.

The Hutu man then took Ancille to his house, locked her in during the day while he was gone, and forced her to be his so-called wife in the evening. That meant she had to cook for him and submit to him raping her upon his return. For Ancille to be locked in imparts added insight into why the Achaean Greeks in the *Iliad* fortified their camp. This was not only to keep the Trojans from torching their ships, but to stop female war-captives like Briseis from trying to run away and rejoin remnant members of their ravaged people. More broadly, the lock-up of Ancille helps us appreciate the striking duality of fortifications in and since antiquity. Strongholds and citadels have worked as much to keep ravaged war-captive women and children imprisoned as to protect families and peoples fighting the good defensive fight from within the walls to keep the besieging and would-be ravaging forces at bay. For example, Antiochus IV Epiphanes had Jerusalem refortified as a Macedonian-held citadel in 167 BCE to detain, dominate, and maltreat the women and children of the systematically slaughtered Jewish men of Israel in the Macedonian ravaging of Jerusalem and nearby villages. Macedonian and allied forces systematically andrapodized the region at the time, using “the city of David” as their fortified base camp for this purpose (1 Maccabees 1:29–35, 5:13).

Precipitously unequal gender relationships like that between Ancille and the Hutu martial fighter do not exist in domestic isolation. They are an inherent part of the martial running of society and of martial wife abuse as standard operating procedure brought in its train. Further, in ravaging and its aftermath, terror is the norm for spear-conquered wives outside the domestic prison as well as inside, and from other men too in addition to the so-called husband. Three times other Hutu militia subjected Ancille to a formidable ritual as her Hutu keeper’s coerced domestic inmate. They took her to a mass grave nearby and threatened to kill her, and each time her keeper intervened and retrieved her. As Ancille initially understood these events, “he saw me and saved my life.” Yet, as she later realizes in her testimony, what this man and his fellows did to her was a ritualized ordeal showing the Russian roulette-like martial power of life or death over her, here exercised by the man and his comrades as a case of bad-cop/good-cop terrorism in the extreme. The man was complicit in these doings, for the threat occurred three times in the same structured way, and each time he was on the scene to save her, proving to his comrades that he wanted Ancille alive. It is a

longstanding martial custom to subject lower-echelon males and females to formidable ordeals that they might not survive as a test, and even to regard this treatment as an administering of justice (Middle Assyrian Laws A 17, 25 in Roth 1997).

For the duration of Ancille's imprisonment, the Hutu man tyrannized her with mood swings.¹⁶ He had his moments of being what Ancille considered kind. But martial kindness is manipulative, for in her case when the man was so-called nice, he told he would bury her if she died, that is, if he killed her or gave the nod for his Hutu comrades to kill her. At other times even this minimal human interchange ceased and he became angry and shouted at her for showing obvious grief and spending the day thinking about her dead family.

Ancille was already pregnant by the Hutu man once Tutsi resistance forces rescued her and the man was seized and later killed. Ancille is emotionally flat about the baby and its death soon thereafter. The closest she comes to any maternal bonding is to acknowledge that the baby was hers in the sense that it emerged from her body: "I delivered my baby in March 1995 and the baby died after one month." The sex of the infant remains unstated, and how and why it died remains unknown. The childrearing would be steeped in martial norms if the infant had lived and the Hutu man and his cronies played a role in shaping its growing years. If the child were a boy, he would be raised under paternal influence to grow up just like his father, a Hutu counterpart of a Chetnik, and his mother would be under duress not to interfere. If the child were a girl, she would be raised to be ancillary and subservient like her mother. This would be a problematic outcome either way.

Ancille, when asked whether she considered the Hutu man her husband, at first replied that in her country she was powerless in disputing his claim as a young woman systematically deprived of her mother and brothers family by the Hutu. "When my family was killed and I was taken like this, I thought I would have to live with this man forever because I had no one else to go to." This deliberate disempowerment is at the core of ravaging enslavement en masse to turn the girls and women irrevocably into enslaved martial detainees, from Briseis to Ancille and beyond to Yazidi girls and women as jihadist war spoil under ISIS. Later in her interview, Ancille returned to the question about the man being her husband. She pointed out that despite the man occupying a place like that of a husband, she did not love this man but hated and feared him for his power. Her martial relationship of intimate tyranny under the Hutu man was

fundamentally anti-marital, anti-familial, and anti-civil because of his power of death over her: “You know . . . we call these men our husbands. But they were not a true love. I hated this man. Maybe later on you could even be killed by them.” What is more, Ancille observed that in Rwanda she was far from alone in being treated this way. Many Tutsi girls and women were treated just as she was. Ancille personally knew several, including at least one deliberately orphaned and sibling-deprived woman who was still stuck in this torment: “This happened to a lot of young girls, even school girls around 18 years old were kept like this. In my commune I know of three women. One of these women is still with her ‘husband’.”

Ancille knew the difference between a prospective husband and a man wielding the martial power of life and death over her, for she used to have a man she wanted as a husband and was planning to marry, “Before the war I had a fiancé.” Respect as opposed to hate, basics of civil courtship and interaction as opposed to engulfing grief, domestic terror, and male comrades from hell—there is no basis of similarity between the two kinds of relationship. The same was true in antiquity. The ideal of traditional civil marriage in antiquity was one of mutual respect, affection, and love between spouses, from the royal Arete and Alcinoos to one of my favorite married couples in fictional antiquity, the humble Baucis and Philemon, who shared equally in giving each other directives and obeying them, and who conferred together to make decisions (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 8.636, 705–706). Parents approved and helped arrange these marriages, which epitomize the city at peace on Achilles’ shield, and the kin and community celebrated them with the joy of songs, dancing, and feasts (e.g., *Iliad* 18.489–495). By contrast, as seen in the Athenian-led ravaging of Carian Miletus, spear-conquest marriage means that the parents and brothers of the sexually dominated daughters have been turned into corpses and the remnant female captives are under a local reign of martially run ethnic terror, leaving the very idea of ancient civil society and its celebratory traditions of marriage and procreation in shambles.

About 170 years before Rwanda, a German Philhellenic officer named von Byern corroborated that Ancille’s experience was no anomaly but one of organized martial violence. He witnessed a very similar practice of domestic domination and terror during the Greek War of Independence, which involved the massive ravaging of Turkish Muslims living in Greece. The German officer had cause to frequent the house of a cephalonian Greek officer who was keeping and treating an adolescent Muslim girl born in Greece as his war-captive concubine, for the Greek officer was serving as von Byern’s

interpreter. Von Byern could have been walking in on the Hutu man tyrannizing Ancille, so similar is the treatment he noted and found appalling—the utter indifference toward a marital relationship and the Greek officer knowingly exerting the power of life and death over his girl and demanding her slavish submission. As von Byern relates:

Since I was in need of seeking his help [with translating] at very different times of the day, the cephalonian no longer bothered much to remove his mistress from the room upon my entrance, contrary to the usual custom . . . This one was a beautiful infidel girl [*Mädchen*] of great virtue, whom, as he confided to me in triumph, he chose from 80 of her unlucky sisters together in a group at the capture of the fortress. With this female [*Weib*], there was a characteristic indifference toward a tender relationship, as that of an absolute subordination. She saw in her uncultured mate only a command-giving master who felt entitled, as his due, to demand of her an utterly unconditional docility as the slave of his will and his moods (*als Sklavin seines Willens und seiner Launen*) . . . He made himself an object of fear for her, since overall here there was no question of love—smoking from the blood of her brothers and relatives . . . he threatened her with dagger and torment if she dared to spurn him . . . and kept her in constant terror.”¹⁷

This girl, turned into a domestic sexual prisoner in the liberating of Greece, no doubt realized as much as Ancille that whether she lived or was killed was in the hands of her captor. As von Byern notes, she only had to look out a window or door to see the ravaging martial treatment meted out by Greek forces to other Muslim womenfolk born and raised in Greece who resisted or who were not wanted alive.

Everywhere one saw mutilated female bodies outside the walls around the city, booty for dogs and birds of prey, and even the strictest orders of a more humane rule was for a considerable time not enough to make an end to these cruelties.

(von Byern 1833: 65–67)

Hence, the ravaging-induced power of death over female war-captives wielded over Ancille and the *Mädchen* was no empty threat given the strewn female bodies. The Hutu man would not go that far in his desecration of the female enemy bodies as that witnessed by von Byern. He would at least make sure to put Ancille in a grave if he or his comrades killed her, or at least so he said.

Moving to the Early Iron Age, the *Iliad*, in one of its shortest and most powerful similes, acknowledges the life and death power that ravaging martial fighters held over the female captives assigned to them. Hector, on the verge of being killed by Achilles, frantically wonders whether he should put down his arms and armor and make an appeal to Achilles for some degree of mercy. But he decides against it, saying that if he tries, Achilles will be sure to kill him naked, like a

woman (κτενέει δέ με γυμνὸν ἐόντα/αὐτῶς ὥς τε γυναῖκα, *Iliad* 22.124–125). In that event, Hector would still have clothes on when killed and be naked only in the sense of being a man killed without armor and weapons on his person. The naked woman to whom he likens himself is an ancient counterpart to the female bodies noted by Von Byern. In antiquity too, they generally were stripped naked in the attack, as noted by Aeschylus, Isocrates, and Diodorus (Gaca 2008: 158, n. 35, 2012: 99–101).

Under this martial regime, war-captive girls and women by the Early Iron Age were subjected to severe aggravated battery prior to being raped, just like Ancille. As first noted in the *Odyssey*, they were struck with the butt end of their spears in addition to being beaten with their fists (*Odyssey* 8.523–530, cf. Diodorus 17.35.7). Hence the spear was a choice weapon for the dual objectives of ravaging warfare—the sharp end to run through the husbands, fathers, and sons, and the dull end to beat the wives, mothers, and daughters into submission. The duality of the spear also stands as a good symbol of the aggressors' power to kill the women too.

Just like Ancille and the *Mädchen* born in Greece, Briseis comes to be Achilles' enslaved war-captive, disempowered and isolated through the same ravaging treatment of having her family members killed and then being held captive under the threat of death. Once Achilles' comrade Patroclus is killed, Briseis and other young female war-captives in the Myrmidon tents seize the opportunity to grieve openly for Patroclus over his corpse while secretly grieving for their own losses, which they are not allowed to do openly (*Iliad* 19.282–303). With daring poetics, the *Iliad* represents Briseis as actually speaking out the forbidden. Lamenting, she states, "I saw (εἶδον) Achilles kill my husband . . . and my three brothers" when he, Patroclus, and other Achaean Greek and allied forces ravaged her home city of Lyrnessos.

Upon Achilles gaining Briseis as his spear-conquered prize (*geras*), Patroclus repeatedly prohibited her from showing her grief in laments and instead kept telling her that he would make her Achilles' legitimate wife, not simply the *geras* that she presently was, in Phthia among the Mymidons, wedding feast included (*Iliad* 1.184–187; 19: 282–300). Briseis ends her lamentation by referring to Patroclus as always kind (μεῖλιχον αἰεῖ). This makes it seem that Patroclus was simply trying to be a nice guy after helping Achilles to ravage her family and people, as in "Briseis, don't cry, I'll make it all better." This would be a naïve impression. Women raped under martial sexual tyranny were at risk of being killed if they cried, as though they were the ones violating their captor-rapists with their outcries, as pointed

out by Choricus in late antiquity (26.2.85), just as Ancille met with outrage from the Hutu man for trying to grieve for her mother and brothers. This prohibition doubled the women's suffering, for it meant that they were subjected to rape and not allowed to seem aggrieved by this treatment, Choricus adds. This prohibition under pain of death goes back as far as the *Iliad*, for it is only under the pretext of lamenting Patroclus that Briseis and the other ravaged female war-captives could secretly lament their own ravaged people while lamenting Patroclus. Patroclus, in repeatedly stopping Briseis from crying, kept having to make it clear to her that she could be killed if she persisted.

The relationship between Briseis and Achilles is romanticized from Achilles' perspective as though she were his wife and the relationship the equivalent of marital love (*Iliad* 9.340–343). The *Iliad* tacitly shows this to be false by never having Briseis say a word to Achilles or he to her, as Andromache and Hecuba do at length with Hector and Priam. The epic does, however, recognize Briseis's other brush with martial sexual terror, when she is seized and taken to Agamemnon. In martially run monarchy in antiquity, it was a standard norm for an overlord to show his power over a man deemed disloyal and insubordinate by seizing the man's woman and handing her over for other men to sexually have, that is rape, her and dominate her. This served to punish the officer for not minding his place and showing submissive fealty to his king.¹⁸ Briseis is presented as realizing that being taken to Agamemnon likely means she is going to get beaten and raped, and that is why she is taken “against her will” (ἀέκουσα) to Agamemnon (*Iliad* 1.345–348). Later in the narrative, this punitive twist on the *droit du seigneur* means that Agamemnon has to go through the elaborate boar sacrifice and swear under the sacrificial oath that here he abided by an exception to the norm (*Iliad* 19.249–275), once he reconciles with Achilles and returns Briseis to him. As Agamemnon swears, “I have never beaten (χεῖρ' ἐπένεικα) the girl Briseis/to go to bed with her, or for any other reason” (*Iliad* 19.261–263),¹⁹ even though that aggravated, sexual punishment was to be expected.

Conclusion

From antiquity onward, martial rape has regularly been an act of war that is integral to ravaging warfare itself. The sexually penetrative aggression is terrifying and often performed to psychologically humiliate and socially debase, in short, to enslave or alternatively to kill. Girls and young women wanted alive have been subjected either

to survivable rape, such as being allocated to one elite man, or to controllable serial rape for forced impregnation and compulsory procreation, whereas the female captives considered dispensable or wanted dead are subjected to lethal gang rape and other kinds of killing.

The standard customs of martial war ravaging, including spear-conquered wifehood, can at first seem inexplicably anti-rational, too old to trace, and impervious to change. Yet ravaging martial power is rather straightforward, cruel, and corrupt. It is designed to sexually harm and exploit targeted girls and women reproductively and in other characteristic ways once the ravaging forces have killed many of the rest of their people. We need to know the rules by which ravaging has historically worked to seek ways to dismantle martial power through reason and historical research.

One of the most fundamental rules, as argued here, has been to exert the power of life and death over subordinates. Historically and today, this power was not simply in the hands of a sovereign monarch over his people. As made clear from the accounts about Briseis and the *Mädchen* and in Ancille's testimony, this power extended its tentacles from the martial overlord king down to every fighter as to who gained his own war-captive girl or woman. Hardly a free person himself, the martial minion still was made to feel like the big man over the mere woman or girl—an attitude that sneers its way through martially run society—because he had *neis potestas* over her. He took her freedom away by having carte blanche to kill her if she put up any resistance,²⁰ a power already shown with stupefying force in the ravaging onslaught on the rest of her family and people. Through this power, he raped and beat her into submission on orders from his superiors, subjecting her to compulsory procreation and other labors. As part of the danger, there is a strong element of arrested masculine development in this interpersonal tyranny—"I can kill her but she can't kill me, so that makes me better than her." Nonetheless, the man had a strong incentive to keep her alive, for exploiting her capabilities in these ruthless ways is what made him and his martial society rich at her expense.

Notes

- 1 On the historical relevance of Homeric epic, see Van Wees 1992, 1997: 692, Raafaub 1997, and Morris 1986. See Henry 2011 for Homeric rape as normative for male society in classical Greece.
- 2 "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth," as Genesis 1:28 presents this imperative in the voice of the Lord God. Martial overlords and brotherhoods

made it a top priority to fill their domains strictly with people obedient to them, such as the Germanic Chauci: “They not only hold but fill such a vast region of territory,” Tacitus *Germania* 35.2.

- 3 On the distinct aggression against ravaged boys when kept alive, Gaca 2015: 283.
- 4 See, further, Justel, this volume, on Mesopotamian law codes and women’s roles therein.
- 5 Tacitus *Histories* 3.33. The Byzantine Roman forces under the commander John Cantacuzenus broke into the houses and “they slept with the women of the Rhodian men, unless she was overage or not good looking—these they pushed out the door” (συνεκοιτάζοντο δὲ καὶ ταῖς τούτων γυναιξίν, εἰ μὴ τινα ἔξωρον οὖσαν ἢ τὸ εἶδος οὐκ ἀγαθὴν ἀπὴλασσαν ἔξω, George Acropolites, *Annales* 48 (ed. Heisenberg 1978, history concerns 1203–1261). A woman pushed outside was in effect marked as usable by lower echelon forces, and thus a likely gang rape target.
- 6 Though well-attested, unrestricted lethal gang rape cannot be assumed the only method of killing grown women through ravaging warfare. The clearest evidence from antiquity for comprehensively killing all the grown women or all the mothers of young unmarried girls among peoples subjected to ravaging remains non-committal about how they were killed. Numbers 31:1–27; Judges 21:1–15; Herodotus 1.146.2. The noun γονέες means mother and father in Herodotus. Heracles’ are Amphitryon and Alcmene, Herodotus 2.43.2. So too, the parents (γονέες), mother and father, worry about the marital prospects for their Spartan daughter, Herodotus 6.61.3.
- 7 Euripides *Trojan Women* 562–567, Nicolaus of Damascus fr. 53, and cf. Herodotus 6.138.1–4, Anna Comnena 15.7.1–2, Leo Chalcocondyles 64d. On the sexual and other maltreatment of boys in ravaging warfare, see Gaca 2014: 307–308, 2015: 283.
- 8 Serbian martial ethnic reproductive agenda to procreate Chetniks or Serbs, 18.94, s/1994/674/AnnexIX: 18:89 (cf. nn. 175–176); 20.110, 20.123, 32.149, 41.208, 43.221 (cf. n. 526); 45.223, 46.226 (Teslic). Repurposed civil buildings: UN Document S/1994/674/247; S/1994/674/Annex IX/35.164, 53.245; Searles and Berger 1995: 174–175.
- 9 For further discussion of surrender to avoid violence, see Day, this volume.
- 10 Whether the males slaughtered were fighting-age or all ages Appian (fl. ca 116–150 CE) does not say, *Hannibalic Wars*. 243–46.
- 11 Herodotus conveys the braggart soldier sexual ethos of martial society with spot-on credibility here, with or without the narrative detail being accurate about female genitalia on the *stelai*, Herodotus 2.102.1–106.5, cf 2.30.1–4.
- 12 Sabin *et al.* eds. 2007; Campbell and Tritle eds. 2013. See also the indices of books on ancient warfare cited in both bibliographies to appreciate the pervasive lack of any reference to women and rape in the vast majority of studies on ancient warfare. It is as though the study of ancient warfare and of slavery are each in their own separate worlds, even though historically they are closely intertwined in ravaging warfare and enslaving martial rape.
- 13 Helvetii and allies: 92,000 fighting-age males of 368,000 total, the 276,000 women, children, and elderly counted separately from the men, Caesar *Gallie War* 1.29.1–3, Joshua Stylites, *Chronicle* 75 (Trombley and Watt 2000), 10,000 fighting-age male Persians and Armenians and 30,000 women and children, 40,000 total. The argument of Trombley and Watt 2000: xxi–xxviii is debatable,

not decisive, for regarding the chronicle as anonymous, and Joshua Stylites as the scribe rather than the author.

- 14 The number of overall men mustered to stop would-be ravagers could be very large as coalitions of fighting-age male allies joined in the effort, such as Greek and Macedonian forces mustered at Thermopylae to stop the celtic overlord, Brennus, from leading his forces to ravage the Balkans in 279 BCE (Paus. 10.20.1–6). My point still holds, for cumulatively each fighting-age male group generally represented not more than their ratio per community of 25 percent.
- 15 Human Rights Watch/Africa 1996: 41. The later turn in the Rwandan genocide is evocative of biblical *herem* (e.g., Deut. 20:15–18) and of the Shoah after the Wannsee Conference.
- 16 For another vivid example of such mood swings, see Plutarch *The Virtues of Women* 259f2–4.
- 17 Von Byern 1833: 65–67. Translations from von Byern are my own.
- 18 Jeremiah 8:10, cf Middle Assyrian Laws A55 (Roth 1997).
- 19 The idiom χεῖρα/χεῖρας ἐπιφέρειν means “beat” or “attack” (*Odyssey* 16.438 and *Iliad* 1.89). οὐτ’ εὐνῆς πρόφασιν κεχρημένος οὐτέ τευ ἄλλου.
- 20 Hence the Roman husband’s and father’s power of *manus* was a serious matter when his so-called wife was a first-generation ravaged war-captive. On the present scholarly status quo that still treats *patria potestas* gingerly, see Westbrook 1999; Yaron 1962.

References

- Askin, K. D. (1997) *War Crimes against Women*. The Hague, The Netherlands: Nijhoff
- Burstein, S. (2012) Whence the women? The origin of the Bactrian Greeks. *Ancient West and East* 11: 97–104.
- Campbell, B. and Tritle, L. A. (eds) (2013) *The Oxford Handbook of Warfare in the Classical World*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Carlton, E. (1994) *Massacres: An Historical Perspective*. Brookfield, VT: Ashgate.
- De las Casas, B. (2006) *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*. J.-P. Duviols (ed.). Buenos Aires, Argentina: Stockcero.
- De Sensi Sestito, G. (1999) Schiave di guerra tra *dikaion* ed *ômotês*. In F. Merola and A. Storch Merino (eds) *Femmes-esclaves*. Naples, Italy: Jovene, pp. 111–128.
- Ducrey, P. (1999) *Le traitement des prisonniers de guerre dans la Grèce antique, des origines à la conquête Romaine*, second edition. Athens, Greece: École Française d’Athènes.
- Finley, M. I. (1998) *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, expanded edition. B. D. Shaw (ed.). Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener.
- Gaca, K. L. (2008) Reinterpreting the Homeric simile of *Iliad* 16.7–11: The girl and her mother in Ancient Greek warfare. *American Journal*

- of *Philology* 129: 145–171.
- Gaca, K. L. (2010) The andrapodizing of war captives in Greek historical memory. *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 140: 116–171.
- Gaca, K. L. (2011a) Manhandled and “kicked around”: Reinterpreting the etymology and symbolism of *andrapoda*. *Indogermanische Forschungen* 115:110–146.
- Gaca, K. L. (2011b) Girls, women, and the significance of sexual violence in ancient warfare. In E. Heineman (ed.) *Sexual Violence in Conflict Zones from the Ancient World to the Era of Human Rights*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 73–88.
- Gaca, K. L. (2012) Telling the girls from the boys and children: Interpreting *paides* in the sexual violence of populace-ravaging ancient warfare. *Illinois Classical Studies* 35/36: 85–109.
- Gaca, K. L. (2014) Martial rape, pulsating fear, and the sexual maltreatment of girls (*paides*), virgins (*parthenoi*), and women (*gunaikes*) in antiquity. *American Journal of Philology* 135: 303–357.
- Gaca, K. L. (2015) Ancient warfare and the ravaging martial rape of girls and women: Evidence from Homeric epic and Greek drama. In M. Masterson *et al.* (eds) *Sex in Antiquity*. New York: Routledge, pp. 278–297.
- Goldstein, J. S. (2001) *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Henry, M. M. (2011) The traffic in women: From Homer to Hipponax, from war to commerce. In A. Glazebrook and M. M. Henry (eds) *Greek Prostitutes in the Ancient Mediterranean, 800 Bce–200 ce*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 14–33.
- Human Rights Watch/Africa. (1996) *Shattered Lives: Sexual Violence during the Rwandan Genocide and Its Aftermath*. New York: Human Rights Watch.
- Kara, S. (2009) *Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Katz, S. T. (1994) *Holocaust and Mass Death Before the Modern Age*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kern, P. B. (1999) *Ancient Siege Warfare*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Morris, I. (1986) The use and abuse of Homer. *Classical Antiquity* 5: 81–138.
- Nadali, D. and Jordi, V. (eds) (2014) *The Other Face of Battle: War on Civilians in the Ancient Near East*. Münster, Germany: Ugarit Verlag.
- Pritchett, W. K. (1991) *The Greek State at War*. Volume 5. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

- Raaflaub, K. (1997) A historian's headache: How to read "Homeric society"? In N. Fisher and H. Van Wees (eds) *Archaic Greece: New Approaches and New Evidence*. London: Duckworth, pp. 169–193.
- Roth, M. T. (1997) *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*. Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press.
- Sabin, P. A. G., Van Wees, H. and Whitby, M. (eds) (2007) *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Scheidel, W. (2009) Sex and empire. In I. Morris and W. Scheidel (eds) *Dynamics of Ancient Empires*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 255–324.
- Searles, P. and Berger, R. J. (eds) (1995) *Rape and Society: Readings on the Problem of Sexual Assault*. Boulder, CO: Westview.
- Stiglmeier, A. (1994) *Mass Rape: The War Against Women in Bosnia-Herzegovina*. Lincoln: NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Trombley, F. R. and Watt, J. W. (2000) *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite*. Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press.
- UN Document S/1994/674/Annex IX. (1994) The Final Report of the United Nations Commission of Experts Established Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 780 (1992), Annex IX "Rape and Sexual Assault."
- Van Wees, H. (1992) *Status Warriors: War, Violence, and Society in Homer and History*. Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben.
- Van Wees, H. (1997) Homeric warfare. In I. Morris and B. Powell (eds) *A New Companion to Homer*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.
- Von Byern, E. (1833) *Bilder aus Griechenland und der Levante*. Berlin: Hande & Spener.
- Westbrook, R. (1999) Vitae necisque potestas. *Historia* 48: 203–223.
- Yaron, R. (1962) Vitae necisque potestas. *Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis* 30: 243–251.

INDEX

ʿImt: 424

ʿApiru (see [Ḫapiru/ʿApiru/Ḫabiru](#))

Abbamuš (see also [Irdabama](#)): 161

Abdmelqart: 544

Abigail: 497

Abortion: 84, 322, 577, 675, 786, 937, 1044

Abydos (Egypt): 176, 198, 210, 275, 278, 285

Achaia (Greece): 691

Achillia: 956–957

Achzib (Palestine): 514

Addu-dūri: 109

Adešu-tabi: 729, 732

Adopti on: 27, 30–32, 208, 225, 442, 454, 456

Adsagsona: 1016

Adultery: 17–18, 84, 118, 195–196, 197, 198–199, 311, 313–314,
423, 454, 679

Adwick-le-Street (Britain): 1034

Aegina/Aigina (Greece): 600, 604–605

Aelia Marciana: 927

Aemilia Hilaria: 916

Aesir: 1035

Afghanistan: 559

Agariste: 579

Agemona: 420

Agighol (Greece): 976

Aglauros: 696

Agrippina the Younger: 889

Ahāssunu, Princess: 30

Ahatmilku, Queen: 454, 456, 457

Aḫātu: 92

Aḫḫiyawa: 7, 301, 302, 437, 557

Ahhotep I, Queen: 210–211, 275

Aḫi-ṭalli: 132

Aidonia (Greece): 604

Aigeira (Greece): 691

Aipygeneia: 625

Akhetaten (see [Amarna](#), [Tell el-](#))

Aksha (Nubia): 285

Ahmes/Ahmose-Nefertari, Queen: [210–211](#), [223](#), [275](#)
Akrotiri (see [Thera](#))
Ajjul, Tel el- (Palestine): [345](#)
Akkad (Mesopotamia): [6](#)
Akko (Palestine): [346](#), [437](#)
Al-aḥāti: [92](#)
Alalakh (Syria): [300](#), [345](#), [346](#), [426](#), [556](#)
Alambra (Cyprus): [376](#), [378](#)
Alaminos (Cyprus): [344](#), [366](#)
Alašiya (Bronze Age Cyprus, when referred to by that name specifically): [7](#), [302](#), [345](#), [386](#), [417](#), [420](#), [426](#)
Albufereta (Iberia): [997](#)
Alcoy (Iberia): [999](#)
Alcudia, Lady of: [991](#), [1000](#)
Aleopotrypa Cave (Greece): [653](#), [655](#)
Aleppo (Syria) (Halab): [300](#), [303](#), [436](#), [502](#)
Alexandra: [602](#)
Alexandria (Egypt): [732](#), [935](#)
Alke: [703](#), [705–706](#), [707](#)
Alkmene: [696](#)
Allia Potestas: [900](#)
Alma: [1043](#)
Al-našuwa: [93](#)
Al-ummī: [92](#)
Ama-e: [106](#)
Aman-Aštar: [42–43](#)
Amaninkatashan, Queen: [292](#)
Amanirenas, Queen: [291](#), [292](#)
Amanishakheto, Queen: [291](#)
Amanitore, Queen: [291](#), [292](#)
Amarna, Tell el- (Akhetaten) (Egypt): [178](#), [187](#), [208](#), [211](#), [212](#), [255–265](#), [346](#), [465](#)
Amarna Age: [7](#), [255–265](#), [346](#)
Amarna Archive: [233](#), [259](#), [465–466](#)
Amat-mamu: [108](#)
Amathus (Cyprus): [347](#), [417](#)
Amatmelqart: [544](#)
Amat-pia: [732](#)
Amat-Šamaš: [107–108](#)
Amazon (personal name): [956–957](#)
Amazons: [966](#), [969–982](#)
Amazons Sarcophagus: [804](#)
Amber: [788](#)
Amenirdis II, Princess: [225](#)

Amenorrhea: 650
Amesemi: 295
Amestris, Queen: 162, 165, 169
Amica: 920–922
Amisiri: 164
Ammaten: 158
Amminae: 108–109
Amnisos (Crete): 575, 584, 613, 622–623
Amorgos (Cyclades): 730
Amphiera: 623–623, 625
Amphipolis (Greece): 650
Amphitheia: 625
Ampurias (Emporion) (Iberia): 966, 989
Amurru (Syria): 502
Amytis: 165
Ana-rabika-Ištar: 732
Ana-rabišu: 729
Ana-rabutišu: 729, 732
Anat: 456, 460, 476
Ancharena Aphe: 915
Ancilla: 908–912
Ancille: 1041, 1048–1053
Andania (Greece): 689
Androdike: 730
Andromache: 678, 1053
Anea: 602
Anemia: 357, 369, 564, 595, 653, 654
Anemospilia (Crete): 565, 586
Anitta Text: 300
Ankhenespaaten, Princess: 261
Ankhesenamun, Queen: 233, 307
Ankhnesmeryre, Queen: 210
Annella: 331
Annunītum: 443
Anshan (Persia): 156
Anthrax: 798
Antigona: 718, 720
Antiochis: 729
Antiope: 970
Antu-bani-abi: 729
Anuket: 295
Anus: 16
Anus Ebria: 901–902
Apama (see also Artakama): 161, 164

Apame (see also Apama): 161
Aphaia: 604
Aphek (Palestine): 437
Aphrodisia: 722
Aphrodisiacs: 517
Aphrodite: 347, 422, 423, 425, 426, 688, 691, 692–693, 694, 696, 703, 722, 995
Apliki (Cyprus): 390
Apollonia: 419
Apollonia Senmouthis: 733
Aquincum (Italy): 887
Araššara(p): 166–167, 169
Archanes (Crete): 584
Archionurge: 730
Ardat Lili: 11, 14
Arete, Queen: 1051
Argos (Greece): 683, 684, 686, 688, 693, 695, 698
Ariadne: 579
Arišatbaal, Priestess: 544
Aristagore: 731
Aristila: 418–419
Aristoklea: 426
Aristonike: 726
Aristonoe: 689
Aristophile: 730
Arkadia (Greece): 691
Arkadia (personal name): 726, 728
Arkhidike: 710 n. 10
Arkhippe: 716, 719
Arkousa: 731
Arkoussa: 730
Armenoi (Crete): 566–567, 586–587, 596, 598
Army (Roman): 942–948
Arpad (Syria): 524
Arpi (Italy): 866
Arraphe (Mesopotamia): 91, 93
Arsinoe Philadelphus, Queen: 423, 425
Arsinoe Philopator, Queen: 425
Årslev (Scandinavia): 1033
Artakama (see also Apama): 161
Artazostre: 164, 165,
Artemidora: 732–733
Artemis (deity): 576, 662, 686, 687, 688, 691, 692, 693, 696
Artemis (mortal): 717, 718

Arthritis (see [Osteoarthritis](#))
Artynte: [165](#)
Artystone (see also Irtašduna): [165](#), [169](#)
Arvad (Phoenicia): [438](#), [439](#)
Arzakiti: [332](#)
Arzawa (Anatolia): [233](#), [277](#), [300](#), [301](#), [302](#), [321](#), [334](#)
Ashdod (Palestine): [438](#), [501](#), [504](#), [505](#), [506](#)
Asherah/Athirat: [456](#), [460](#), [479](#), [480](#), [507](#), [511](#)
Ashkalon (Palestine): [345](#), [437](#), [438](#), [501](#), [504](#), [505](#), [937](#)
Asine (Greece): [598–600](#)
Askut (Nubia): [286](#)
Asmunikal: [308](#), [330](#)
Aspasia: [720–721](#)
Asru: [185–186](#), [187](#), [189–190](#)
Aššur (Mesopotamia): [105](#), [131](#)
Aštart/Astarte: [347](#), [410](#), [426](#), [445](#), [447](#), [544](#), [705](#)
Atalanta: [579](#)
Atalia/Athalya, Queen: [127](#), [496](#)
Aten Hymn: [205](#)
Athena: [426](#), [662](#), [669](#), [686](#), [688](#), [690](#), [696](#), [697–698](#), [722](#)
Athens (Greece): [649](#), [650](#), [655](#), [661](#), [664–667](#), [669](#), [683](#), [684–686](#),
[688](#), [689](#), [690](#), [693](#), [696](#), [697](#), [703–710](#), [714–722](#), [970](#)
Atherosclerosis: [186](#)
Athirat (see [Asherah/Athirat](#))
Atia: [890](#)
Atiya, Queen: [284](#)
Atossa, Queen: [156](#), [165](#), [168](#)
Attar-paltī: [132](#)
Attutu: [732](#)
Auditory Exostoses: [654](#)
Auletrides: [705](#)
Aurelia Leontarous: [926](#)
Aurelia Nais: [917](#)
Aurelia Plousia
Avaris (see [Dab'a, Tell el-](#))
Axiothea: [422](#), [732](#)
Aya/Aja: [72](#), [443](#)
Aya-kuzub-mātum: [108](#)
Aya-šitti: [108](#)
Ayatum: [108](#)
Ayia Irini (Cyclades): [579–580](#)
Ayia Triada/Haghia Triadha (Crete): [554](#), [587](#), [588](#), [638](#)
Ayia Triada/Haghia Triadha Sarcophagus: [579](#), [584–586](#), [587](#), [609–](#)
[610](#)

Ayia Varvara-*Almyras* (Cyprus): 393
Ayios Epiktitos-*Vrysi* (Cyprus): 401
Ayios Georgios (Cyprus): 427

Babylon (Mesopotamia): 71, 88, 120, 164, 178, 277, 300, 307, 559
Babylonian Captivity: 435
Baetica (Iberia): 927
Bahlī-bašti: 30
Baki: 207
Balachulish (Scotland): 1010
Balawat Gates: 525–527
Baltā: 31
Banitu, Queen: 127
Banking: 719–720
Barsine (see also Irdabama): 161, 165
Bartare, Queen: 291
Bar-Uli, Princess: 158
Basilinna: 692
Basilissa: 423
Bastet: 295
Batavii: 1018
Bath (Briatin): 1010, 1018
Batshalom: 420
Ba'u-ašītu, Princess: 164
Baucis: 1051
Baza (Iberia): 1000

La Dama de Baza: Front Cover, 993, 999–1000

Bee-keeping: 991
Beer: 16, 113–116, 249, 272–273, 333, 337, 338, 378, 469, 490
Beer-Sheeba (Palestine): 514
Beirut (Phoenicia): 439
Belessunu: 729, 732
Beltiya: 157
Bēltum, Princess: 30
Beneventum (Africa): 935
Beni Hassan (Egypt): 199, 207, 466–467, 468
Beowulf: 1034–1035
Berenice, Princess: 221
Berenice II, Queen: 423
Bes: 205, 206, 247, 264, 295, 514, 802, 817
Beset: 295
Bêt 'āb: 488
Bêt 'ēm: 488

Bet(h) Shean (Palestine): 473, 490, 491
 Beth Shemesh, Tell (Palestine): 466
 Bia: 728
 Bintanath, Princess: 276
 Birth/Childbirth/Parturition (see also Pregnancy): 26, 188, 205–206, 247, 283, 295, 319–325, 322–325, 334–337, 338, 355, 362, 364, 365, 367, 369, 370–371, 379, 380, 394, 403, 404, 406, 411, 449, 460–462, 466, 513–514, 516, 578, 580, 595, 599, 648, 649, 674–675, 764, 781–787, 791, 801, 802–803, 805, 817, 854, 886–888, 936, 995
 Caesarian section: 785
 Birth Beds: 264
 Birth Bricks: 205–206, 325
 Birth Hut: 363
 Birth Stool: 206, 316, 323, 324, 336, 362, 365, 784, 888
 Blidegen (Scandinavia): 1029
 Blindness: 187
 Bodaštar: 542
 Bog Bodies: 1009, 1010, 1013–1014
 Boğazköy (see Hattusa)
 Bologna (Italy): 822, 823, 846, 849
 Bologna Tintinnabulum: 845
 Bona Dea: 905–906
Book of Going Forth by Day (see *Book of the Dead*)
Book of the Dead (Book of Going Forth by Day): 198, 201
 Booths: 515
 Borremose (Scandinavia): 1013–1014
 Borsippa (Mesopotamia): 84, 89
 Boston Sarcophagi: 814
 Boudica: 1019–1022
 Bracteates: 1035
 Brauron (Greece): 692
 Breast-feeding/Nursing/Lactation: 27–28, 30–31, 206–208, 291, 366, 367, 406, 449, 513, 523, 564, 580–581, 586, 595, 596, 599, 604, 650, 676, 764, 781, 787–788, 801, 895, 991, 995, 1002
 Breasts: 13, 574, 575–577, 579, 580, 581, 586, 675, 801, 833, 905, 972
 Brick Industry: 925
Bridal Songs (Mesopotamia): 9, 13
 Brideprice/Bridewealth: 80, 310, 311, 312, 313
 Brinsvaer: 1034
 Briseis: 1041, 1049, 1051–1052
 Brocavum (Britain): 974–975 Brothels: 88, 704, 705–708, 709, 720
 Building Z (Athens, Greece): 705

Lupanar: 938

Oikema: 705

Brucellosis: 653

Bubastis (Egypt): 208

Bull Leaping (Don't try this at home): 578–579

Business: 101–111, 482, 678, 714–722, 728–729, 915–927

Bustum: 961–962

Byblos (Phoenicia): 176, 436, 437, 438, 556

Cabezo Lucero: 1000

Caere/Cerveteri (Italy): 801, 812, 813, 824, 838

Regolini-Galassi Tomb: 823

Tomb of the Reliefs: 803

Calcaria: 918

Campovolano (Italy): 821

Campstool Fresco: 584

Cancer: 185–186

Capotribú: 756

Capua (Italy): 787

Carchemish (Syro-Anatolia): 109, 301, 303, 436, 455

Carthage: 439, 540–546, 918, 1046

Cartimandua, Queen: 1009, 1019–1020

Casinum (Italy): 897–898

Cassandane: 165

Castel di Decima (Italy) 816, 824

Castellar de Pontós (Iberia): 989

Castellet de Bernabé (Iberia): 987

Cavatha/Catha: 834

Celibacy: 225

Celts: 848, 967, 1008–1023

Hallstatt Culture: 967

La Tène Culture: 967

Cerebral Palsy: 188

Cerillo de Hornos (Iberia): 1001

Cerro de los Santos (Iberia): 986, 993, 1002

Cerro del Villar (Iberia): 540

Cetona (Italy): 879

Chaeronea (Greece): 907, 970

Chairestrate: 686

Chalkis (Greece): 419

Chania (see *Khania*)

Chariots: 289, 315, 420, 438, 449, 502, 584–585, 587, 624

Châteaubleau (Gaul): 1010

Chelidon: 938

Chertomlyk (Greece): 976
Child Sacrifice: 439
Childbirth (see [Birth/Childbirth/Parturition](#))
Childcare: 208–210, 250, 460–462, 493, 601
Chiusi (Italy): 638, 769–770, 788, 799, 879–880
Choes: 788–789
Choruses: 333
Chrysis: 683, 693–694, 695, 699
Cilicia (Anatolia): 301, 345, 347, 502
Cimbri: 1018
Claudia Severa: 945
Claviarii: 918
Cleopatra III, Queen: 425
Cleopatra VII, Queen: 179, 271, 560
Clitoris: 13, 202, 580
Clothing (see also [Footware](#)): 168, 292–294, 316, 329, 366, 402, 405, 406, 407, 449, 454, 457, 461–462, 467, 472, 495, 503, 525, 526, 535, 577, 581–582, 669, 686, 688–690, 707, 717, 755–757, 823–824, 872–873, 896
 Gloves: 870–871
Collado de los Jardines (Iberia): 989, 991, 995, 1002
Collegia: 900, 923–924
Collia Mascellina: 926
Cologne (Germany): 1019
Colosseum: 955
Columbaria: 900
Conception: 26, 205, 321–322, 495, 513, 675, 937
Concubines/Concubinage: 88, 132, 225, 277, 312, 325, 409, 527, 704, 933, 1041, 1042, 1051
Conditaria: 917
Contendings of Horus and Seth: 201
Contraception: 188, 205, 599, 786, 936–937
Conubium: 811
Corchiano (Italy) 859
Corinna: 660
Corinth (Greece): 648, 651–652, 654, 661, 688, 703, 706, 707, 811
Cornelia (mother of the Gracchi): 885, 887, 891
Cornelia (wife of Julius Caesar): 886
Cornelia (wife of Pompey): 897
Cornelia Venusta: 918
Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum: 540
Corral de Saus (Iberia): 995
Cortona (Italy): 835
Cosmetics: 189–190, 457, 690, 718–719

Coste di Manone (Italy): [799](#), [860](#)

Courtesans: [704](#)

Cow of the Moon God: [324](#)

Credit: [116](#)

Cusae (Egypt): [219](#)

Cybele: [686](#), [705](#), [970](#), [976](#)

Cypro-Minoan: [344](#), [345](#), [346](#), [361](#), [387](#), [393–394](#), [400](#), [417](#), [418](#)

Cyrene (see [Kyrene/Cyrene](#))

Dab'a, Tell el- (Avaris) (Egypt): [177](#), [437](#)

Daduhepa, Queen: [305](#)

Dakma: [166](#)

Damascus (Syria): [438](#)

Damaspia, Queen: [168](#)

Danatiya, Queen: [479–480](#)

Dancers/Dancing: [237](#), [238](#), [239](#), [286](#), [334–335](#), [421](#), [456](#), [518](#), [579–580](#), [597](#), [728](#), [877](#), [916](#), [933](#), [959](#), [993](#)

Nfrt: [238](#)

Daunia: [742](#), [744](#), [846](#), [865–875](#), [881](#) n. 1

Deafness: [187](#)

Deborah: [496](#), [518](#)

Defixiones: [1010](#), [1016](#)

Deir 'Alla (Palestine): [437](#)

Deir el-Bahri (Egypt): [238](#), [244](#), [284](#)

Deir el-Medina (Egypt): [178](#), [196](#), [198](#), [243–250](#), [262](#), [264](#), [731](#)

Delilah: [501](#), [507](#)

Delos (Cyclades): [726](#), [728](#), [730](#), [731](#), [734](#)

Delphi (Greece): [699](#)

Demarion: [726](#)

Demeter: [425](#), [679](#), [684](#), [686](#), [696](#)

Demo: [732](#)

Demonassa: [423](#)

Denderah (Egypt): [223](#)

Deneia (Cyprus): [369](#)

Deportation: [521–530](#)

Despoina: [689](#)

Detfri: [920–922](#)

Diana: [905](#)

Dianoia: [726](#)

Diet: [243](#), [264](#), [322](#), [564](#), [586](#), [596](#), [599](#), [600](#), [628](#), [647](#), [651](#), [652](#), [754](#), [797](#), [798](#), [854](#), [1034](#)

Diktyнна: [588](#)

dingir.maḥ.meš: [324](#)

Diptah: [186](#)

Diviners/Divination/Oracles/Prophets: [66](#), [337](#), [442](#), [496](#), [497](#), [518](#),
[520](#), [683](#)
Divorce: [82](#), [198](#), [246](#), [309](#), [311](#), [325](#), [454](#), [481–482](#), [890–891](#)
Di-u-ja: [615](#)
Di-wi-ja: [613](#), [614](#)
DNA Studies: [1034](#)
Domitia Lucilla Minor: [925](#)
Do-qe-ja/Doqeja: [603](#), [613](#), [614](#)
Double Axe (see *Labrys*)
Dowry: [80](#), [85](#), [89–90](#), [162](#), [167–168](#), [169](#), [245](#), [310](#), [394](#), [418](#), [454–](#)
[455](#), [457](#), [482](#), [729](#), [732–733](#), [811](#), [911](#), [991](#), [993](#), [1002](#), [1017](#)
Dream Interpretation: [67](#)
Drenthe (Gaul): [1014](#)
dumu.munus (*Šuppešara*): [332](#), [334](#)
Dusigu, Queen: [55](#)

Ebenion: 726
 Ebla (Syria): 52, 55, 56, 114, 436, 442, 447
 Eddas: 1035
 Edfu (Egypt) 223
Edict of Ammi-ditana: 114, 116, 117
Edict of Ammi-šaduqa: 114, 116, 117
Edict of Telipinu: 300
 Education: 30, 102, 208, 247, 333, 362, 493, 583, 677, 788, 798, 820,
 896–897, 898, 916
 Eileithyia: 371, 580
 Eirene: 732
 Eitun, Tel (Palestine): 514
 Ekalte (Syria): 91
 Ekron (Palestine): 438, 501, 504, 505, 507
 El Cigarralejo (Iberia): 991, 999, 1000–1001
 El-Kab (Egypt): 207
 El-Kurru (Nubia): 290
 El-Lahun (Egypt): 345
 El Oral (Iberia): 987
 Elam: 81, 156–159
 Elche (Iberia): 986, 987, 991, 1000
 La Dama de Elche: 986, 988, 993
 Elephantine (Nubia): 295
 Eleusinian Mysteries: 706
 Eleusis (Greece): 696
 Eli-eressa: 108
 Ellingen (Germany): 950
 Elopement: 310, 312
 Emar (Syria): 79, 86, 87, 89, 91–92, 436, 441, 442, 443–448, 449
 eme-gir: 10
 eme-sal: 10
 Emina: 1043
 Emporion (see *Ampurias*)
 Enḫeduanna: 6, 36, 40, 67–69
Enki and Ninmah: 26
 Enkomi (Cyprus): 346, 354, 392, 409, 418, 423
 Tomb 18: 354
 Enmenanna: 59
Enmerkar and Enšuhkešdana: 66
 En-nirgal-ana: 68
 En-nirzi-ana: 68
Enūma Eliš: 26
 Epaino: 730

Ephesos (Anatolia): [961](#), [970](#), [971](#)
Epie: [689](#)
Epirus (Greece): [654](#)
Episkopi-Bamboula (Cyprus) (see also Kourion): [370](#), [423](#), [598](#)
Eppia: [958–960](#)
Eratokrate: [730](#)
Erectile Dysfunction: [11](#), [17](#)
Eridu (Mesopotamia): [68](#)
Erimi-*Pamboula* (Cyprus): [344](#)
Erinyes/Eumenides/Furies: [584](#), [686](#), [695](#)
Erišti-Aya, Princess: [29](#), [72–73](#), [443](#)
E-ri-ta/Eritha: [611](#), [619–621](#), [625](#), [632](#)
Eritado: [730](#)
Erythrai (Greece): [691](#)
Ešarra-ḫammat, Queen: [128](#)
Essedaria: [955](#)
Este (Italy): [822](#), [846](#)
Eteocypriot: [361](#), [417](#)
Ethausva: [782](#), [785](#)
Etirtu: [732](#)
Euboia (Greece): [557](#), [558](#)
Eubola: [426](#)
Euklea: [545](#)
Euplia: [923](#)
Euthene: [726](#)
Execration Texts: [177](#), [288](#), [437](#)
Eza, Priestess: [79–80](#)

Fabaria: [917](#)
Facial Reconstruction: [561–570](#), [776](#)
Falerii (Civita Castellana) (Italy): [812](#), [854–859](#)
Fannia Calliste: [918](#)
Fannia Pieris: [918](#)
Ferrarii: [918](#)
Far'ah, Tel el- (South) (Palestine): [345](#), [514](#)
Fayum (Egypt): [726](#), [727](#), [732](#)
Figurines: [204](#), [207](#), [234–237](#), [362–363](#), [399–411](#)
 Ashdoda: [504](#)
 Bird-faced (Cyprus): [388](#), [407–409](#)
 Bomford Figurine (Cyprus): [409–410](#)
 Cruciform (Cyprus): [361](#), [363–364](#), [402–404](#), [411](#)
 Kourotrophoi: [366–367](#), [368–369](#), [370](#), [380](#), [388](#), [394](#), [406](#), [410](#),
 [466](#), [604–605](#), [787–788](#)
 Normal-faced (Cyprus): [408–409](#)

Plank (Cyprus): [365–367](#), [379](#), [404–406](#), [411](#)
 Potency (Egypt): [204](#)
 Mourner: [504](#)
Flateyjarbók: [1035](#)
 Food/Drink Processing/Preparation (see also Beer): [166–167](#), [244](#),
[286](#), [315](#), [377–378](#), [380](#), [381](#), [389](#), [407](#), [459](#), [468–469](#), [470](#), [473](#),
[478–479](#), [480](#), [488–492](#), [494](#), [496–497](#), [505](#), [514–515](#), [517](#), [519](#),
[535](#), [537](#), [538](#), [555](#), [583](#), [677](#), [761](#), [798](#), [804](#), [916](#), [989–991](#), [1031](#)
 Grain Grinders: [377](#), [378](#), [381](#), [389](#), [459](#), [469](#), [470](#), [471](#), [473](#), [489](#),
[490](#)
 Ovens: [459](#), [469](#), [490](#), [491](#), [498](#) n. 5, [505](#)
 Wine Industry: [926](#)
 Footware: [293](#), [294](#), [457](#), [467](#), [627](#), [666](#), [688](#), [689](#), [946–948](#)
 Fortuna: [861](#)
 Frigidity: [15](#)
 Funaria: [918](#)
 Furies (see [Erinyes/Eumenides/Furies](#))
 Fycklinge (Scandinavia): [1029](#)

Gagûm (see [ġipar](#))
 Gankunsig: [38](#)
 Gargašy: [545](#)
 Gassulawiya, Queen: [305](#)
 Gath (Palestine): [438](#), [501](#), [504](#)
Gath Ostrakon: [507](#)
 Gaza (personal name): [726](#)
 Ge: [691](#), [692](#)
Ġebûra: [496](#)
 Geheset: [188](#)
 Geite (Scandinavia): [1029](#)
 Gemma: [1016](#)
 Genucilia Plates: [860](#)
Geraiai: [693](#)
 Gezer (Palestine): [233](#), [345](#), [438](#), [466](#), [514](#), [556](#)
 Ghiaccio Forte (Italy): [798](#)
 Giants' Tombs (*Tombe dei Giganti*): [750–754](#)
Gilgamesh Epic: [20](#), [113](#), [114](#), [118](#)
 Giluḥepa, Princess: [232](#)
 ġipar/*gagûm*: [69](#), [72](#), [108](#), [442](#)
 Glykera: [703](#)
 Glyptic (see [Seals/Sealings/Glyptic](#))
 Golgoi (Cyprus): [419](#)
 Gortyn (Crete): [670](#)
 Gournia (Crete): [575](#), [580](#), [588](#)

Grand (Gaul): 919
Gravisca (Italy): 801, 834
Great Houghton (Britain): 1016
gulšeš: 324, 331
Gundestrup Cauldron: 1015
Gurob (Egypt): 229–240, 277
Gygea, Princess: 162
Gynecology: 188, 321, 324

Habryllis: 686

Hagia Triadha (see [Ayia Triada/Haghia Triadha](#))

Hagneis: 730

Hairstyles: 39, 45, 54, 158, 170 n. 12, 190, 393, 503, 574, 575–577, 586, 688, 690, 760, 782, 802, 817, 824, 832, 859, 860, 898, 957, 991, 1013, 1014, 1015

Seni Crines: 816

Hala Sultan Tekke (Cyprus): 346, 391, 418

Halab (see [Aleppo](#))

Halikarnassos (Anatolia): 688, 693, 696, 967

Hamâ, Queen: 127

Hanigalbat (Syro-Anatolia): 302, 307

Hannah: 513

Ḫannaḫanna: 324, 331

Ḫapiru/ʿApiru/Ḫabiru: 437–438, 466

Haraldskear (Scandinavia): 1013–1014

Haram (Scandinavia): 1030

Harbakka: 166

Harem: 133, 229–240, 257, 275, 277–278

Ipt nswt: 231–232

Ḫarimtu: 12, 19–21, 114

Harrinup: 167

Harris Lines (see [Teeth](#))

Hasanlu: 138–152

Ḫašauwa/Hasawa/šū.gi (“Old Woman”, “Wise Woman”): 316, 321, 332, 334, 336, 338

Hathor: 205, 210, 211, 219, 220, 238, 249, 256, 257, 259, 272, 273, 276, 287, 295, 457

Hatiba/Ḫataba, Princess: 386, 394, 395, 421

Hator Miskar: 544

Hatshepsut, Pharaoh: 35, 178, 207, 220, 272, 275, 276, 556

Hattusa (Boğazköy): 11, 300, 303, 442

Hauge (Scandinavia): 1036

Hayyat, Tell el- (Palestine): 473

Hazor (Palestine): 437, 466, 468, 470, 473, 604

Headshaping: [351](#), [352–353](#), [370](#), [655](#)
Healers (see [Physicians/Healers](#))
Health: [184–190](#)
Ḫebat: [443](#)
Hebe: [696](#)
Hedjenpaouni: [733](#)
Hegenassa: [730](#)
Hegeso: [669](#)
Hehenhit, Princess: [188](#)
Hekabe/Hecuba: [678](#), [684](#), [1053](#)
Hekat: [288](#)
Helen: [1043](#)
Helenis: [726](#)
Henti, Queen: [305](#)
Henttawy, Queen: [187](#)
Ḫepate: [92](#)
Hera: [688](#), [695](#), [698](#), [699](#)
Heraia Games: [579](#)
Herakleia: [726](#)
Herculaneum (Italy): [746](#), [923](#), [1029](#)
Herennia Cervilla: [887](#)
Hermione (Greece): [684](#), [695](#)
Hermione (personal name): [726](#)
Hermopolis (Egypt): [261](#)
Hetepheres II, Queen: [206](#)
Hieropoioi Inscriptions: [730](#)
Hieros Gamos: [443](#), [813](#), [815](#)
[hi.li](#) (*kuzbu*): [10](#), [13](#), [14](#)
Hilamaddu: [331](#)
Himlingøje (Scandinavia): [1029](#), [1033](#)
Hippocratic Corpus: [937](#)
 Excision of the Fetus: [674](#)
Hippolyta: [970](#)
Hippostrate: [680](#)
Hispaniola: [1047](#)
Hormano: [730](#)
Horns of Consecration: [584](#)
House(hold): [248–249](#), [344](#), [345](#), [375–378](#), [389](#), [456](#), [459–460](#), [466](#),
 [468](#), [477–480](#), [488–492](#), [504–505](#), [512](#), [513–515](#), [517](#), [535–540](#),
 [541](#), [583](#), [596](#), [661–662](#), [673](#), [674](#), [677–678](#), [679](#), [715–716](#), [718](#),
 [721](#), [731](#), [732](#)
Hubbuṣītu: [89](#)
Ḫudena Ḫudellura: [324](#)
Huelva (Iberia): [439](#), [966](#)

Huhun: 158
 Huldah: 518
 Huldremose (Scandinavia): 1014
 Human Sacrifice: 1014, 1018
 Huner: 198
 Huraya, Lady: 479
 Hurrian(s): 7, 48, 50, 61, 93, 109, 300, 301, 303, 306, 320, 321, 324, 329, 336, 436, 437, 443, 477, 478
 Hursama (Anatolia): 337
 Huwassanna: 333
 Hüseyindede (Anatolia): 335
 Hyksos: 176, 177, 210, 437
Hymn to Ninkasi: 114
 Hypsicrateia: 977–978
Hywel Dda: 1018

 Ia: 729
 Iabâ, Queen: 127, 133
 Ibiza (Iberia): 536
 Idalion (Cyprus): 420
 Iltanî, Princess: 108
 Iltani: 103
 Il-ummiya: 16
 Impurity/Pollution: 321, 334, 338, 676, 704, 798
Ina ašabi: 729–730
 Ina-banat-Nana: 729, 732
 Ina-bani-Nana: 729
 Inan(n)a/Ištar: 6, 9, 12, 13, 15, 19, 21, 40, 43, 52, 67, 302, 331, 332, 336, 392, 410, 443, 445–447, 449
Inanna and Enki: 16
 Inanna-amamu: 107–108
 Ina-qībit-Nana: 729, 732
 Inatos (Crete): 580
 Incest: 84, 273, 308, 314
 Infant Mortality: 248, 379, 404, 493, 513, 596, 599, 648–649, 675, 786, 792 n. 21, 803
 Infanticide: 649, 656, 786, 792 n. 24, 937
 Inheritance: 30–32, 88–93, 208–209, 245, 248, 309, 310, 455, 456, 483, 730, 731–733, 811, 923, 925, 935, 1035
 Inib-Šina, Priestess: 443
 Initiation/Coming-of-Age Ritual: 336, 515, 788–789, 813, 1003
 Ino: 907–908
 Inšabtu: 84
Institutores: 924

Instructions for the Temple Personnel: 331
Instructions of Ani: 195, 206–207, 208, 220, 244–245
Instructions of Ptahhotep: 194, 244–245
 Iphigeneia: 685, 692
 Ipu: 207
 Iput I, Queen: 210
 Irdabama: 160–162
 Irene: 423
 Irtašduna (Artystone): 162
 Irtyersenu: 186
 Ischia/Pithekoussai (Italy): 556, 558
 Išḫara: 449
 Išḫunnatu: 120
 Isis (deity): 199–200, 201, 204, 207, 211, 259, 272–273, 287, 288–289, 295
 Isis (mortal woman): 248
 ISIS: 1048, 1051
 Išnikarab-huhun: 158
 Ištar (see Inan(n)a/Ištar)
 Ištar-bāsti: 105
Ištaritu: 71
 Ištar-lamassī: 105
 Ištarte: 85
 Iunia Libertas: 925
 Ivory Triad: 577, 597–598, 641–642

 Järrestad (Scandinavia): 1033
 Jebel Barkal (Nubia): 290, 295
 Jemmeh, Tell (Palestine): 507
 Jephthah's Daughter: 515
 Jericho (Palestine): 468, 471, 561
 Jerusalem (Palestine): 438, 466, 521
 Jewelry: 128, 167–168, 293–294, 295, 345, 353, 354, 363, 370, 402, 405, 407, 418, 424, 454, 459, 470, 472, 480, 537, 540, 567, 576, 579, 584, 663, 665, 689, 705, 707, 755–758, 771, 773, 777, 824, 855–856, 858, 859, 868, 966, 970, 971, 975, 976, 977, 978, 981, 993, 1000, 1002, 1013, 1021, 1028, 1029, 1030, 1033, 1034, 1035
 Jezebel, Queen: 496
 Jezreel (Palestine): 490
 Judgment of Paris: 812
 Julia (daughter of Julius Caesar) 886–887
 Julia Curtius: 860
 Juno Lucina: 1003

 Ka: 466

Kadimalo, Queen: [288–290](#), [291](#), [293](#)

Kalaureia (Greece): [691](#)

Kalavastos-Agiou (Cyprus): [402](#)

Kalavassos-Ayios *Dhimitrios* (Cyprus): [346](#), [353–354](#), [358](#), [370](#), [392–394](#), [598](#),

Tomb 11: [353–354](#), [393–394](#), [418](#)

Kalḫu (see [Nimrud](#))

Kallithoe: [684](#)

Kalyvia (Crete): [636](#)

Kamid el-Loz (Phoenicia): [429](#)

Kamilari (Crete): [583](#), [596–597](#)

Kandake: [291](#), [292](#), [294](#)

Kandou-Kouphouvounos (Cyprus): [401](#)

Kaneš, Karum (Kültepe) (Anatolia): [7](#), [82](#), [91](#), [105](#), [299](#), [300](#), [447](#)

Kanuta: [835–836](#), [879](#)

Kaptara: [555](#)

kar.kid (see also Priestess(es): *qadištu*): [332](#), [334](#)

Karanòg (Nubia): [286](#), [293](#)

Karmi (Cyprus): [345](#), [381–382](#)

Karpathia: [620–621](#), [632](#)

Kašerum/Gašeru, Queen: [29](#)

Kassandra: [689](#)

Kaššaya: [164](#)

Kavousi (Crete): [595](#)

Kawa (Nubia): [287](#)

Kazakhstan: [972](#), [978–980](#)

Kultobe: [980](#)

Kebiti, Queen: [288](#)

Keftiu: [555](#), [556](#)

Keraso: [602](#)

Kerma (Nubia): [177](#), [283](#), [285](#), [293](#)

Keryneia (Greece): [695](#)

Kessandra: [623](#), [632](#)

Khania (Crete): [575](#), [578](#), [639](#), [640](#)

Master Impression: [587](#)

Kheb: [287](#)

Khentkaues II, Queen: [210](#)

Khirbet Qeiyafa (Palestine): [489–490](#)

Khirokitia (Cyprus): [344](#), [351–353](#), [358](#), [400](#), [411](#)

Kholetria-Ortos (Cyprus): [400](#)

Kida: [730](#)

ki-lukur-ra: [72](#)

Kiririša: [156](#), [157](#)

Kirta Epic: [479–480](#)

Kiš (Mesopotamia): [67](#), [442](#)
Kissonerga-*Mosphilia* (Cyprus): [344](#), [345](#), [362–363](#), [365](#), [371](#), [402](#),
[403](#), [404](#)
Kissonerga-*Mylothkia* (Cyprus): [402](#), [404](#)
Kition (Larnaca) (Cyprus): [346](#), [347](#), [354–355](#), [390](#), [392](#), [393](#), [409](#),
[417](#), [419](#), [420](#), [423](#), [424](#), [426–427](#)
Tomb 128: [354–355](#)
Kizzuwatna (Anatolia): [301](#), [321](#), [449](#)
Kleainete: [419](#)
Kleoboule: [716](#)
Kleonike: [426](#)
Klippel-Feil Syndrom: [653](#)
Knossos (Crete): [554–556](#), [557](#), [565](#), [574](#), [575](#), [578](#), [579](#), [582](#), [583–](#)
[584](#), [587](#), [601–602](#), [611](#), [612](#), [613](#), [618](#), [619](#), [622–623](#), [626](#), [627](#),
[629](#), [630–632](#), [635](#), [636](#), [638](#), [639](#), [640](#), [641](#)
Grandstand Fresco: [582](#), [583](#), [587](#)
(Sacred) Grove Fresco: [583](#), [587](#)
Kore: [668–669](#)
Kos (Anatolia): [684](#), [689](#), [691](#), [692–693](#), [694](#), [696](#)
Kotharôt: [460–461](#)
Kouklia-Teratsoudhia (Cyprus): [409](#)
Koumasa (Crete): [581](#)
Kourion-*Bamboula* (Cyprus) (see also Episkopi-*Bamboula*): [346](#), [361](#),
[391](#), [392](#), [419](#), [421](#), [423–424](#)
Koutrotrophoi (see [Figurines](#))
Kourotrophos Maffei: [788](#)
Kovuklukaya (Anatolia): [356](#)
Kritou Marottou-Ais *Giorkis* (Cyprus): [400](#)
Ku-Baba: [113](#), [119](#)
Kubātum, Queen: [10](#)
Kültepe (see [Kaneš](#), [Karum](#))
Kunnaniya: [447](#)
Kunšīm-Mâtum, Priestess: [442](#), [443](#)
Kunuštalleš: [324](#)
Kurgans: [969–982](#)
Kurra-dimri: [86](#)
Kurunnam-tabni: [89](#)
Kush, Kingdom (see also Nubia): [177](#), [179](#)
Kuwatalla: [331](#), [334](#)
Kuzbu (see [hi.li](#))
Kurkh Monolith: [526](#)
Kvåle (Scandinavia): [1035](#)
Kvassheim (Scandinavia): [1034](#)
Kydippe: [699](#)

Kyme Treasure: [774](#)

Kypria/Kypris: [347](#), [424](#)

Kypromedousa: [422](#)

Kyrene/Cyrene (Libya): [420](#), [676](#)

Kyrios: [727–728](#), [730](#)

Kythera (Greece): [604](#)

La Bastida de les Alcusses (Iberia): [997](#)

La Bastida de Moixent (Iberia): [987](#)

La Cueva de la Lobera (Iberia): [991](#), [1002](#), [1003](#)

La Lobera (Iberia): [1002](#)

La Moleta del Remei (Iberia): [989](#)

La Parisienne: [584](#)

La Serreta de Alcoy (Iberia): [1002](#)

Labat: [545](#)

Labia: [13](#)

Labrys: [582](#), [584](#), [588](#)

Lachish (Palestine): [345](#), [471](#), [498](#) n. [9](#), [514](#), [521](#), [522](#), [528](#), [556](#)

Lactation (see [Breast-feeding/Nursing/Lactation](#))

Lagaš (Mesopotamia), [39](#), [107](#)

Lahhennutu: [131–132](#)

Lama: [40](#), [41–42](#), [43](#)

Lamaštu: [26](#)

Laodameia: [419](#) Laodike: [426](#)

Lapakhidaye: [285](#)

Lapithos (Cyprus): [345](#), [367](#), [369](#)

Larinum (Italy): [923](#), [956](#)

Larnaca (see [Kition](#))

Larsa (Mesopotamia): [30](#)

Larthia Seianti: [771](#), [773](#), [816](#)

Larzac Curse: [1016](#), [1017](#), [1022–1023](#)

Las Ataleyuelas (Iberia): [1002](#)

Lavello (Italy): [866](#)

Law Codes: [77–84](#)

Digest, Ulpian: [922–923](#), [924](#), [932–933](#), [934](#), [935](#), [936](#), [886](#)

Ešnunna: [17](#), [31](#), [78](#), [117](#)

Gortyn: [670](#)

Hammurapi: [17](#), [18](#), [31](#), [71–72](#), [77](#), [78](#), [115](#), [117](#), [118](#), [120](#), [449](#)

Harem Edicts: [78](#)

Hittite (*200 Laws*): [78](#), [303](#), [309](#), [311](#), [312](#), [313](#), [315](#), [317](#), [322](#)

Lipit-Ištar: [21](#), [78](#)

Middle Assyrian: [18](#), [78](#), [118](#), [527](#), [1042](#)

Neo-Babylonian: [78](#)

Sumerian Laws Handbook of Forms: [78](#)

Ur-Namma: 17, 31, 78, 115
Lawsuits: 84–86, 246, 482
Lefkandi (Greece): 557, 660, 661, 662–664, 669
Lemba (Cyprus): 344, 363, 364, 365
Leprosy: 356–358
Lerna (Greece): 556, 598–600, 649, 655
Leto: 422, 787
Leucothea: 907
Libbali-šarrat, Queen: 130–131
Licinia Primigenia: 918
Life Expectancy: 283, 513, 564, 586, 595, 754, 778 n. 28, 792 n. 21,
798, 936
Lilītu/Lilith: 14, 513
Linakushu: 732
Linaria: 919
Linear A: 361, 573–574
Linear B: 573–575, 578, 581, 583, 587, 588, 600–604, 605, 608, 610–
615, 618–632, 635, 639
Liriš-gamlum, Princess: 29–30
Literacy: 68, 107–108, 127, 194, 247
Livia: 886, 889–890
Lliria (Iberia): 990

Loans: [83](#)
Lokris (Italy): [686](#)
London (Britain): [960](#)
Los Saldares (Iberia): [987](#)
Love: [12](#), [29](#), [209](#)
Love Sickness: [15](#)
Love Songs (Egypt): [196–197](#), [209](#), [245](#)
 Turin Love Song: [196–197](#)
Ludia: [958–959](#)
Lupercalia: [906](#)
Luxor (see [Thebes](#))
Lude: [934](#)
Lykosoura (Greece): [689](#)
Lysimache: [693](#), [697](#), [699](#)
Lysistrata: [694](#), [721](#)
Lyso: [731](#)

Maa-Paleokastro (Cyprus): [346](#), [557](#)
Ma'at: [211](#), [257](#), [260](#), [272](#), [295](#)
Maahorneferure, Queen: [234](#), [239](#)
Maat-Hor-Neferure, Princess: [308](#)
Madamiš: [164](#)
Madiken: [287](#)
Madumitu: [164](#)
Magic: [66–67](#), [118–119](#), [205](#), [273](#), [278](#), [323](#), [331](#), [336](#), [364](#), [449](#), [461](#),
 [519](#), [537](#)
Magurre: [119](#)
Maia/Maya: [261](#)
Makere, Queen: [188](#)
Malaria: [564](#)
 Thalassaemia: [564](#)
Mal(l)ia (Crete): [554–556](#), [575](#), [578](#), [580](#), [583](#)
Malloura (Cyprus): [356](#)
Malnutrition (see [Diet](#))
Mamaj Cora (Ukraine): [971](#), [974](#), [977](#)
Mammisis: [223](#)
Mana: [108](#)
Ma-na-sa: [615](#)
Mandane, Queen: [165](#)
Manumission (see also [Slaves/Slavery](#)): [87](#), [680](#), [681](#) n. [5](#), [717](#)
Marcia Kaenis: [925](#)
Mari (Cyprus): [371](#)
Mari (Syria): [7](#), [29](#), [30](#), [50](#), [56](#), [67](#), [72](#), [107](#), [109](#), [118](#), [119](#), [345](#), [389](#),
 [391](#), [436](#), [437](#), [441](#), [442–443](#), [555](#)

Marion/Polis *Chrysochous*/Polis-*Polisteries* (Cyprus): 355–358, 418, 419, 422, 424, 425, 427,
Burial 11: 356–358
Marki-Alonia (Cyprus): 345, 367, 376–378, 404
Maroni (Cyprus): 346, 418
Marriage (see also Elopement): 79–82, 244–246, 273, 306, 309–313, 317, 334, 388, 394, 454, 456, 466, 477, 478, 481–482, 492, 503, 516, 559, 578, 674–675, 679, 684, 759, 802, 810–817, 849, 856, 879–880, 886, 887, 888, 889, 892, 900, 912, 933, 942, 943–944, 949, 974, 991–993, 1003, 1034, 1036
Dextrarum Iunctio: 815
Exogamy: 759, 875, 1033–1034
Levirate Marriage: 312, 314–315
Manus: 888
Polyandry: 82
Polygamy: 165, 271, 312, 454
Polygyny: 10, 81–82, 478, 486 n. 3, 493
Marseille (Gaul): 927
Marsiliana (Italy): 821
Marzabotto (Italy): 798
Massanuzzi, Princess: 308
Masturbation: 200–201, 275
Matanazzi: 322
Mater Matuta: 907–910
Maternity (see [Motherhood/Maternity](#))
Matištukkaš: 161
Matmabba: 166
Matralia: 906–910
Matronalia: 906, 910, 912, 946, 951 n. 24
Matriarchy: 588, 608, 610, 667, 750, 765, 770, 810
Matrilineality: 81, 290, 448, 542, 544, 603, 1036
Matrilocality: 81, 308, 309, 310, 313
Matronymics: 206, 630, 786, 792 n. 28, 810
Matrunna, Princess: 109
Mattaki: 116
Maya: 235
Mecia Dynata: 925
Medical Papyri (Egypt): 182–183, 188, 189, 205
Berlin Papyrus: 182
Carlsberg Papyrus: 182
Ebers Papyrus: 182
Kahun Gynaecological Papyrus: 182, 188
Medinet Habu (Egypt): 502–503
Meditrina (Italy) 919

Megara (Greece): 706, 707
Megara Hyblaea (Sicily): 787
Megiddo (Palestine): 345, 468, 469, 470, 471
Megisto: 731
Mego: 687
Mekhet: 295
Meketaten/Maketaten, Princess: 208, 211–212, 260
Mellaria: 917
Melos (Cyclades): 554
Memphis (Egypt): 176
Menarche: 587, 596, 691
Menat: 220, 238, 249, 257
Menekratia: 730
Minerva/Menerva/Menrva: 781–782, 831, 861, 905
Menopause: 564, 578
Menstruation: 188, 205, 244, 338, 577
Meresankh III, Princess: 206
Meritaton, Princess: 208
Merit-Neith, Queen: 210, 275
Meroë (Nubia): 285, 290, 291, 292, 295
Merytre-Hatshepsut, Queen: 211
Messarà (Crete): 587
Messene (Greece): 649, 687
Me-ta-ka-wa: 623–624
Metaneira: 706, 707
Metrodora: 799
Metz (Gaul): 1009, 1017
Mevia: 955
Mezzomiglio (Italy): 798
Mezzulla: 331
Mi: 235, 238
Midwives: 104, 206, 244, 316, 320, 323, 324, 336, 355, 364, 371, 461, 496, 518–519, 520, 674, 717, 781–782, 783, 784, 785, 790, 887, 888, 916
Migration: 502–504, 505
Mi-jo-qa: 623–624
Miletos (Anatolia): 555, 556, 558, 1049
Minet-el-Beida (Syria) (see also Ugarit): 453, 457
Minucia Suavis: 886
Miptaḥiah: 164
Miriam: 518
Miscarriage: 322, 675
Mitanni (Empire): 7, 178, 179, 212, 232, 259, 260, 273, 277, 300, 301, 303, 307, 321, 436, 437

Mneso: 730
Mochlos (Crete): 554, 555, 581, 639
Molpadia: 970
Montescudaio Urn: 826
Morning Sickness: 205
Moschis: 923
Motherhood/Maternity: 25–32, 55, 204–212, 246–248, 319–325, 361–371, 384, 388, 394, 595–605, 629–631, 673–681, 759–760, 770, 781–791, 802–803, 804, 805, 817, 825, 854, 855–856, 860, 885–892, 896, 907, 908, 909, 910, 935–936, 972, 991–997, 1000, 1016, 1043, 1044
 Stepmothers: 889
Mourners: 66, 239, 244, 250, 481, 496, 497, 517, 518, 520, 676, 827, 999
 Taptara: 337
Moza, Tell (see *Urkeš*)
Mozia (Sicily): 537, 539, 540
 House of the Domestic Shrine: 537, 539, 540
Muḥḥūtu: 442
Mullissu-mukannišat-Ninua, Queen: 127, 133
Mullissu-šarru-ušri: 132
Mummies: 182–190
Munbaqa, Tell (Syria): 450
Murlo (Poggio Civitate) (Italy): 815, 816, 825, 826, 832, 838, 850
Musarna (Italy): 798
Music/Musicians: 127, 219, 220, 221–222, 238, 239, 249, 261, 286, 334–335, 391, 393, 421, 456, 496, 497, 506–507, 518, 520, 721, 999
 Nfrt: 238
 Xnr: 221
Musrit: 545
Mut: 211, 221, 234, 287, 295
Mutemwia, Queen: 211, 276, 277
Mycenae (Greece): 556, 557, 566–570, 575, 579, 600, 602, 604, 610–611, 618, 622, 623, 626, 630, 639, 640, 652, 695
 Shaft Graves: 556, 566–570, 639, 652
Myrrhine: 686, 691, 694
Myrrhinous (Greece): 667–668
Myrsine: 423
Myrtos (Crete): 554, 581, 636
Mytilene (Anatolia): 710 n. 10

N'gaous (Algeria): 541
Naga (Nubia): 291, 292

Nagila, Tel (Palestine): [468](#), [470](#)
Naḥal Soreq (Palestine): [507](#)
Naḥdi-Esu: [167](#)
Nahomsis: [733](#)
Nahunte-Utu, Queen: [158](#)
Nana-iddin: [729](#)
Nanaya: [19](#), [164](#)
Namma: [26](#)
Naomi: [494](#)
Napata (Nubia): [285](#), [287](#)
Napir-Asu, Queen: [157](#)
Naqi'a, Queen (Zakûtu): [128–130](#)
Narāmru, Princess: [30](#)
Narce (Italy): [744](#), [821](#), [853–859](#), [861–862](#)
Nasalsa: [287](#)
Naukratis (Egypt): 710 n. [10](#)
Naunakhte: [209](#), [245](#), [248](#), [250](#)
Nawidemak, Queen: [291](#)
Nea Paphos (Cyprus): [427](#), [648](#), [654](#)
Neaira: [680](#), [703](#), [706–708](#), [718](#)
Nebetia: [235](#), [237](#), [238](#)
Nebet-tawya, Priestess: [221](#)
Nebuemu: [248](#)
Nebuwy: [418](#)
Nefertari, Queen: [256](#)
Nefertiti, Queen: [178](#), [206](#), [207](#), [208](#), [212](#), [255–256](#), [257](#), [258](#), [259–260](#), [261](#), [273](#), [274](#)
Neferure, Princess: [207](#), [272](#), [275](#), [276](#)
Nefrusobek, Queen: [177](#)
Neith: [272](#), [287](#)
Neithhotep, Queen: [275](#)
Nekhbet: [210](#), [274](#)
Nemea (Greece): [604–605](#)
Nemi (Italy): [905](#)
Nepthys: [295](#)
Nerik (Anatolia): [337](#)
Nerthus: [1035](#)
Nesamenope: [198](#)
Nichoria (Greece): [661](#)
Nicosia (Cyprus): [345](#), [409](#), [427](#)
Nidintu-Nana: [729](#)
Nikaia: [727](#), [730](#)
Nikarete: [706](#), [715](#)
Nike: [685](#), [695](#)

Nikeso: 688, 695
Niko: 695
Nimrud (Kalḫu) (Mesopotamia): 127, 131, 132
Nin-azu: 108–108
nin.kur: 444, 445, 447
nin.ur.maḫ.meš, Queen: 466
Nineveh (Mesopotamia): 130, 131, 132, 522
Ningal: 68, 69
Ninhilia: 109–110
Ninkasi: 114
Ninmelam: 109
Nin-melila: 38
Ninšatapada, Priestess: 70
Ninsun: 26
Nin-zagesi: 82
Nippur (Mesopotamia): 20, 42, 71, 72, 442
Nitocris, Princess: 225
Nitocris Adoption Stele: 225
Noahdiah: 518
Nonae Caprotinae: 906, 910–912
Norchia (Italy): 802
Nubia: 176–177, 179, 185, 186, 187, 210, 225, 238, 256, 257, 280–295
Nude Female (image): 50–52
Nuhšātum: 105
Numisia Aphrodite: 905
Nuntarriašḫaš Festival: 330–331
Nuri (Nubia): 290
Nursing (see Breast-feeding/Nursing)
Nut: 200, 204, 287, 295
Nuttuptum: 103
Nuzi (Mesopotamia): 20, 91, 93, 103, 442

Oberstimm (Germany): 950
Obesus Etruscus: 797
Obole: 722
Obstetrics: 188, 355
Octavia: 890, 891
Odyssey: 822
Officinatrices: 924–925
Ogulnia: 934
Öland (Scandinavia): 1030
“Old Woman” (Hittite) (see *Ḫašauwa/Hasawa/šu.gi*)
Olympias, Queen: 559

Olympias: 728–729
Olynthos (Greece): 661
Opet Festival: 221–222, 276
Oracles (see [Diviners/Divination/Oracles/Prophecy](#))
Orchomenos (Greece): 691
Ordubad (Armenia): 978
Orgasm: 14, 202 n. 1
Ornatrix: 916
Oropos (Greece): 661
Orthwowije: 602
Orvieto (Campo della Fiera) (Italy): 742, 743, 799, 802, 835–836, 878
Orvieto (Cannicella) (Italy), 785, 812
Osteoarthritis: 141, 187, 264, 356, 566, 567, 653
Osteopenia: 187, 655
Osteoporosis: 187, 283, 564, 596, 655
Osteria dell'Osa (Italy) 848
Ostia (Italy) 919, 925, 956, 887–888
Osuna (Iberia): 999
Ovaries: 188

Paestum (Italy): 686
Paget's Disease: 567
Paghit/Paghat: 476, 480
Pahidyme: 165
Pa-ki-ja-na/Sphagianes (Greece): 611, 613, 614, 615, 619, 621
Palaepaphos/Paphos (Cyprus): 346, 363, 371, 420, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426
Palaikastro (Crete): 554, 555, 575, 577
Pallakai: 704, 706, 708, 709
Palmina: 545
Panathenaia: 684, 706
Pani Loriga (Sardinia): 538–539
Pantakleia: 730
Panthea: 916
Paphia: 347
Paphos (see [Palaepaphos](#))
Papiria: 905
Papissona: 1010
Paralimni-Nissia (Cyprus): 401
Parasites: 184–185
 Guinea-worm Infestation (*Dracunculiasis*) 184
 Plasmodium falciparum: 185
 Schistosomiasis: 184
 Strongyloides: 184–185

Tapeworm (*Echinococcus granulosus*): 185

Parmys: 165

Parnassa (Anatolia): 338

Paros (Cyclades): 697

Parturition (see [Birth/Childbirth/Parturition](#))

Parysatis, Queen (Purrušatu): 156, 162, 165, 169

Pasalta: 285

Paškuwatti: 321, 334

Passover/Pesach: 515

Pathyris (Egypt): 730, 733–734

Pātil: 92

Patrai (Greece): 691

Patriarchy: 303, 310, 316, 339, 381, 454, 587, 618, 699, 727

Patrilineality: 542, 603

Patrilocality: 481, 483, 888

Pazyryk (Scythia): 870, 981

Pelvic Flattening: 599

Peña negra de Crevillente (Iberia): 987

Penelope: 579, 638, 641, 817, 822

*Pe-re-**82: 612, 615, 621

Perfume/Unguent: 50–51, 234, 235, 378, 454, 483, 496, 498 n. 6, 517, 538–539, 613, 623, 718–719, 799, 812, 918, 999

Pergamon (Anatolia) 559, 916, 967

Periallos: 697

Persephone: 679

Persepolis (Persia): 559

Persepolis Fortification Archive: 156–157, 158, 160, 164

Persia(ns): 8, 156–169, 179, 224

Perugia (Italy): 742, 744, 746, 811

Tomb of the Mothers and Daughters: 811

Phaiarete: 717

Phaistos (Crete): 554–556, 575, 577, 578, 579, 587, 588, 597, 609, 613, 622–623

Phanion: 425

Phanostrate: 717

Phialai Exeleutherikai: 716–717

Philadelphia (Egypt): 731

Philae Island (Nubia): 295

Philistines/Peleset: 438, 501–508, 557

Philotis: 425, 426, 911

Philowoina: 602

Phloion (Greece): 971

Phoinikeia: 622

Phrasikleia: 660–661, 667–669, 670

Phryne: 703, 704
Phylakopi (Cyclades): 582
Physicians/Healers/Doctors (see also Midwives): 316, 391, 517, 520, 717, 916, 991
Pidda/Piddaya: 482–483
Pierides Bowl: 367
Pietrabbondante (Italy) 920–922
Pieve d'Alpago Situla: 783–784
Piscatrix: 917
Pithekoussai (see *Ischia/Pithekoussai*)
Pittei: 336
Placentia (Piacenza) (Italy): 905
Plumbarii: 925
Pneumoconiosis: 186
Pnubs (Nubia): 287
Poggio Buco (Italy): 812
Poggio Colla: 728
Poliandro: 751–753
Political Testament of Hattušili: 300
Polystrate: 684
Polyxena: 686–687, 688–689
Pompeia Anthis: 923
Pompeii (Italy): 917, 918, 934
 Graffiti: 933–935, 938, 959
 House of the Vettii: 919
Pontecagnano (Italy): 803
Populonia (Italy): 742, 754, 759, 799, 821, 822, 879
Porcuna (Italy): 987
Postumia Matronilla: 896
Potnia: 614, 615, 623
Pottery Production: 286, 378, 395, 407, 468, 469–470, 473, 491, 496, 554, 574, 583
Pozzetto Tombs: 754
Praeneste (Palestrina) (Italy): 782, 798, 799, 823–824
Praisos (Crete): 661
Pregnancy: 26–27, 204, 205–206, 283, 321–322, 322, 355, 367, 371, 380, 403, 404, 461–462, 492, 513–514, 580, 586, 595, 599, 649, 650, 784, 785, 801, 802, 854, 886–888, 936, 937, 991, 995, 1002, 1003, 1044, 1050
Pregnancy Testing: 188
Priene (Anatolia): 688, 695
Priestess(es)/Cult Functionaries: 37, 64–74, 88, 103, 218–226, 257, 275, 286–288, 293, 304, 306, 307–308, 317, 331–333, 393, 424, 425, 441–450, 456, 534, 555, 583–586, 603, 608–615, 662, 683–

699, 1018–1019

bd bt: 542, 544

mt: 542, 544

Alhuitra-Priestess: 333

ama.dingir: 331, 337, 448

a-ne-mo-i-je-re-ja (Priestess of the Winds): 610–611

Arrephoroi: 689, 722

Chantress (*Smayt*): 219–220, 222

Chantress of Amun: 219, 220, 221, 235, 238

Divine Adoratrix: 287

Do-e-ra te-o-jo (Slave of the Deity): 603, 611, 612, 613–615, 619, 626

en/entu: 39, 40, 42, 65, 67–69, 441, 442, 443–445, 448–449

ereš-dingir: 38, 67, 69–70, 441, 442, 444, 447, 448

Followers of Mut: 288

God's Hand: 211, 275–276

God's Wife (of Amun): 211, 221, 223, 225, 275–276, 286–287, 293–294

Hatrencu: 832

Ḥazgara: 333, 337–338

Hemet Netjer: 219, 220

Ḥuwaššannalla-Priestess: 333

I-je-re-ja (Priestess): 610–611, 619, 621, 626, 632

Kanephoroi/Cannephorae: 425, 689–690, 860

Ka-ra-wi-po-ro (Key-Bearer): 611–612, 619, 620–621, 632

Katra-Priestess: 332, 336

Khnt: 450

Ki-ri-ti-wi-ja: 603, 612–613, 619, 620

Kleidouchos: 684

Kulmašitu: 449

lukur: 67, 70, 81, 442

Maš'artu: 441, 442, 443, 445–447

Naditu: 65, 67, 70–73, 81, 83, 88–89, 90, 107, 116, 118, 441, 442, 443, 449

nin.dingir: 331, 334

nu.gig: 21

Palwatalla: 333, 338

Po-re-na: 615

Priestess of Amun: 189

Priestess of the Winds: 584

Propolos: 686

Qadištu (Qadiltu): 20, 71, 79, 441, 442, 449–450, 527

Qammatu: 441, 442–443

Qedešah: 442, 449, 517–518

sanga: 448

Singers (*Hsy*t): 219, 221, 244, 249, 288

Sistrum-Player (*IHy*t): 219, 221, 287

suhur.lá: 331–332, 334, 337

Te-o-jo do-e-ra (see *Do-e-ra te-o-jo*)

Ugbabtu: 67, 71, 118, 441, 442, 443

Vestal Virgins: 905, 906

Prophecy/Prophets (see [Diviners/Divination/Oracles/Prophecy](#))

Prolapse: 188

Prostitutes/Prostitution: 19, 88, 118, 225, 332, 391–393, 423, 442, 496, 507, 527, 675, 680, 703–710, 714–715, 720–721, 932–938, 1044

Cellae Meretriciae: 934

Hetairai: 168, 703–710, 720

Pornai: 704, 706, 708

Pornoboskousai: 704, 707, 709

Sacred Prostitution: 19, 392–393, 449, 517, 534, 544, 703–704

Proteleia: 684

Prothesis: 587

Ptgyh: 507

Ptolemies: 179, 271

Pu-abi, Queen: 6, 38, 109

Pu-nari: 729

Puberty: 492

Pubic Hair: 13, 799

Puduḥepa, Queen: 302, 306, 307, 323, 325, 330, 336
 Puente Tablas (Iberia): 987, 988, 989
 Puhumenni: 103
 Puig de Sant Andreu de Ullastret (Iberia): 989
 Punic Wars: 1045
 Puntal dels Llops (Iberia): 987
 Purification/Purity: 322, 331, 332, 449, 516, 688, 691
 Purrušatu (see *Parysatis*, Queen)
 Puteoli (Italy): 918
 Pyla- *Kokkinokremos* (Cyprus): 346
 Pylos (Greece): 557, 583, 586, 601, 603, 610–611, 612, 613, 618, 619, 622, 623, 626, 627, 630, 631–632, 639, 640, 652, 653
 Pyrgi (Italy): 742, 743, 744, 801, 834, 838, 839, 878
 Pyrgos (Cyprus): 368–369
 Pyrgos Pitcher: 368–369
 Pythia: 683, 691–692, 697, 699

 Qadeš (Syria): 302, 437
Qadištu/Qadiltu (see *Priestesses*)
 Qalhata, Queen: 290
 Qasaka, Queen: 290
 Qatna (Syria): 30, 436
 Queens (see also under individual names; see also *Tawananna*): 127–131, 210–212, 223, 271–278, 288–292, 330–331, 334, 421, 485
 Queen of Heaven: 515

 Rachel: 513, 517
 Radušamuya: 164
 Radušdukka: 164
 Rahab: 496
 Rape: 18, 84, 314, 524–525, 530, 678, 680, 1041–1054
 Ras Shamra (see *Ugarit*)
 Rassam Cylinder: 522
Reforms of Iri-Kagina: 82
 Reitia: 846
 Resi: 236
 Rhamnous: 689
 Rhodes (Anatolia): 555
 Rhodokleia: 733
 Rhodopis: 704, 710 n. 10
 Rīm-Sîn-Šala-bāštašu, Queen: 29
 Rišāya: 85
 Roselle (Italy): 812
 Roxana, Queen: 559
Royal Love Songs (Mesopotmia): 10

Ruth: [494](#), [518](#)
Rwanda: [1041](#), [1049](#)

šà.zi.ga: [11](#), [15](#), [17](#)
Sa'idyeh, Tell es- (Palestine): [472](#)

Sacred Knot: [582](#), [584](#)

Sadukka: [166](#)

Saffron: [575](#), [577](#), [609](#)

Safi, Tell es- (Palestine): [514](#)

Sagas: [974](#), [978](#), [1030](#)

Sagburu: [66](#)

Sais (Egypt): [206](#)

Sakhmakh, Queen: [291](#)

Sakhmet/Sekhmet: [211](#), [295](#), [817](#)

Šakintu: [127](#), [131](#), [483](#)

Salamis (Cyprus): [346](#), [418](#), [419](#), [420](#), [423](#), [426](#)

Samaria (Palestine): [438](#), [524](#)

Šamhat: [20](#)

Sammandu: [167](#)

Samos (Anatolia): [557](#), [971](#)

Sammu-ramat, Queen: [128](#), [130](#)

Sanam (Nubia): [285](#), [287](#)

Šanatu: [482](#)

Sant'Abbondio (Italy) [797](#)

Šapaš/Šapšu: [485](#)

Sappho: [660](#), [710](#) n. [10](#)

Saqqara (Egypt): [261](#)

Saraia: [132](#)

Šardanit: [545](#)

Sardinia: [439](#)

Sarelli, Queen: [456](#)

Sarepta (Phoenicia): [439](#)

Sargat Culture: [971](#)–[972](#)

Sarmatians: [971](#), [974](#)–[975](#)

Sassia: [923](#)

Šat-Aššur: [447](#)

Šāt-Aya: [107](#)–[108](#)

Satet: [295](#)

Satiah: [207](#)

Satjyt, Queen: [288](#)

Satre, Queen: [211](#)

Satricum (Italy): [907](#)

Saturnalia: [906](#)

Šauška: [302](#)

Šaya: 485
 Scarabs: 211, 229, 256
 Scarification: 283–284, 293
 Scribonia: 891
 Scenic Compositions: 365, 367–369, 379–382, 406–407, 411
 Scoliosis: 1014
 Scribes: 107, 132, 219, 315, 391
 Scurvy: 653
 Scythians (see also Sarmatians): 679, 972–983 Saka-Scythians: 972, 978, 980, 981
 Sebittis: 733
 Sea Peoples (see also Philistines/Peleset): 179, 438, 502
 Seals/Sealings/Glyptic: 36–45, 101–111, 126, 158–159, 160, 164, 169, 424, 456, 457, 466, 495, 573–574, 578, 579, 580, 582, 584, 597, 608–609, 729
 Audience Scenes: 42–45
 Banquet Scenes: 37–38, 104
 Libation Scenes: 40–41
 Presentation Scenes: 41–42, 104
 Seduction: 10, 18, 84, 195–196
 Seh: 204
 Seianti Hanunia Tlesnasa: 769–778, 804
Sekretu: 71, 127, 132–133
 Semele: 697, 781, 907
Seminaria: 917
 Semiramis (see *Sammu-ramat*, Queen)
 Semna (Nubia): 288
 Semo Awtschala (Caucus): 978, 979
 Senet: 210
 Senetney: 207
 Sennesis: 730
 Sepsis: 185
 Septimia Stratonice: 919
 Šeraš: 158–159, 164
 Seshat: 257
 Severa Tertioncna: 1016
 Sex(uality) (see also Sexual Intercourse): 12, 194–202, 225, 319–321, 322, 410, 580, 691, 886, 900, 906, 908–913, 916, 932–938, 959
 Desire: 13, 202 n. 1, 957, 961
 Homosexuality: 195
 Offenses (see *Adultery*, *Incest*, *Rape*)
 Sexual Intercourse: 781, 973
 Anal: 16, 201, 679, 934
 Cunnilingus: 16, 934

Fellatio: 16, 201, 934
 Vaginal: 15–16, 934
 Sexually Transmitted Diseases: 936
 Shanakdakhete, Queen: 291, 294
 Shechem (Palestine): 437, 438, 466
 Ši-Damqat: 20
 Sibyl, Cumean: 1019
 Šibtu, Princess: 29
 Sidon (Phoenicia): 439, 544
 Šiduri: 113, 118, 119
 Siephmous: 730
 Silalluhi: 334
 Simale: 420
 Singers (see also Priestesses): 286, 334, 391, 496, 518
 Singing: 389, 390, 391, 496
 Sippar (Mesopotamia): 71, 72, 107, 116, 442, 443
 Šiptu, Queen: 443
 Sirolo-Numana (Italy): 825
 Sisaia Cave-Dorgali: 751
 Sistrum: 220, 235, 238, 249, 257
 Sitra: 207
 Skovgård (Scandinavia): 1034
 Slaves/Slavery (see also Manumission): 84, 86–88, 120, 131, 282, 285, 286, 288, 293, 310, 311, 312–313, 317, 331, 332, 456, 477, 482, 484–485, 497, 527, 545–546, 611, 612, 622, 625, 626, 628, 629, 632, 650, 656, 673, 674, 675, 677–678, 680, 704, 705, 707, 714, 716, 718–721, 726, 728, 732, 743, 745, 786, 787, 789, 790, 827, 850, 871, 877–881, 888, 891–892, 895, 898, 899, 900, 905, 906–910, 911–913, 915, 916, 922, 924, 925, 932, 933, 934, 936, 938, 948, 955, 958, 1041–1054
 Sobeknofru, Queen: 272
 Social Networks: 494–495, 498, 675, 676
 Soloi (Cyprus): 425
 Soteris: 718
 Sotira (Cyprus): 344, 345, 376, 378, 381, 401
 Souskiou-Laona (Cyprus): 344, 363, 404
 Souskiou-Vathyrkakas (Cyprus): 365, 402, 404
 Sparta (Greece): 686, 697
 Spina Bifida: 283
 Stateira (see also Irdabama): 161, 165
 Steatopygy: 284
 Store-Dal (Scandinavia): 1029–1030, 1033
 Strettweg (Austria): 1010
 šu.gi (see [Hšašauwa/Hasawa/šu.gi](#))

Šugītu: [71](#)
Sulpicia Lepidina: [945–946](#), [948](#)
Sulpicii Archive: [923](#), [926](#)
Sumerian Temple Hymns: [67–68](#)
Šumma ālu: [11](#), [16](#)
Sun Goddess of Arinna: [300](#), [323](#), [325](#), [329](#), [330–331](#), [336](#)
Sunnmøre (Scandinavia): [1032](#)
Supervisors: [107](#)
Šuppešara (see [dumu.munus](#))
Šuruppak: [21](#)
Susa (Persia): [156](#)
Sutrix: [919](#)
Syeris: [695](#)
Syllabo-Cypriot: [346](#), [400](#), [417](#), [419](#), [421](#), [422](#)
Symposion: [168](#)

Taanach (Palestine): [466](#), [490](#)
Tabūra: [30](#)
Taduḥepa, Princess: [232](#), [260](#), [330](#)
Tafoni: [751–752](#)
Tagriš-Damu, Princess: [60](#)
Takabuti: [190](#)
Takunai: [41–42](#)
Tahurpa (Anatolia): [331](#)
Tale of Aqhat: [476](#), [479–480](#)
Tale of Truth and Falsehood: [195](#)
Tale of Two Brothers: [196](#), [199](#)
Tale of Wenamun: [386](#)
Tama: [236](#), [237](#)
Tamar: [496](#), [518](#)
Tamisa: [426](#)
Tamut: [164](#)
Tanagra (Greece): [587](#)
Tanaquil, Queen: [783](#), [815–816](#), [822](#), [825](#), [830](#), [834](#), [836](#), [838](#)
Tanit: [540](#), [541–542](#), [543](#)
Taniya: [482–483](#)
Tanofrether: [165](#)
Tanouphis: [731](#)
Tanuhepa, Queen: [304](#), [306](#)
Tapstress (Mesopotamia): [16](#), [113–120](#)
Tar'am Agade, Queen: [7](#), [59–60](#), [61](#), [109](#)
Taranto (Italy): [556](#)
Tarhuntašša (Anatolia): [302](#)
Tarquinia (Italy): [803](#), [804](#), [810](#), [830](#), [834](#)

Bocchoris Tomb: 817
 Bruschi Tomb: 832
 Tomb of the Barron: 790, 838
 Tomb of the *Bigae*: 838
Tomba della Fustigazione: 877
 Tartessos (Iberia): 966
 Tatehathyris: 731
 Tattoos/Tattooing: 283, 293, 366, 402, 870–871, 873, 875 n. 1
 Taous: 730
 Taous-Heribastis: 733
 Taverns: 20–21, 113–120
Tawananna: 300, 304, 317
 Taweret: 205, 247, 263, 293, 295
 Tawosret, Queen: 272
 Taxes: 116, 120
Teaching of Ankhsheshonq: 195
 Teeth: 141, 187, 349, 353, 354, 355, 356, 564, 565, 566, 569, 586,
 595–596, 599, 653–654, 751, 753, 775, 799–800, 804, 1016, 1034
 Caries/Cavities: 187, 586, 653, 775
 Dental Appliances: 799–800, 805
 Dental Attrition: 187, 283
 Enamel Hypoplasia: 566, 586, 600
 Harris Lines: 187, 586–587
 Hyperostosis: 653–654
 Tefnut: 260, 276, 295
 Tegea (Greece): 695
 Tello (Mesopotamia): 40
 Tentamun: 179
 Terqa (Syria): 442–443
 Tessennano (Italy): 801
 Teteshapi: 337
 Tetewatti: 332
 Tetisher: 210
 Textiles: 66, 105, 107, 131, 230, 232, 239–240, 244, 249, 250, 286,
 315, 356, 357, 377–378, 381–383, 389, 391, 393, 426–427, 437,
 455, 459–460, 468, 478–479, 480, 483 n. 5, 490–491, 494, 495,
 496–497, 505, 535, 537, 554, 566, 574, 583, 601–602, 603, 612,
 613, 622–623, 626, 628–629, 630, 635–642, 714, 718, 721–722,
 726, 757, 812, 821, 832, 844–850, 857, 997–999, 1029, 1030
 Carding: 641, 726
 Distaffs: 316, 329, 459, 639, 641, 757, 815–816, 821, 822, 823,
 825, 844, 845–849, 850, 857, 858, 1031
 Loom Weights: 377, 389, 459, 468, 471, 491, 502, 505, 537–538,
 574, 635, 638, 705, 721, 722, 757, 770, 812, 821, 848, 859,

997, 999

Spindle Whorls: 377, 378, 383, 389, 427, 459, 468, 470, 471, 491, 635, 637, 757, 760, 821, 832, 838, 844, 848, 857, 859, 971, 974, 976, 977, 978, 997, 999, 1001, 1002, 1030

Spinning/Spinners: 66, 637, 641, 677, 855, 857, 858, 874, 919, 997, 1030, 1031

Talaros: 823

Weavers: 626, 654, 677

Textrix: 919

Teye, Queen: 232

Teye, Lady: 186

Tey(e), Nurse: 260–261, 264

Thais: 703

Thalna: 785, 812

Thana Plecunia: 799

Thanchvil Catharna: 834

Thanr: 785

Thasos (Greece): 689

Theano (Homeric): 684

Theano (Priestess): 688, 698

Thebes (Egypt) (see also Deir el-Medina, Valley of the Kings, Valley of the Queens): 177, 182, 185, 188, 189, 190, 207, 210, 211, 212, 220, 223–224, 262, 285, 286, 288–289, 293, 626, 726

Thebes (Greece): 610, 613, 618, 622, 629, 630, 640

Themis: 692

Theodora: 602

Theodote: 720

Theophilia: 726

Theoris: 678, 717

Thera (Cyclades): 567, 575–577, 578, 580–581, 583, 597, 609, 639

House of the Ladies: 580–581

Xeste 3: 567, 574, 575–577, 582, 586, 609

Thesan: 834

Thesmophoria: 679, 684, 709

Thiasos: 580

Thrace/Thracians (Greece): 559, 655, 656, 870, 871, 873, 975, 976, 982

Three Hundreds Tomb: 753

Thuya: 256

Tia: 261, 263

Tiaa, Queen: 211

Tiamat: 26

Tillya Tepe (Baktria): 980

Timmuzi: 41

Timnah (Palestine): [491](#), [507](#)
Timo: [426](#), [697](#)
Timokrite: [696](#)
Timonasa: [731](#)
Timonassa: [695](#)
Timowanassa: [419](#)
Tiryas (Greece): [557](#), [578](#), [579](#), [587](#), [610](#), [640](#), [970](#)
Titela: [797](#)
Titinia Anthracis: [923](#)
Tiya: [235–236](#)
Tiya/Tiye, Queen: [211](#), [212](#), [233](#), [235](#), [255–259](#), [260](#), [273](#)
Tiye (Harem Queen): [278](#)
Tjtj: [204](#)
Tomb of the Witch: [751](#)
Tombos (Nubia): [286](#)
Tophet (Carthage): [540](#), [543–546](#)
Torreparedones (Iberia): [987](#), [995](#), [1002–1003](#)
Tossal de Sant Miquel de Llíria (Iberia): [987–989](#), [993](#)
Traglatella *Oinochoe*: [789–790](#)
Trauma: [138–152](#), [186–187](#), [353](#), [647](#), [655](#), [974](#), [982](#), [1041–1054](#)
Treaty of Zakûtu: [128–129](#)
Tu (Scandinavia): [1028](#)
Tuberculosis: [185](#), [186](#)
Tuli: [48](#), [58–59](#)
Tullia: [887](#), [889](#)
Tullia Superiana: [905](#)
Tulpunnaya: [20](#)
Tuna (Scandinavia): [1029](#), [1034](#)
Tunnawiya: [321](#), [334](#), [336](#)
Tunnawiya's Ritual of Purity: [331](#)
Tura (Scythia): [972](#)
Turan: [812](#), [816](#), [831](#), [834](#)
Turin Erotic Papyrus: [225–226](#),
Tusculum (Italy): [925](#)
Tuta-napšum, Princess: [42](#), [59](#)
Tuta-šar-libbiš, Queen: [42](#), [59](#)
Tutela/Tutula: [911](#)
Tuty: [234–235](#)
Tuy, [198](#)
Tujia: [273](#)
Tya: [207](#)
Tylissos (Crete): [575](#)
Tyras (Greece): [976](#)
Tyre (Phoenicia): [439](#), [542](#), [544](#)

‘Uthtaya: [483–484](#)
U-tik, Priestess: [157](#)
Ubkhet: [198](#)
Ugarit (Syria): [7](#), [88](#), [345](#), [346](#), [387](#), [426](#), [436](#), [437](#), [438](#), [441](#), [449](#),
[453–462](#), [476–486](#), [502](#), [555](#), [556](#)
Uley (Britain): [1010](#)
Uliliyašši: [321](#)
Umma (Mesopotamia): [82](#), [106](#), [109](#)
Ummidia Quadratilla: [897–898](#)
Uni: [831](#), [834](#)
Uqnitum, Queen: [38](#), [39](#), [43](#), [48](#), [53–59](#), [109](#)
Ur (Mesopotamia): [6](#), [40](#), [67](#), [69](#), [102](#), [442](#)
 Royal Cemetery: [104](#), [109](#)
Urbanilla: [896](#)
Urkeš (Tell Mozan): [7](#), [38](#), [39](#), [48–61](#), [109](#)
Uruk (Mesopotmia): [67](#), [70](#), [726](#), [728](#), [729](#), [730](#), [732](#), [734](#)
Urutuk-E-halahu: [158](#)
Uterus/Womb: [188](#), [204](#), [675](#), [785](#), [801](#), [995](#), [1002](#)
Utu-ehihi-Pinigir: [158](#)
U-wa-mi-ja/Uwamia: [611](#), [612](#), [620](#)

Valeria Euterpia: [918](#)
Valley of the Kings: [178](#), [182](#), [243](#), [285](#)
Valley of the Queens: [178](#), [243](#), [285](#)
Vanir: [1035](#)
Vasiliki (Crete): [554](#)
Vei/Vea: [785](#), [812](#)
Veii (Italy): [787](#), [812](#), [822](#), [825](#), [826](#), [834](#)
Veils/Veiling: [20](#), [119](#), [445](#), [457](#), [526](#), [527](#), [661](#), [681](#) n. 3, [686](#), [709](#),
[760](#), [774](#), [777](#), [815](#), [816](#), [817](#), [825](#), [855](#), [991](#), [1002](#)
 Anakalypsis: [816](#)
Veleda: [1018](#)
Velelia: [789–790](#)
Verdolay (Iberia): [990](#)
Verecunda: [959](#)
Vergina (Greece): [650](#), [975](#)
Verucchio (Italy): [741](#), [786](#), [798](#), [803](#), [811](#), [821](#), [822–823](#), [825](#), [838](#),
[845–846](#), [849](#), [850](#)
Vesta: [905](#)
Vetralla (Italy): [839](#)
Vetulonia (Italy): [741](#), [742](#), [783](#), [824](#), [825](#), [827](#)
 Pietrera Tomb: [824](#)
Vetustilla: [934](#)
Vibia Calybenis: [935](#)

Vibia Chresta: [935](#)
Vindolanda (Britain): [942](#), [945–948](#), [950](#)
Vindonissa (Germany): [950](#)
Violence: [138–152](#), [655](#), [1041–1054](#)
Virginity: [12](#), [669](#)
 Batultu: [12](#)
 ki.sikil.tur: [12](#)
 (W)ardatu: [12](#)
Vix (Gaul) [785](#), [817](#), [1011](#)
Volsinii (Orvieto) (Italy): [742](#), [743](#), [858](#), [878](#)
Volterra (Italy): [770](#), [788](#), [803](#), [804](#), [815](#), [838](#), [849](#)
Votives: [231](#), [245](#), [249](#), [347](#), [424](#), [473](#), [540–545](#), [669](#), [740](#), [759](#), [760](#),
 [781](#), [785](#), [787](#), [788](#), [798](#), [803](#), [817](#), [831](#), [833](#), [835](#), [839](#), [846](#), [861](#),
 [991](#), [993](#), [1002](#), [1003](#)
 Anatomical: [785](#), [799–802](#), [832–833](#), [991](#), [995](#), [1001](#)
Vounous (Cyprus): [367](#), [369](#)
Vounous Bowl/Model: [380–381](#), [384](#), [407](#)
Vratsa (Greece): [976](#)
Vulci (Italy): [741](#), [742](#), [759](#), [801](#), [802](#), [805](#) n. 3, [813](#), [814](#), [815](#), [824](#),
 [832](#), [849](#)
 Tomb of the Sardinian Bronzes: [759](#), [765](#)
 François Tomb: [790](#), [803](#)
Vulva/Vagina: [13](#), [15](#), [16](#), [197](#), [371](#), [580](#), [675](#), [801](#)

Wadjyt: [274](#)
Waist Compression: [582](#)
Wanassa: [422](#)
Wands, Apotropaic: [205](#)
Waqartum: [44](#)
Waqqurtum: [105](#)
Warfare: [521–530](#)
Waššukani (Anatolia): [301](#)
Wawiyat, Tell el- (Palestine): [471](#)
Weaning: [207](#), [369](#), [370](#), [596](#), [599–600](#), [650](#), [788–789](#)
Weaving/Weavers (see [Textiles](#))
Wedding of Yarih and Nikal: [461](#)
Weeks: [515](#)
Werethekau: [235](#), [238](#)
Weret-yamtes, Queen: [278](#)
Westcar Papyrus: [195](#)
Wet-nurses: [27](#), [30–31](#), [41](#), [56–58](#), [207](#), [244](#), [249](#), [260–261](#), [323](#), [355](#),
 [367](#), [496](#), [676](#), [677](#), [680](#), [888–889](#), [900](#), [905](#), [916](#), [1002](#)
Wetwang (Britain): [1012](#)
Widows/Widowhood: [20](#), [26](#), [79](#), [81](#), [82](#), [85](#), [88](#), [90](#), [92](#), [105](#), [208](#),

275, 283, 314, 424, 454, 456, 716, 719, 727, 732, 890, 901, 911,
1021
Wilbour Papyrus: 211, 230, 240
“Wise Woman” (Hittite) (see [Ḫašauwa/Hasawa/šū.gi](#))
Witchcraft/Witches: 66
Witnesses (Legal): 126
Wordieia: 602, 626–627, 631

Xenaino: 730
Xenocleia: 675–676
Xeste 3 (see [Thera](#))

Yalia (Cyprus): 403
Yamenes (Nubia): 288
Yamhad (Syria) (see also Aleppo): 436
Yavneh (Palestine): 505–506, 507
Yde (Gaul): 1014
Yugoslavia: 1043–1044

Zagora (Cyclades): 661
Zagreb *Liber Linteus*: 805
Zakros (Crete): 555, 575
Zakûtu (see [Naqi’a, Queen](#))
Zama (Iberia): 990
Zamena: 38, 39, 48, 56–58, 60, 109
Zarina, Queen: 972
Zeuxo: 420
Zinû: 28
Zipporah: 516
Zobia: 680